

ARTIST / MURALIST OPPORTUNITY: **Devens Intersections of Communities and Cultures**



OVERVIEW:

The Devens Enterprise Commission and MassDevelopment invite artists from Massachusetts to submit application materials for consideration for the award of a \$15,000 grant to create a temporary public art installation, including a mural on pavement with an interactive element in an underutilized public recreational space in Devens, MA 01434. The awarded artist or artist team will conduct at least one community engagement session and interviews with key project interest groups to better inform their art design. The location is an area of approximately 2,000 square feet near active recreation fields, a playground, sledding hill, and a former roadway that is now open to the public for non-vehicular uses.

Volunteer stakeholders (see attached) from Devens and surrounding communities will comprise the Advisory Group/review committee for the artist selection process.

Due date for Responses: Wednesday, January 31, 2023, 11:59 pm

Goal: to advance and support public art and utilize it as a tool for placemaking; to activate an underutilized recreational area; to attract visitors to notice the space and reflect on Devens' cultural and community identity and engage with the art and the space; and to bring joy, color, beauty, a sense of belonging, and hope.

Location: Within the Willard Field Complex near the junction of Antietam Street and Sherman Avenue of the Devens Regional Enterprise Zone (Devens), MA. The location is shown on this Google Map <https://maps.app.goo.gl/K6KxswzuCmdxga538>.

Art Installation: By exploring Devens Intersections of Communities and Cultures the grantors desire to bring joy, color, beauty, a sense of belonging, and hope to an underutilized recreation space near a gateway to Devens. The art project must include a mural painted on the paved surface at the Willard Field Complex with an interactive component. The mural should invite visitors to engage with it in some manner. Additional artistic furnishings (such as benches, tables, planters, and/or screening) are desired to complement the mural and provide a sense of place. The Grantors will work with the artist to secure furnishings to complement the mural on pavement.

Theme: *Intersections of Communities and Cultures*

Devens has a rich history as an area adjacent to the Nashua River and a former military base with a multicultural and transient population. Devens is on the traditional lands of the Nipmuc people, and Nashua River means "river with a pebble bottom". The land of the current Devens Regional Enterprise Zone (Devens) is divided among the three original towns – Ayer, Harvard, and Shirley. The land that comprises Devens has undergone more change than that of many communities since the Town's ceded the land to the US Military and now, post-Army use (the majority of the Army base operations closed in 1996, but Army Reserve training remains active), it is undergoing significant redevelopment with an emphasis on protecting natural and recreational areas and sustainable redevelopment. The Redevelopment Plan following base closure focused on creating regional jobs and providing community services, with a focus on sustainability, land protection and stewardship, and environmental restoration. Many businesses with cutting edge technologies have located at Devens.

Devens is rich in open space and natural beauty, which is an important aspect of life here, but following the military base closure there has been less cultural and physical representation of what Devens is today. Through the temporary art installation, a destination point will be created to encourage community engagement and reflection on community identity and culture. As Devens continues to change, this art piece will reflect a place and moment in time during the community's trajectory.

CONTEXT:

See also supplemental information.

Project Location: Willard Field Complex on Devens; near the junction of Antietam and Sherman Roads. GPS Coordinates 42.55093, -71.61134 and map link <https://maps.app.goo.gl/K6KxswzuCmdxga538>

The location is an approximately 2,000 square foot plaza which is near active recreation fields, a playground, sledding hill, and paved plaza that was a former roadway.

The location is within the Fort Devens Historic District and proposals will be subject to potential review by the Devens Enterprise Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission. The Devens Enterprise Commission staff will help secure all necessary municipal permits.

Adjacent to the site are the offices of key stakeholders for the project, the United Native American Cultural Center and Clear Path for Veterans. Other resources include the Fort Devens Museum, Freedom's Way National Heritage Area, and Nashua River Watershed Association.

ARTIST RESPONSIBILITIES:

The artist will be responsible for the following:

- Meetings with technical advisory team (minimum of three: kick off, preliminary design, final design stages)
- Community engagement activities –minimum requirements of one public event and additional interviews with 3 key project interest groups (identified by advisory group)
- Preliminary design, plan for materials and installation, and timeline
- Revised design, plan, and timeline
- Finalize design/plan
- Project Management (in the event of a team, the lead artist to be the point of contact and project manager)
 - Routine communication with community lead
 - Full management of the installation and materials procurement. Artist must be present at and assist in the installation of the artwork on site.
- Post-installation event and presentation of an artist's talk on site

AWARD:

The \$15,000 grant commission must cover all services from development through final completion including but not limited to artist fee, travel, community meetings, materials, creation, fabrication, installation, transportation, and project coordination. Devens Department of Public Works will apply a base coat of paint at the mural site and can offer assistance with installation, depending on the nature of the project. If agreement and arrangement in advance are made, DEC and MassDevelopment can supply furnishings to complement the art installation.

MassDevelopment will enter into grant agreements with individual artists and/or artist teams.

WHO CAN APPLY:

The call is open to any resident of Massachusetts aged 18 years or older. Artists at all levels of experience – including individuals who are currently enrolled in school – are encouraged to apply. The following experience is desired, but not required.

- Familiarity with Nashoba Valley and Devens.
- Experience in outdoor public art and site-specific art installation.
- Experience with community arts, creative engagement, murals, painting, graphic design, communications, and/or social media
- Experience working with community-based and municipal organizations, BIPOC communities, and other segments of the population that are underrepresented in the public realm.

REQUIRED SUBMISSION MATERIALS INCLUDE:

1. A one-page cover letter including:
 - a. Contact information: Lead applicant name, mailing address, email address, and phone number. If applying on behalf of a team, please list the full names of all team members.
 - b. Artist statement of interest, including
 - i. Why the project resonates with you.
 - ii. Indication of availability to commence work in accordance with the presented project timeline.
2. A one-page overview of background and experience (if a team, one page for each member):
 - a. Brief biography or simplified resume.
 - b. Names, phone numbers, and email addresses for 2 references familiar with the artists ability to deliver artwork in a professional manner.
 - c. Link/s to the artist portfolio (pdf or website) that is exemplary of the artistic media; sharing examples of artworks informed by and/or geared towards community projects linked to specific places. For each cited work include details on title, date, location displayed (if applicable), dimensions, and a one sentence description.
3. *Preliminary Conceptual proposal: A one-page brief description of concept and one-page rough sketch, including a brief preliminary written description of the temporary public art concept you are envisioning that includes: the concept and elements of the mural, materials, look and feel, size, interactive elements, complimentary furnishing (if any).
4. A one-page overview of the Estimated Project Timeline and Funding Request:
 - a. A timeline of activities to develop and complete the artwork(s) with a brief overview of installation needs/requirements.
 - b. Anticipated project budget. Include the estimate for the materials and artist's tasks and time.

*Please note, full conceptual proposals are not expected as part of this selection process, but general written concepts and rough sketch(es) are highly desirable.

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION MATERIALS:

Artists should submit all materials digitally via email to bethsuedmeyer@devensec.com. If file size is an issue, a share site link will be provided upon request.

SELECTION PROCESS:

An Advisory Group (review committee) consisting of up to 14 reviewers from Devens and regional communities (see attached list) will evaluate the proposals received. Committee members will review submissions in accordance with the criteria listed below. The review committee may seek outside expertise, including, but not limited to, input from technical and subject matter advisors to assist in evaluating proposals.

- The review committee reviews all submissions, scoring them based on review criteria outlined below.
- If the committee desires, the top 3-5 applicants may be interviewed by the committee to help inform the selection process.
- The review committee will select one artist, or team of artists, to be awarded the grant.
- MassDevelopment and Devens Enterprise Commission staff will support the review committee but will not be ranking submissions.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

The following is an overview of the review criteria that will be used to assess and score each submitted application.

Eligibility:

- Is the application complete with all the required materials present?
- Are the budget and timeline realistic and within the scope of the project?
- Is the artist (team) able to commit to the presented schedule?
- Is the proposed idea temporary in nature, yet able to withstand various weather conditions for a minimum of 4 months.
- Does the preliminary concept invite interaction with the artwork?

Review criteria:

Experience

- Do the submitted examples of past work showcase robust relevant experience in executing projects of this nature?
- Does the artist have experience working with clients and/or community outreach to learn more about the context to inform the design?
- Does the artist demonstrate an understanding of or connection to Devens or the surrounding region?

Artistic Merit and Creativity

- Does the artist's statement of interest and/or concept clearly articulate their interest in and ideas for this project?
- Does the preliminary concept
 - reflect the project site?
 - align with the project goals?
 - convey joy, color, beauty, a sense of belonging, and hope?
 - propose to creatively engage visitors?

KEY DATES:

Call For Artists Process

Interested artists are invited to submit questions and attend an optional information session/site visit.

- Question Submission Deadline: January 15, 2024 at 12 pm
- Call for Artists Information Session [Hybrid: In person at Devens or Virtual on Zoom]: **Thursday, January 11, 2024** at 12 pm followed by a site visit at 1 pm. (Alternate bad weather date January 12, 2024 at 12 pm).
- Responses to all questions received via email and during info sessions will be posted online by January 18, 2024 at 5 pm.

Email Beth at bethsuedmeyer@devesnec.com to submit questions and to register for the Information Session.

Due date for Responses: January 31, 2024, 11:59 pm

Selection Process

Interviews (held by invitation under review committee discretion): Mid-February 2024

Selection Made/Grant Agreement Signed: Early March 2024

Project Timeline

Notice to Proceed and Project Kick off Meeting: Mid-March 2024

Planning, public outreach, and preliminary design: March - May 2024

Meeting with Technical Committee: May 2024

Final design and materials procurement: May 2024

Installation: June 2024

Public Event – Grand Opening and Artist’s Talk: July 2024

Dates which are not in bold are subject to potential change.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS:

The Devens Enterprise Commission and Mass Development are not liable for any costs incurred by the proposer in submitting this proposal. The grantor reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to award the agreement in its best interest. The grantor reserves the right to make multiple awards. Any municipal permit fees required will be waived by Devens, however, the awarded artist may still be required to pull the permits.

MGL c. 30B, §2 defines “Grant agreement”, [as] “an agreement between a governmental body and an individual or nonprofit entity the purpose of which is to carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation instead of procuring supplies or services for the benefit or use of the governmental body. Therefore, the anticipated Contract is exempt from the rules and regulations of MGL 30B S. 5 or 6.

The Devens Enterprise Commission, MassDevelopment, and the grantee each reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, and otherwise use, and authorize others to use any artworks/deliverables developed under this agreement with attribution. Grantee retains all ownership and copyright of any ancillary materials developed under the Grant Agreement and will grant Devens Enterprise Commission and Mass Development a royalty-free, nonexclusive, limited right to reproduce, publish, and otherwise use any such ancillary materials on a case-by-case basis with the written permission of Grantee.

The Devens Enterprise Commission and Mass Development do not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, gender expression, age, national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations.

Funding for this project is generally provided by the New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA) with support from the Massachusetts Area Planning Council (MAPC) through the [Making it Public for MA Municipalities Project](#) .

TO LEARN MORE: Visit <https://www.devenec.com/publicart.html>.

FOR QUESTIONS CONTACT:

Beth Suedmeyer, Associate Planner, Devens Enterprise Commission, bethsuedmeyer@devenec.com, 978-772-8831 Ext. 3314.



Advisory Group Anticipated Members

Nonprofit partners:

Clear Path for Veterans Representative
Devens Enterprise Commission Representative
Fort Devens Museum Representative
Freedom's Way National Heritage Area Representative
United Native American Cultural Center Representative

Local Cultural Councils:

Ayer Cultural Council Representative
Harvard Cultural Council Representative
Shirley Cultural Council Representative

Devens Residents (4)

Devens Business partners (2)