

Johnson County Park & Recreation District

Heritage Park Public Art Project

(Potawatomi Trail of Death)

Project Plan



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I. Introduction

Johnson County Park & Recreation District (JCPRD) launched its Public Art Program in 2020 to activate parks, trails, and facilities in a new way. The JCPRD Public Art Program commissions and cares for a collection of public artworks in JCPRD parks and facilities, and promotes the community's access to and engagement with public art. The Public Art Program is guided by the JCPRD Public Art Committee, a nine-member advisory committee to the JCPRD Board. The Public Art Committee advises and makes recommendations to the JCPRD Board regarding the Public Art Program. JCPRD has adopted a policy to set aside one-half of one percent (.5%) of the annual Capital Improvement Plan budget for public art. JCPRD is also using those funds to leverage additional philanthropic dollars.

In fall 2021, JCPRD approved a [Public Art Master Plan](#). As part of this planning process, the following goal serves as a guiding statement for the program:

Public art in JCPRD parks, trails and facilities will inspire a deeper connection to place through interactive, immersive, and inclusive experiences.

The Heritage Park Potawatomi Public Art piece will be the 14th permanent public art project in the JCPRD collection.

II. Park/Facility Context

Purchased in 1979 through voter-approved bonds, Heritage Park was dedicated on July 4, 1981. Heritage Park welcomes over 1.7 million visitors each year and consists of a wide range of features and amenities for all to enjoy. The 1,234-acre park includes 10 picnic shelters, a 40-acre lake and marina used for fishing and boating, a 30-acre dog off-leash area, play areas, outdoor exercise equipment, an 18-hole disc golf course, softball, football, and soccer fields, and the 18-hole championship Heritage Park Golf Course and driving range. By the time of the public art installation in 2025, Heritage Park Lake will have recently completed a large water quality project to improve the water and habitat conditions.

III. Public Art Goals

The goals for the Heritage Park Public Art Project are to:

- Commemorate the 1838 Potawatomi Trail of Death which travelled through Heritage Park.
- Use art to celebrate the resiliency of the Potawatomi tribe and reflect their culture, incorporating culturally significant colors, symbols, or imagery, as appropriate.
- Use art to highlight and celebrate the natural environment within Heritage Park including native flora, fauna, and unique features of the park.
- Celebrate the role that art and artists play in our community and in our economy.

IV. Project Overview

The Public Art Program is interested in commissioning an artist or artist team to create a site-specific, permanent sculpture at Heritage Park to commemorate the Trail of Death and celebrate the resiliency of the Potawatomi tribe. The Trail of Death, a forced removal journey of the Potawatomi tribe, occurred in 1838. This 660-mile grueling trek passed through the land that is now Heritage Park in Olathe, Kansas. The site of the art will be adjacent to the current historical marker, located in the Heritage Park Marina Parking lot, located at 16050 Pflumm Road, Olathe, Kansas 66062.

The Potawatomi tribe conducts a pilgrimage of the Trail of Death every five years, journeying from Indiana to Kansas, travelling the same path to honor their ancestors. The most recent pilgrimage occurred in September 2022, with over 100 gathered from across the United States to participate. Johnson County Park & Recreation District hosted a commemorative event and breakfast at Heritage Park for those on the journey. [Learn more here.](#)



Pilgrimage group from 2023 that attended a breakfast hosted by JCPRD at Heritage Park.

Artist Scope of Work

The final selected artists will be responsible for the following:

- Based on the approved concept proposal, develop final design documents, detailing every physical feature of the sculpture and its integration with the site.
- Execute the fabrication and installation in a manner that conforms to the approved concept proposal.
- Provide maintenance and conservation instructions for the completed artwork.
- Work cooperatively and maintain effective communication with all parties involved in the project.
- Participate, as requested, in community outreach and dedication events.

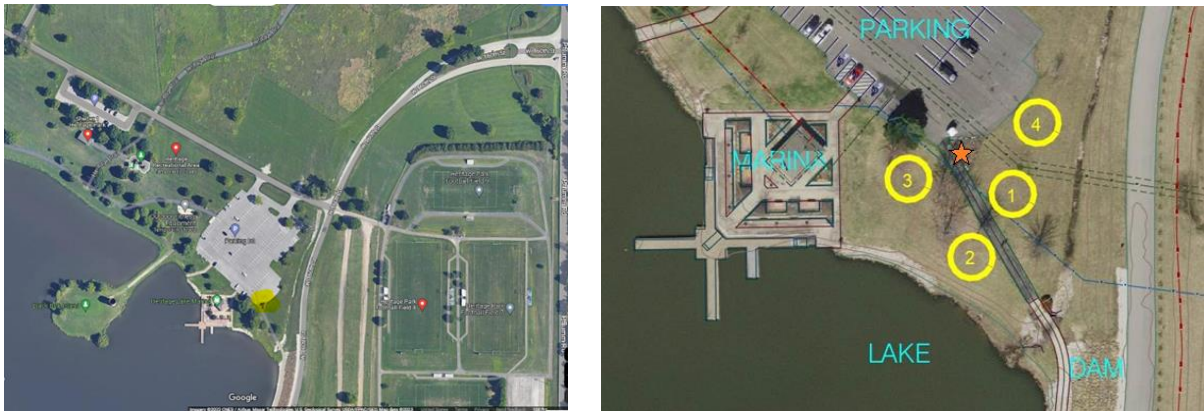
Design Specifications

- The public art should be fabricated of highly durable, low-maintenance materials, that can withstand Kansas weather with a life expectancy of 20-30 years.

- The proposal should include engineering approved detail around proposed concrete bases and footings, sized to the sculpture. JCPRD will assist with site preparation, within reason.
- There are no height or weight limitations, but artists should consider the scale of their pieces in accordance with the assigned project budget (\$100,000).
- Lighting should be considered as part of the design. JCPRD will assume the cost of any external lighting elements, within reason.
- The artwork must have no points or sharp edges than can pose a hazard to pedestrians.

Artwork Placement

Four optimal sites for artwork placement at Heritage Park have been identified in the photos below. The orange star indicates the placement of the existing Trail of Death historical marker.



Site Preparation

Site preparation will be managed and provided by JCPRD within reason. The need for a concrete pad will be assessed based on the proposed design and size of the sculpture. Durability and low maintenance of the artwork is important. The artist will be required to submit installation and anchoring proposal recommendations for prior approval (artist must provide mounting bolts and hardware; JCPRD will provide the concrete pad).

Signage

Signage will be created and installed by JCPRD near the piece with basic information including the project title, artist, and materials used. A QR code will also be included to direct visitors to the project webpage to connect with the artist’s statement and inspiration for the sculpture.

V. Application Process

Artist Eligibility

The public art opportunity is open to professional artists residing within the United States with a tribal affiliation that is recognized. If you have questions about your eligibility, please contact us at jcprdpublicart@jocogov.org.

Contract

Johnson County Park & Recreation District shall provide the contract shell for artists to review prior to applying. Please review the contract to ensure compliance as no modifications will be made. [View the](#)

[document here](#). Following recommendation from the Art Selection Committee, the selected artist will be approved by the Public Art Committee and finalize a contract with JCPRD for the project.

Virtual Open House / Informational Session

JCPRD will host an optional virtual open house / informational session for all prospective applicants to provide an overview of JCPRD, the goals for the project, a review of the application process, and field any questions. **This session will be held via Zoom on Thursday, February 22nd from 11:00 – 11:30 AM.** [Please RSVP here to receive the access link](#). Although the session will not be recorded, questions and answers will be compiled and shared on the [Heritage Park Public Art Project page](#).

Submittal of Qualifications

Interested artists should submit their qualifications as outlined below **by Tuesday, April 2, 2024 at 11:59 PM MT** through the CaFÉ (Call for Entry) website. [Click here to submit your qualifications](#). Technical questions about the online submission platform should be directed to: <https://www.callforentry.org/artist-help-cafe/>.

- Submission of Tribal Membership card
- A letter of interest that indicates your interest in the project and how you might approach the commission of creating a site-specific piece at Heritage Park (no more than 2 pages).
- A CV/resume with current contact information (no more than 3 pages).
- Names and contact information for 3 professional references.
- Up to 10 sample images of previous artwork relevant to this project.
- A corresponding image list with artwork title, medium, dimensions, brief description, location, date of work, commissioning entity and budget/price.

VI. Selection Process

The Heritage Park Public Art Project Art Selection Committee (ASC) will review artist qualifications and select up to 3 finalists. Finalists will be paid a stipend to develop a site-specific concept proposal that includes a sculpture or series of sculptures at the designated site. Finalist proposals will also be shared publicly on the JCPRD website and social media channels for community feedback (see “Community Feedback on Proposals” section) for a two-week period. The Art Selection Committee will review concept proposals and recommend one final artist/design to the Public Art Committee. The final artist selection and concept will be approved by the JCPRD Board.

Heritage Park Public Art Project Art Selection Committee

- Angela Montgomery, Citizen Potawatomi Nation
- Blake Norton, Director of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Cultural Heritage Center
- Eddie Coffey, JCPRD Southwest Region Park Manager
- George Godfrey, Citizen Potawatomi Nation
- Jon Boursaw, Legislator, Citizen Potawatomi Nation
- Kathryn McClure, Citizen Potawatomi Nation and Museum professional
- Susan Mong, JCPRD Superintendent of Culture
- Tammy Mikinski, Citizen Potawatomi Nation
- T.J. Harvey, Assistant JCPRD Southwest Region Park Manager
- Whitney Williamson, Public Art Committee

- Yolonda Guyton, JCPRD Planning & Development Department
- Jen Newell, JCPRD administrative support, non-voting

Criteria for Review of Qualifications

Artist qualifications will be reviewed by the ASC based on the following criteria:

- Artist meets the eligibility requirements, including a recognized tribal affiliation.
- Artistic excellence: What is the quality of the artist’s work and their compatibility with the project?
- Goals: Does the artist’s body of work demonstrate an ability to create an artwork that responds to the goals of the project?
- Approach: How well does the artist communicate their understanding of the project?
- Capabilities: Does the artist have sufficient experience to be able to design, fabricate, and install the artworks on time and on budget?

Submittal of Finalist Proposals

Three finalists will each receive a stipend of \$1,000 to participate in the concept proposal process. Proposals should include renderings (digital renderings preferred), a narrative description, a community engagement activity (see “Community Engagement Activity” section), a preliminary budget, and timeline for the sculpture for placement at one of the 4 suggested locations. The artists should refer to the project goals when developing their designs. Finalists will present their concept proposals virtually to the Art Selection Committee. The Art Selection Committee will recommend a final artist/design for the project for approval by the Public Art Committee as well as JCPRD Board.

Pre-Proposal Site Visit

JCPRD will host an optional pre-proposal site visit for the selected finalists. This meeting will be held in-person at Heritage Park and provide an opportunity for the artists to learn more about the project goals, meet stakeholders, and have a guided site visit tour. Any documents shared at the site visit will also be made available to the finalists electronically. Artists residing more than 100 miles from Heritage Park will be provided an additional stipend to \$500 for travel and lodging expenses for the site visit.

Criteria for Review of Finalist Proposals

- Artistic excellence: Does the concept proposal demonstrate artistic excellence, high quality, innovation, creativity, and clarity of vision?
- Goals: Does the concept proposal respond to the goals for the project and fit within the theme?
- Approach: Does the concept proposal reflect a clear understanding of the site, including how the artwork will be experienced and engaged with?
- Capabilities: Has the artist presented a sound work plan for the site-specific sculpture, with quality materials, on time and on budget?
- Community: Has the artist developed a design, as well as a community engagement activity, that will spark curiosity and encourage exploration by members of the public?

VII. Tentative Timeline

January 25, 2024	Issue call for artists
February 22, 2024	Virtual open house / informational session (11:00 – 11:30 AM @ Zoom, RSVP here)
April 2, 2024	Artist qualifications due via CaFE
April 10, 2024	ASC meets to determine 3 finalists
April 26, 2024	Optional site visit for 3 finalists
May 29, 2024	Artists present concept proposals to ASC virtually
June 1 - 16, 2024	Community feedback
June 18, 2024	ASC meets to determine winning artist and site placement. Design proposal / finalization
June 25, 2024	Public Art Committee approval
July 17, 2024	JCPRD Board approval, contract initiated, engineering design approval
Aug 2024 - Feb 2025	Fabrication
March - April 2025	Site preparation, art installation
April - May 2025	Ribbon cutting / community engagement activity (may be one event or separate events)

VIII. Budget

Total Artist Payment (to include artist design fee, labor, fabrication, materials, transportation costs, a community engagement activity, and any mounting or hardware costs associated with the installation)	\$100,000
Finalist design stipends (3 artists x \$1,000)	\$3,000
Travel stipends for finalist site visit (3 artists x \$500)	\$1,500
External lighting cost (JCPRD will assume cost within reason)	\$TBD
Site preparation - concrete pad (JCPRD will assume cost within reason)	\$TBD
Signage for art piece (JCPRD will assume cost)	\$TBD

IV. Community Engagement, Marketing and Communications

Community engagement, marketing and communications should be geared toward engaging with existing stakeholders as well as bringing new audiences to experience the artwork. JCPRD will make efforts to make stakeholders aware of the commissioning process and, when appropriate, information about the concept proposals and other project milestones.

Community Feedback on Proposals

Finalist proposals will be shared publicly on the JCPRD website and social media channels from June 1 – 16, 2024. Community members are invited to participate in this project by providing feedback on these proposals via an online form. This feedback will be shared with the Art Selection Committee prior to final selection of the artist/design.

Community Engagement Activity

Community engagement is a key element for this project, serving as an opportunity for members of the public to learn more the artistic process as well as the history of this site and the Potawatomi Trail of Death. Finalists will need to submit a concept for a community engagement activity as part of their proposal presentation. The community engagement activity shall be led, organized, and staffed, exclusively by the artist, but may include other partners. The activity can be held in-person or virtually and must be made available at no cost to members of the public. JCPRD will assist with the promotion of this event and any registration/sign-up needs.

Stakeholders

Community engagement, marketing and communications should build upon the existing stakeholder base for art, parks, and Heritage Park, specifically. These will include, but may not be limited to, representatives from:

- Citizen Potawatomi Tribe
- Indigenous tribes in Johnson County
- Heritage Park visitors
- Art Selection Committee members
- JCPRD Staff and Board
- JCPRD Public Art Committee

Marketing and Communications

JCPRD staff will develop a marketing and communications strategy throughout the entire commissioning process that will include:

- A unique project page will be created on the JCPRD website with information about the commissioning process, artist, project, and related community events.
- Social media announcements about project milestones, as appropriate.
- Print materials about the project to be shared at various JCPRD locations, as appropriate.
- Media releases to local and national publications and blogs.
- Signage will be created and installed near the piece with basic information including the project title, artist, and materials used. A QR code will also be included to direct visitors to the project webpage to learn more.

- Hosting and promoting a ribbon cutting event, which will include an artist talkback.

X. Evaluation

There are several types of evaluation that can help provide valuable feedback regarding both the process and the success of the project.

- A questionnaire will solicit feedback from the finalists and selected artist on the overall project development process.
- JCPRD staff involved with the project will be invited to share feedback to improve future public art projects and processes.
- Media, social media, and website hits will be used to monitor engagement around this project.

XI. Resources

Links to information about JCPRD, Heritage Park, the Trail of Death, and Citizen Potawatomi Nation:

- [JCPRD Public Art Program \(jcprd.com/publicart\)](http://jcprd.com/publicart)
- [JCPRD Public Art Plan \(jcprd.com/DocumentCenter/View/23775\)](http://jcprd.com/DocumentCenter/View/23775)
- ["2024 Art Installation Relating to Tragic Event Being Planned for Heritage Park Site" \(https://www.jcprd.com/blog.aspx?iid=496\)](https://www.jcprd.com/blog.aspx?iid=496)
- [JCPRD Heritage Park \(jcprd.com/Facilities/Facility/Details/Heritage-Park-22\)](http://jcprd.com/Facilities/Facility/Details/Heritage-Park-22)
- [Potawatomi Trail of Death \(potawatomi-tda.org\)](http://potawatomi-tda.org)
- [Citizen Potawatomi Nation \(https://www.potawatomi.org/\)](https://www.potawatomi.org/)