

# Public Art Opportunity

## Request for Artist Proposals

PROPOSAL DEADLINE:  
**October 3, 2022**

TOTAL BUDGET FOR ART:  
**TBD**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The DeWitt Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has received a Placemaking Public Art Grant from the Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) in the amount of \$10,000. The grant was awarded to the City of DeWitt to commission, create and install a piece of public art for year-round public display. The grant is designed to strengthen economic development efforts in the Greater Lansing region by enhancing the sense of place for residents and visitors through public art.

The DDA is seeking design proposals for a work of functional art in the form of four functional, artistic benches to be located at the four corners just north of Main St on Bridge St. The art pieces/benches are envisioned as being highly visible to both automobile and pedestrian traffic, and adding to the unique character of the City of DeWitt and the downtown business district. The embodiment of this project will engage the community through a visual, spatial, and sensory experience while providing seating for Downtown DeWitt. Artists are encouraged to consider making the art piece interactive with the visitors of Downtown DeWitt (ex. photo opportunities, kinetic elements, etc.).

### **CALL**

The competition is open to all artists, architects, designers that live or work in the tri-County region of Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties.

After the submission deadline, a short list of up to three (3) artists will be created by the selection committee and each artist will be asked to further develop their design proposal. A design stipend of up to \$100.00 will be paid to each of the short-listed artists upon completion of a formal design proposal and submittal of required expenditures.

## **PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The art pieces will be located on the four corners of the block north of Main St. on Bridge St., where we host our Farmers Market and other downtown events. Downtown DeWitt is a traditional downtown, serving the area residents with many amenities and businesses. People and businesses are attracted by the City of DeWitt's quality of life, schools, and other amenities. Downtown DeWitt has always been the focus of the community and is its commercial center. The focus of the downtown has been to encourage more people to visit the downtown through an increase in retail businesses, restaurants, and streetscape improvements. The selection of this Downtown block as the location for the public art pieces is intended to encourage visitors to visit the downtown and promote future placement of public art pieces.

## **DEWITT OVERVIEW AND HISTORY OF PROJECT AREA**

The City of DeWitt is located just north of Lansing in the heart of mid-Michigan and is primarily a bedroom community.

DeWitt was named after DeWitt Clinton, Governor of New York during the 1830s. It was first settled by Captain David Scott, who moved there from Ann Arbor on October 4, 1833, and platted the land. At that time the Village of DeWitt had the distinction of being the County Seat from 1839 to 1857. The area that is now Memorial Park was once known as New Albany and was a competing municipality up until the 1850s. The Village of DeWitt adopted a new charter on June 7, 1965, and officially became incorporated as the City of DeWitt.

The City of DeWitt was voted the 75<sup>th</sup> best place to live in the US by CNN Money in 2005. The City of DeWitt has a rich history that includes settlements by Native Americans in the 1760s, and a bustling Interurban Rail system from 1910 to 1930.

The City of DeWitt has long recognized the importance of the arts, including in the Preamble of the City of DeWitt Charter: "the municipality recognizes the economic and social importance of having cultural amenities within it, including the arts, which allow a desired quality of life to be enjoyed here."

The City of DeWitt will make available "DeWitt Area History" for anyone seeking additional information on the history of the City of DeWitt.

## **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The block north of Main St. on Bridge St. has been chosen as the location for the installation of the art pieces. The art pieces will be placed on the four main corners in the heart of the downtown district, which is just north of the shores of the Looking Glass River. The downtown district is also part of a popular pedestrian route that residents call the "big block," an approximate four-mile route that is used for runners,

walkers, and bikers. Having the art piece displayed in the downtown will be seen and enjoyed not only by residents who utilize the pedestrian routes, but visitors to the community who frequent the retail shops, salons, and eateries. Multiple events occur in this area, including:

- Weekly DeWitt Farmers Market
- Annual Christmas Market, Streetfest, Ox Roast, and Cabin Fever Reliever
- Engagement events from multiple businesses on this block



Site A:  
Corner of N. Bridge & E. Jefferson



Site B:  
Corner of N. Bridge & W. Jefferson



Site C:  
Corner of N. Bridge and E. Main St.



Site D:  
Corner of N. Bridge & W. Main St.

### ***SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS***

- Design must be extremely durable, suitable for outdoors in a secluded area without 24-hour surveillance, resistant to vandalism, and able to withstand the elements. Art piece is to be secured to foundation or footing (to be provided by the City). Suggested material includes, but is not limited to, metals (i.e. stainless

steel, mild steel, galvanized steel, painted aluminum) rock, concrete, stainless steel, wood, etc.

- Three-dimensional proposals need to be designed to prohibit, or as best as possible, climbing or entering if they are at an accessible height, and be safe for all ages.
- Artwork commissioned for this project will become the property of the City of DeWitt. The City of DeWitt will have no obligation to display the artwork for any particular time period.

### **CRITERIA FOR SELECTION**

The DeWitt Public Art Committee will manage the stages of this project, including circulating the Request for Proposals, fielding questions on the project, reviewing proposals, and making a recommendation on the bid award. The DeWitt City Council will finalize the selection, authorize work, and issue contracts.

The criterion for selecting proposals includes but is not limited to:

1. Originality: creativity and uniqueness demonstrated in previous projects.
2. Submittal of all required application materials as outlined in this RFP.
3. Style, scale to the site, and appropriateness: Artwork should demonstrate compatibility with the Central Business District, surrounding neighborhoods, and the DeWitt DDA. The art pieces should celebrate our Downtown District and help further the mission of Downtown DeWitt being a place to gather.
4. Technical considerations and feasibility: Based upon the artist's history and experience in completing public art projects within the timeline and budget, as well as the sustainability of the project.
5. Quality and craftsmanship exhibited by past work.
6. Safety and Maintenance: Artwork should be durable and resistant to theft and/or vandalism. Materials should require minimal periodic maintenance and be readily available if restoration is necessary.
7. Budget: The DeWitt DDA will allocate additional funds, in excess of the LEAP grant of \$10,000 to the project as determined by the selection committee.

### **PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND FORMAT**

1. Current Resume with contact information (two-page limit).
2. Letter of Interest: Introduce yourself, your art practice and provide a general overview of your interest in this commission—maximum 500 words.
3. Portfolio: Curate a portfolio of completed artworks representing the artist's or artist team's approach to this commission. The portfolio should provide context to the proposal in form, content, and practice. Artist or artist teams can include a

maximum of three (3) completed artworks and may be submitted as a file or as a web link.

All materials must be received by proposal deadlines.

**PROJECT TIMELINE**

RFP release	August 23, 2022
Deadline for application	October 3, 2022
Review of qualifications and finalist selection	October 14, 2022
Final Proposal Due	November 10, 2022
Artist Selection	November 17, 2023
Art piece finished	February 28, 2023
Dedication	March 4, 2023

**BUDGET**

The project budget is all inclusive of project costs, including artist’s fees and expenses, taxes, materials, permit fees, travel, insurance fees, pedestals, transportation costs, fabrication, and installation. The DeWitt DDA will allocate additional funds, in excess of the LEAP grant of \$10,000 to the project as determined by the selection committee. The DeWitt DDA will be responsible for, and will work with, the artist to install any needed site landscaping (soft or hardscape) and lighting of the artwork.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS**

It is expected that the winning artist will be available for a public dedication of the art pieces/benches. The DeWitt DDA will work with the artist to ensure that the City and the artist receive publicity for this significant placemaking piece.

The art piece should have a spot for a plaque that would provide the artist’s name and recognition of LEAP, Inc and PNC for the grant. The plaque will be provided by the DDA.

The City is expected to use the completed art pieces as part of their branding. As such, illustrations, photos, or representations of the art piece may be used in print, web, and other mediums.

**APPLICATION DELIVERY**

Postmark, deliver, or email proposal materials by October 18, 2022 4:00 pm  
DeWitt DDA Public Art  
Downtown Development Authority  
414 East Main Street  
DeWitt, MI 48820  
dewittdda@gmail.com

All materials submitted become the property of the DeWitt Downtown Development Authority and will not be returned unless a self-addressed stamped envelope, with sufficient postage, is provided. We will make every effort to protect submitted materials;

however, the City will not be responsible for any loss or damage. DeWitt Downtown Development Authority accepts no responsibility for costs incurred by the artist in responding to this RFP and reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal submitted.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have questions or need any additional information or images, contact Jennifer Roberts, DDA Coordinator at 517-624-0285 or email [dda@dewittmi.gov](mailto:dda@dewittmi.gov).