REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

ART AND INTERIOR DESIGN FOR CHICKASAW PARK LODGE

Closing Date: December 1, 2026, at 3pm EST

Format: One (1) electronic document in fully bookmarked PDF Format. on a thumb drive. As an alternative, a consultant may offer a location to download with the understanding that it must be available for full download no later than **December 1, 2026 at 3pm** by email or other recognized file transfer/storage service.

Submit to: **fari nzinga**
Project Ambassador
Louisville Olmsted Parks Conservancy

Mailing Address & Office Location:
1299 Trevilian Way
Louisville, KY 40213
chickasaw@olmstedparks.org

Those responding to this solicitation may elect to either mail, email, or deliver proposals to the Olmsted Parks Conservancy offices. The deadline for the submittal of proposals is no later than **December 1, 2026, at 3pm EST**. Proposals received after this date and time will not be considered.

Overview & Location:

Olmsted Parks Conservancy is soliciting proposals (RFP) from Black, West End-, and/or Louisville-based, artists to provide visual art and interior design for the Chickasaw Park Lodge. The art and design shall celebrate Black history and culture, and tell the story of the park, its neighbors, visitors, and stewards. Chickasaw Park Lodge, a climate-controlled multi-

use space is roughly 39' x 23'. It has a landscaped front entrance, two bathrooms accessible from the outside, two interior bathrooms, a warming kitchen, a main room (multi-use space), and a rear porch with scenic river views. The goal is for the Lodge to be an accessible space for community groups to meet and host programs, and for families to gather and celebrate. Artists may submit proposals as individuals or in groups; proposals must include a concept, a budget, and images of 5-10 recent works. Before the submission due date there will be an opportunity for artists to walk through the Chickasaw Park Lodge and see the space. If your proposal is selected, artists will be required to 1) tour Chickasaw Park with OPC historian and tour guide, Denise Davis; and, 2) meet with Jacqueline Hudson, the Curator of the Black Experience Archive at the Filson Historical Society, to view documents, photographs, and objects from the collection that may inform their visual storytelling through art and design.

Park History:

Chickasaw Park has a rich and important history in the development of the City of Louisville. When the park was developed in the early 1920's, it was the largest city park to date to be designated specifically for Black residents of Louisville.

Foreshadowing the de jure segregation that was to come in the city of Louisville, in October 1911 the West End Improvement Club requested that the Parks Board ban Black people from Shawnee Park. The Parks Board explained that they had no right to exclude any citizen from the public parks and denied the request. By 1913, however, Shawnee Park had a playground designated for “colored citizens” and the Parks Board directed that Cherokee and Iroquois parks have similar facilities.

Bowing to pressure from white racists, the Parks Board formally dedicated Chickasaw Park for the use of Black Louisvillians in 1922, and officially segregated the parks in 1925. Shortly thereafter, the Parks Board gave the official go ahead for implementation of the

Olmsted firms' plan for the park in June 1927. All plans, however, did not go smoothly for the new park. The community had mixed emotions about being contained to smaller, less robust park areas, rather than being free to use and enjoy all of the city's parks and public spaces. Several Black community leaders warned that acceptance of the park amounted to tacit agreement with segregation.

Chickasaw Park was completely inundated by the waters of the great flood of '37, as was most of the rest of the City of Louisville. The Parks Board approved plans in 1938 for a flood wall through the park that would protect the city from experiencing such extensive damage again. The Olmsted firm disagreed with this decision and warned the mayor that both Chickasaw and Shawnee parks would be greatly affected by it, but as the design had been approved and there was considerable pressure from the public, the wall was built as planned. The portion of Louisville's floodwall through Chickasaw Park was completed in 1947 and the park was essentially split in two.

Beginning in the late 1940's and continuing throughout the 1950's park use increased dramatically. Chickasaw Park was the place to be for large company picnics, family gatherings, and summer programs and carnivals. Tragedy hit the park late in 1950 when the original park lodge burned down. The new, smaller park lodge building, which is seen today, was dedicated in May of 1952. Almost immediately, residents began voicing concerns about the lodge being "private, for reservation only" and not providing an adequate place for people to get out of the rain.

The growing population in the City of Louisville spent more and more time in the city parks. With segregation still being enforced, the Black population was seriously overcrowding the limited available parks. Finally, the City's parks were officially integrated in 1955 ending the 30+ year long history of park segregation in Louisville. Chickasaw Park had been the only

park so many Black Louisvillians were able to enjoy for so long that park integration didn't really change the demographic patterns of behavior around its use. Over the years there have been sporadic investments in the park. The lodge and immediate surrounding areas were renovated in 1987. Outdoor exercise equipment stations along the walking paths were installed in 1998. The most recent and current master plan for Chickasaw Park was completed in January 2001.

More recently, in 2019, a rain garden was planted, improvements have been made to the pond, as well as parking; and Sankofa Sanctuary was built as a natural play space with river overlook. The Olmsted Parks Conservancy planted a 6-acre pollinator meadow that runs along the base of the floodwall across from the pond in 2024. Additionally, the 6 clay and 6 hard tennis courts have seen significant recent investment and improvements. And the lodge is the last major renovation to be completed before the Olmsted Parks Conservancy embarks on creating a new master plan for Chickasaw Park.

Historic Status:

- The Park is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing element to the Historic Chickasaw National Register District (ID # 83002680, listed in 2025).

About OPC:

Olmsted Parks Conservancy's mission is to restore, enhance and forever protect our Olmsted parks and parkways, connecting nature and neighborhood. We value diversity in all its forms for the same reason we value biodiversity in our parks: it makes communities more resilient, sustainable, and vibrant. Our parks are an intrinsic part of Louisville, and, as an organization striving for inclusivity, we commit to fostering diversity and respect both in nature and neighborhoods.

Since we were founded in 1989, we've partnered with Louisville Parks and Recreation and overseen over $70 million of investment into our parks and parkways.

Purpose:

The purpose of this RFP is to be creative in how the interior of the Lodge can tell the story of Chickasaw Park, its visitors, neighbors, and stewards; and to be creative in how the aesthetics and design of the Lodge interior welcomes park visitors and celebrates local Black history and culture. Concepts can include (but certainly are not limited to) murals, mobiles, sculpture, installations, and/or artwork to be displayed on walls; objects of material culture to be displayed; and, textile arts, decorative arts, and interior design elements. Artists should pay special attention 1) to accessibility concerns for children, families, and elders; and, 2) to the multiple uses the space must be able to accommodate.

Areas of analysis:

History, Culture, and Community – The proposal shall include an analysis of the unique cultural traditions that inform park usage, and a set of robust engagement measures to support residents and longtime park users in telling the story of this important park.

Activation and Programming – The proposal shall include an analysis of how this park amenity can be used to enhance passive and active recreational activities and community programming.

Environment and Ecology – The proposal shall include a consideration of the unique ecosystem that exists in an urban riverbank forest like Chickasaw Park, and how to encourage more park visitors to learn about and care for it.

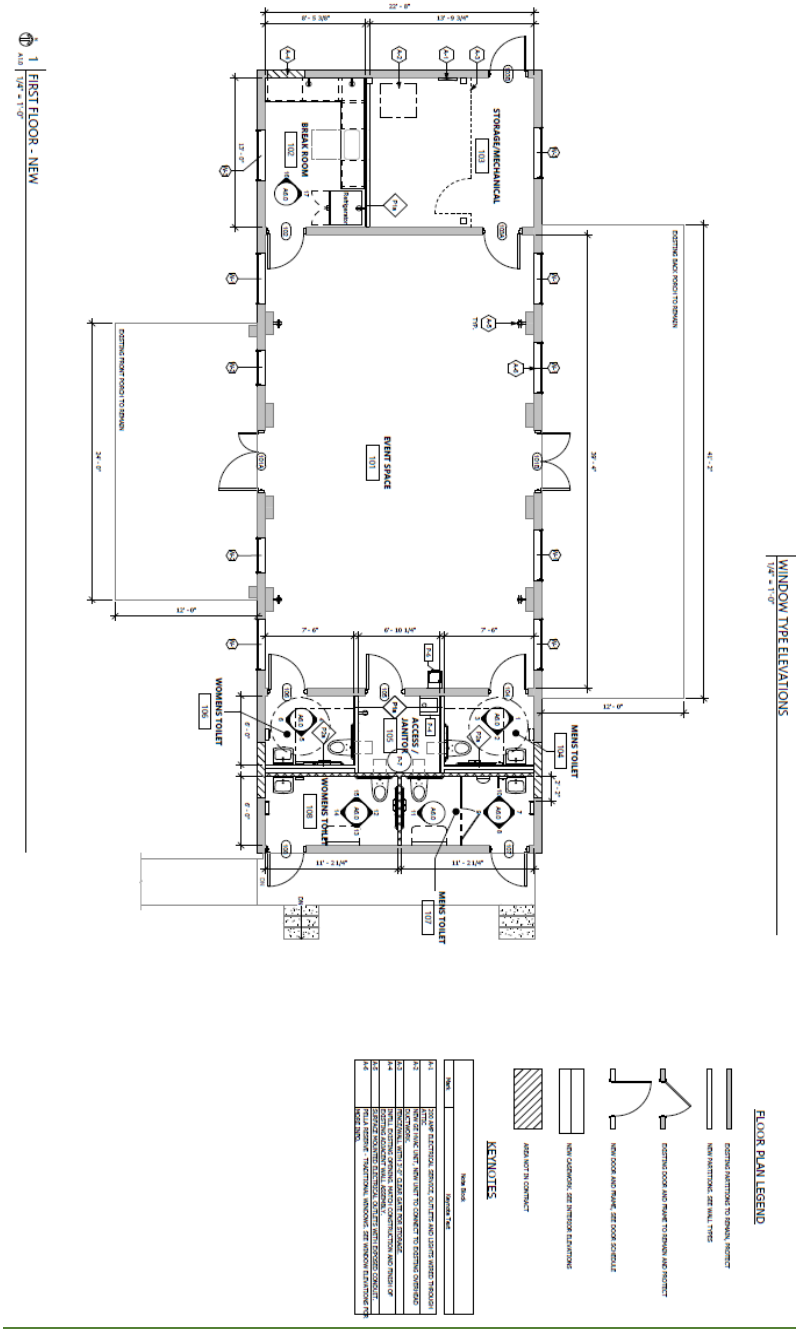
Timeline:

November 2	Application opens
November 16	Lodge walk-through (12:30p EST)
December 1	Submission deadline (3p EST)
December 11	Artists notified via email
Week of December 14th	Artists attend park tour with OPC Tour Guide, Denise Davis
Week of December 14th	Artists schedule research appointment with Curator, Jackie Hudson, at the Filson Historical Society
Week of February 1st	Art and interior design installation

Submittal Requirements and Criteria

Artist proposals shall include the following information:

- Overall concept
    - What story/stories are you telling?
    - What medium/media will you use?
    - What past professional experience(s) make you uniquely qualified for this project? (include a description of the type of project completed, the time frame for the process, and the date completed)
- If applying as a group, artists to be included on the project team and their respective roles,
- Professional resume(s),
- Artist statement(s) and headshot(s)
- Portfolio of 5 – 10 images of relevant artworks
- Detailed schedule and ability to integrate this project into current workload,
- Project budget
- References


1 FIRST FLOOR - NEW
1/4" = 1'-0"
STORAGE/MECHANICAL
103
BREAK ROOM
102
EVENT SPACE
101
ACCESS / JANITOR
105
WOMENS TOILET
106
MENS TOILET
104
WOMENS TOILET
108
MENS TOILET
107
EXISTING FRONT PORCH TO REMAIN
EXISTING REAR PORCH TO REMAIN
WINDOW TYPE ELEVATIONS
1/4" = 1'-0"
FLOOR PLAN LEGEND
EXISTING PARTITIONS TO REMAIN, PROTECT
NEW PARTITIONS, SEE WALL TYPES
EXISTING DOOR AND FRAME TO REMAIN AND PROTECT
NEW DOOR AND FRAME, SEE DOOR SCHEDULE
NEW OVERHEAD, SEE INTERIOR ELEVATIONS
AREA NOT IN CONTRACT
KEYNOTES
Tag
New Work
Demolish Text

PROPOSALS SHALL BE EVAUATED BASED ON THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA

	Criteria	Scoring
A	Does the concept and preliminary drawing/portfolio demonstrate high artistic quality and originality?	0: Poor aesthetic quality 1: Basic artistic merit, but lacks creativity or impact 2: Good artistic quality, shows creativity and enhances visual appeal 3: Excellent artistic quality, elevating the area with innovative and captivating design
B	Does the concept reflect the unique identity, history and ecology of Chickasaw Park?	0: No connection to the unique identity, history and ecology of Chickasaw Park 1: Minimal reference to the unique identity, history and ecology of Chickasaw Park 2: References some elements of the unique identity, history and ecology of Chickasaw Park 3: Meaningfully and comprehensively represents the unique identity, history and ecology of Chickasaw Park

C	Does the concept reflect a sense of welcome for community members and visitors to Chickasaw Park?	0: The art is exclusionary 1: Some/ limited inclusivity elements represented but improvements needed 2: Moderately inclusive, with elements attempting to engage a diverse range of community members and visitors to Chickasaw Park 3: Highly inclusive, actively welcoming all community members and visitors to Chickasaw Park
D	Does the concept make innovative and economic use of space and resources?	0: The concept is costly and doesn't consider the entirety of the interior space 1: Minimal use of space and expensive materials 2: Makes use of the entirety of the interior space resourcefully 3: Innovative and economic use of the entirety of the interior space and materials
E	Does the concept incorporate historical research, methods, or materials?	0: No 1: Yes
	Total points:	