



REQUEST FOR ARTIST QUALIFICATIONS:
Public Art for

North Carolina's African American Music Trail
All-America City Park, Kinston, North Carolina





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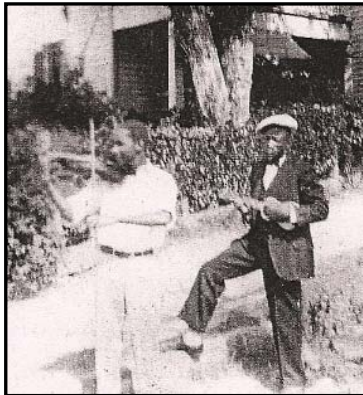
BUDGET: \$100,000

DEADLINE: Tuesday, September 7, 2010, at 5:00PM EST (This is *not* a postmark deadline.)

Online RFQ and Project Resources: <http://www.ncarts.org/projectspeccs>

Please note: *This RFQ is one of two concurrent public art calls to artists related to the African American Music Trail in Kinston, but commissioned by different agencies. This North Carolina Arts Council RFQ refers only to the All-America City Park site, not to the Neuseway Park bandstand project, which is under the auspices of the Kinston Community Council for the Arts. Artists may apply to both RFQs, but separate applications are required.*

Project Context and Background



Pitt county musicians, c. 1930

The North Carolina Arts Council seeks to commission an artist or artist team to create site-specific, outdoor public artwork which interprets, commemorates and celebrates the African American musical history, heritage and culture of eastern North Carolina, in particular the City of Kinston and Lenoir County. This public art project, to be sited in a new public park in Kinston, will be a prominent component of the [African American Music Trail](#) (AAMT), an initiative of the N.C. Arts Council, an agency of the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources, in partnership with the N.C. Department of Transportation, the Golden LEAF Foundation, and local arts councils, government agencies, musicians and community stakeholders.

The commissioned artist will design and produce artwork for a proposed public park in downtown Kinston, N.C., near the historic Sugar Hill neighborhood. This is a design team project: the All-America City Park will be designed by landscape architects Kofi Boone and Fernando Magallanes, with whom the selected artist will be expected to collaborate in order to develop an artwork concept which can be integrated into the context of the park design. (The landscape architecture team will be working with a separate budget.)

Research Materials and African American Music Trail Resources



Wilbert Croom and band, c. 1950s

The AAMT region as a whole includes eight neighboring counties: Edgecombe, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, Nash, Pitt, Wayne and Wilson. The commissioned artist is encouraged to explore the vibrant musical culture of this entire region during research, community engagement and design development. However, the current AAMT public art and design phase is limited to Kinston, the location of the park site for the commissioned artwork.



Maceo Parker

[AAMT Kinston Pilot Design Study.](#)

An historic music center of eastern North Carolina and a hub of the AAMT, Kinston has fostered a deep and diverse African American cultural heritage of musical tradition-bearers and innovators. Among many other notable achievements, the city has been home to five members of James Brown’s classic 1960s and 1970s bands, including Maceo and Melvin Parker and Nat Jones. The personalities, sites, careers and traditions associated with the AAMT provide a wealth of evocative historical and contemporary material for artists to explore. These elements of local musical culture in Kinston and throughout the eight-county AAMT region — which project folklorists have documented with ongoing artist interviews, discographies and media collection — should help inform the selected artist’s process and product. For more information on the AAMT project and region, Kinston’s rich musical history, and the park site, please consult the

For additional resources and an overview of the AAMT project, a cultural tourism collaboration between the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources and the N.C. Department of Transportation, visit <http://www.ncarts.org/projectspeccs>



**Kinston jazz musician
Sedatrius Brown Boxley**

[The AAMT Kinston Pilot Design Study, developed by an NC State University College of Design team, in consultation with community stakeholders, is available here.](#) (Please note that this PDF file is 16 MB and may take some time to download.) See in particular pages 17 and 29–30, which describe the selected site. Pages 13 and 20 provide, respectively, a map of historic sites of musical significance and a conceptual schematic for a potential trail alignment in downtown Kinston.

Please note: The park design will be relatively compatible with the general and long-term design recommendations for the trail outlined in this document, but the artwork concepts therein (i.e., the “sound mounds”) represent only preliminary ideas and suggestions and are not meant to influence artist proposals. The pilot study report is intended to inspire and inform potential artists and to furnish an open-ended design context and vision for future project phases into which the public art should fit, not to constrain the selected artist’s artwork concept or design.

Artwork Intent, Design Considerations, and Goals

For the purposes of this project, “public art” should be construed broadly as any artwork(s) or artful design enhancements relevant to the AAMT and located in the proposed All-America City Park site in Kinston. The All-America City Park site is located on the southern edge of downtown Kinston, near the historic Sugar Hill neighborhood, with the potential to serve as a significant gateway attraction for the city and the AAMT.

Artists should concentrate on compelling artwork concepts that sensitively respond to the cultural, historical and musical contexts of Kinston and Lenoir County in particular and the AAMT region in general, as well as the existing and planned natural and built environments. Artwork should impart a strong sense of place and contribute to the community use value of the park, appealing to tourists, local residents and musicians alike, as well as visitors of diverse age groups and cultural backgrounds. Artwork, either single or multiple, may be executed in any medium and at any scale whatsoever, as long as it is appropriate to the site, integrated with the park design and pertinent to the project and the community as a whole. (See “Research Materials” above.) Artwork must be durable, relatively low maintenance and reasonably resistant to weather and vandalism.

Because the park will comprise three acres and is located along a busy street, the artwork should be sited relatively near to the road and of a sufficiently substantial scale to be highly visible to passing motorists and pedestrians. Given the park setting, environmentally conscious artwork that complements a green context is appropriate. Projects that include musical references, elements that foster musical performance or gatherings, or which feature storymapping/narrative components may be particularly relevant considering the musical subject matter of the trail, but such formal approaches are absolutely not required for consideration.

Note: The artist will be required to collaborate with the landscape architecture team of Kofi Boone and Fernando Magallanes during the design process in order to ensure a coherent, integrated park design in which the artwork complements the landscape and vice versa. The selected artist or artist team will be expected to engage in research and workshops with community stakeholders to inform and refine the form and content of the final artwork that develops from the preliminary design proposal. Dialogue with local musicians is highly encouraged — these individuals represent the AAMT’s primary subjects, greatest resources and ultimate authorities. Although the final artwork will be entirely the product of the artist’s vision, consultation with local stakeholders is necessary to understand the cultural and design contexts of Kinston and the AAMT.

Site Description and Resources



Proposed site

Please consult the [AAMT Kinston Pilot Design Study](#) for further site details, maps and images of the proposed park site, as well as significant historical and musical contexts for Kinston and Lenoir County. (See “Research Materials” above.) Additional photographs are available at the end of this document. Further site specifications and schematics will be available to finalist artists to assist the development of project proposals.



Steven Jones and Terrial Suggs, 2 of the region’s new generation of musicians

The licensed site for the park and the artwork is the currently vacant lot located immediately southwest of the intersection of Queen St. and Springhill St.: parcel 4525-30-1257, in USGS aerial quadrant 20452503. This three-acre site, formerly the site of a tobacco warehouse, has been designated as a future All-America City Park and will serve as a central trail site and identifying feature for downtown Kinston. It is important to note that tobacco warehouses in eastern North Carolina were commonly converted into music and dance venues at night; and in fact, several clubs and other venues for African American music once existed within blocks of the site. Many

musicians grew up and performed a few blocks northeast in Sugar Hill, the historic African American business and entertainment district that lies east of Queen St. and south of King St., along Shine and Bright streets. (See Pilot Design Study for more information.)

Public Art Budget



Bill Myers, leader of the Monitors

The total budget for the artwork portion of this project, including (but not limited to) selection process expenses, design fee for the commissioned artist, site preparation, permits, fabrication, installation, all necessary transportation and subcontracts and contingency, is **\$100,000**. Finalist artists will receive travel compensation and \$1,000 honoraria for their design proposals, interviews and site visits.

We anticipate furnishing an initial payment of up to 20 percent (\$20,000) of the total budget upon execution of a contract. Depending on the project type, three or more periodic payments will follow over the course of the 14-month contract period and upon submission of invoices: one payment upon approval of final design documents; another during site preparation, fabrication and/or installation phases; and a final payment upon acceptance of the final installed project and submission of a maintenance plan. However, the exact payment

schedule is contingent upon the nature and needs of the specific project and will be determined in the contract between the artist and the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources.

Although they will collaborate with the artist during design and implementation, the landscape design team will operate under a separate budget in order to realize their design for the park and its landscape elements.

Artist Qualifications

An interest in and knowledge of African American culture and musical traditions; experience with public art projects involving a similar budget, scale and scope; and experience working with landscape architects and community stakeholders are all preferred qualifications. Applicant artists must be American citizens or legal residents aged 18 years or older. Interdisciplinary design teams and artist teams and partnerships are encouraged to apply. Currently enrolled students are ineligible.

How to Apply

All applicants should submit the following materials in one of the two following formats:

1. On a PC-compatible CD or DVD clearly labeled with artist's name and contact information; or
2. Via an e-mailed URL link to a folder or compressed zip file containing all required application documents, uploaded by the applicant to a reliable and free online file hosting Web site (e.g. Mediafire.com, FileSavr.com, YouSendIt.com) or to an accessible private site. An artist's Web site URL alone, while useful, does not suffice; all required application materials must be available for download from one URL source. Please do not send an e-mail with attachments; include only a brief note of your intent to apply and the single download link.

We cannot accept slides or hard copies of any documents or artworks, faxed materials or e-mails with attachments. The Arts Council will not return any submission materials.

Letter of interest and references

A Word file or PDF not to exceed 750 words (no more than approximately three double-spaced typewritten pages). The letter of interest should briefly explain the artist's or team's interest in the project and potential approaches; the relationship of the project to the applicant's artistic practice; and relevant past experience, specifically experience with public art commissions. If the applicant has collaborated with landscape architects, government agencies, arts councils, neighborhood organizations, musicians or other relevant organizations and individuals, please describe those working relationships and how they impacted the research and design processes. Describe any experience with fabrication, installation and conservation/maintenance planning for outdoor artwork of similar scale and scope. If you are applying as an artist team, please identify the lead artist and indicate if the individuals and/or organizations that comprise the team have previously collaborated in a similar capacity, and if so, the nature of the association. Please also include contact information for three references.

10 digital work samples

JPEGs of recent related artworks at reasonable resolution (72–300 dpi), dimensions (1920 pixels maximum on the longest side) and file size compression (no larger than 2 MB). Please include only one artwork image per image file, and label files clearly in the following format: "lastname_01_title.jpg." If you feel that your work cannot be accurately represented with still photographs, you may submit one video file of up to three minutes in duration as one of your 10 work samples.

Annotated image list

A Word file or PDF listing all work samples by two-digit identification number, followed by *artist; title of work depicted; year completed; media; dimensions (height x width x depth);* and if appropriate: *location; collection or recent exhibition history; budget (for public art projects);* and *one line of project contextual information.*

Resume/CV

A Word file or PDF. If applying as a team, include all team members' resumes within one document. Please include links to relevant Web sites or additional online materials.

Submission Deadline

All above materials must be received at the N.C. Arts Council office no later than 5 p.m. EST on Tuesday, September 7, 2010, regardless of postmark.

The Arts Council will not be responsible for applications delayed or lost in transit. While all reasonable care will be taken in the handling of materials, the Arts Council will not be liable for late, lost or damaged materials or electronic files, or for faulty or expired file hosting Web site URL links. Faxed applications and e-mail applications with attached images cannot be accepted.

The Arts Council reserves the right to withhold the award of a commission or re-release the call for entries should it be determined that the applications submitted are of insufficient quality.

Selection Process

The Arts Council will solicit artists nationally through an RFQ/RFP process. An artist selection committee composed of arts professionals, community stakeholders, musicians, local government representatives, site representatives and other parties will select up to three finalists to interview, to conduct a site visit and to develop and present a site-specific artwork proposal. Proposals and design concepts from finalist artists will be due in November and evaluated shortly thereafter. All finalist artists will be compensated with a \$1,000 design proposal fee and travel reimbursement. The selected artist contract will begin by December 2010, and the project must be completed by February 2012. The selected artist must fulfill the terms of the contract within state guidelines and in accordance with all state laws.

Project Timeline

The estimated timeline is as follows:

September 7, 2010: RFQ deadline

Late September: Committee meets to select finalists.

October: Finalist site visits and interviews scheduled.

Late November: Finalist proposals due. Phone interviews as needed.

Early December: Committee meets to select artist to offer the commission. Contract period begins.

Winter 2010–11: Dialogue with landscape design team and community stakeholders. Preliminary design.

Spring 2011: Design development, refinement and final review.

Summer–Fall 2011: Fabrication. Engineer's and conservator's reviews.

Fall-Winter 2011: Installation.

February 2012: Project completed.

Submission Addresses

U.S. Mail:

Brendan Greaves
Public Art and Community Design Director
c/o Katherine Reynolds
North Carolina Arts Council
4632 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4632

Other delivery services (FedEx, UPS, DHL, etc.) or hand-delivery/messenger:

Brendan Greaves
Public Art and Community Design Director
c/o Katherine Reynolds
North Carolina Arts Council
109 East Jones St.
Raleigh, NC 27601

E-mail (for questions and to provide links to online application materials uploaded to a file sharing Web site):

brendan.greaves@ncdcr.gov (Out of office from July 8 through August 1)
katherine.reynolds@ncdcr.gov

Contacts and Sources for Additional Information

Brendan Greaves

Public Art and Community Design Director
North Carolina Arts Council
(919) 807-6509
brendan.greaves@ncdcr.gov

(Please note: Brendan Greaves will be unavailable from July 8 through August 1. Please contact Katherine Reynolds during that period.)

Katherine Reynolds

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<http://www.ncarts.org/projectspeccs>

<http://www.ncartstrails.org>

<http://www.ncarts.org/elements/docs/AAMTRReport.pdf>

<http://www.ncarts.org>



↑ 1" = 100'

Aerial of S. Queen St. site