

Call for Artists- Request for Qualifications

Nicollet Avenue Greenway Wayfinding Signage

Whittier Alliance, in partnership with Midtown Greenway Coalition and Hennepin County, invite artists and graphic designers to submit qualifications to develop two designs for Midtown Greenway wayfinding signs that reflect and celebrate the unique Whittier Neighborhood and Eat Street identities. The purpose of the new signs is to provide wayfinding/visual cues that support this vital connection by enhancing the streetscape and welcoming people to Midtown Greenway and the business district.

Background

Nicollet Avenue is the only paved Greenway entrance serving the Whittier Neighborhood and the Eat Street Business District. The Greenway crosses under Nicollet Avenue at Eat Street, but community input indicates Greenway users are often not aware of the businesses and amenities located above them at street level. At the top of the Greenway ramp there are concrete jersey barriers and a closed bridge. There is no welcome sign or indication that Greenway users have exited to Eat Street, nor where they should go to find the many businesses in the district. Additionally, community feedback has revealed many people do not realize where the Nicollet Avenue Greenway entrance is or that the Greenway is a public trail where all are welcome.

Artist Qualifications

The ideal candidate will have previous experience with community driven art and a demonstrated connection to and understanding of the Eat Street/Nicollet Avenue corridor and the Whittier Neighborhood. A strong background in graphic design is preferred but artist of all mediums are welcome to apply. POI and artists from historically underrepresented communities are encouraged to apply.

Compensation

The selected applicant will be paid \$1500 for sign designs and granting Whittier Alliance and Hennepin County the right to print the design images on signs and place them on and near the Midtown Greenway, and to use depictions or two-dimensional reproductions of the designs in all formats, including in electronic formats for non-commercial purposes.

Project Timeline

Submissions are due November 12, 2019. The selected applicant will be notified November 19, 2019. The artist will then work with Whittier Alliance and Hennepin County to arrive at a final design by January 31, 2020.

Additional Requirements

The selected applicant will be expected to participate in a listening/input session with Eat Street stakeholders at a time to be determined.

Selection Process

A committee of project partners and community stakeholders – including at least one Whittier Alliance board member and one member of the business community – will select the applicant.

Submission:

Email the following materials to business@whittieralliance.org by 5:00pm CT Nov 12, 2019:

1. Up to 5 work examples
2. Artist resume or CV
3. A brief description of how you would approach this design project and incorporate business district and neighborhood identity (max 250 words).

Note: This is a Request for Qualifications. Applicants are not expected to create and propose new designs for this submission.

Design Specifications

Below are design and sign specifications to help applicants understand the parameters of the project.

- Signs will be retroreflective. The artist should take this in consideration, as retroreflectivity affects how a sign is seen in low-light conditions.
- One design will include the words "Midtown Greenway" and will be printed on a sign placed by the entrance on Nicollet Avenue to help welcome and direct people to the Midtown Greenway. The other design will include the words "Eat Street" and will be printed on two signs placed along the Greenway to help welcome and direct trail users to Eat Street.
- The signs will be for static display mounted on standard posts typical of the Greenway.
- Hennepin County and Whittier Alliance will be strategically placed near the only Midtown Greenway entry point to Eat Street/Nicollet Avenue.
- Whittier Alliance and Hennepin County will work with artist on the sign size. Dimensions and shape can vary up to 30 inches by 30 inches if there is a compelling creative or functional reason to do so.
- Sign designs should be legible at a biking speed of 15 miles an hour from someone offset from the sign by about 7 feet. Lettering to meet this guideline should be 1.25 inches or taller. Symbols also should be appropriately sized.
- Sign designs should not resemble a regulatory sign or warning sign (e.g. avoid red on white, white on red or black on white or white on black unless the design is significantly different).
- In general, a simple and legible design is more effective than a complicated but pretty sign.
- Any reproducible color may be used. Multiple colors may be used, but simplicity is best.
- Hennepin County will work with the selected artist to arrive at the final design. Hennepin County would like to give the artist considerable latitude in the design, but will need to ensure the sign does not create a safety hazard such as confusion or distraction or a maintenance burden by creating such a fantastic sign that they all get stolen.

For additional information contact: Marcus VanderSanden, business@whittieralliance.org 612-871-7756

