

## East End Bridges to Art – Coxwell Underpass Street Art Project

The City of Toronto invites artists who identify as Indigenous persons to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to participate in the East End Bridges to Art - Coxwell Underpass Street Art Project. The goal of this Expression of Interest (EOI) is to obtain a roster of artists who will be eligible to participate in this project. The goal of this project is to beautify and animate the underpass with a mural representative of the local, historical indigenous perspective. This Expression of Interest is facilitated by Denise B. McLeod. Denise is Anishinaabe (Ojibway) who's home territory is Sagamok Anishinabek First Nation on the north shores of Lake Huron.

This project forms a central part of a larger underpass initiative by the City of Toronto called East End Bridges to Art. Produced by StreetARToronto, East End Bridges to Art was initiated by Councillor Fletcher in 2017 to transform all 9 underpasses in Ward 14. This is the fourth underpass art project in the East End Bridges to Art series.

**Expressions of Interest are due no later than: February 6, 2020 by 4:30pm EST.**

**Total Project Budget: up to \$90,000.**

### Overview of Artist Selection Process

Artists who respond to this REOI and meet the criteria will be included in the **StART UP Coxwell Artist Roster (Stage 1 – This REOI)**. An Advisory Committee facilitated by Denise McLeod and comprised of community members who identify as Indigenous Persons will evaluate all EOI submissions and shortlist five (5) artists from the roster to respond to a site-specific Request for Proposal ('RFP') (**Stage 2 - RFP**). The five (5) short-listed artists will be provided technical details of the site, the budget for the project and direction for a theme, and will be paid a design fee of \$1,500 to prepare their submission. Artists should be prepared to attend a community consultation facilitated by Denise McLeod, and/or to respond to community feedback to further guide their work and provide an opportunity for community input into their design. The final submissions will be reviewed by the Advisory Committee and a winning design recommended based on the highest total score as evaluated by the committee.

#### A. Eligibility Requirements

Indigenous artists located within Canada who have completed large, outdoor murals and have experience in mural and street art design and implementation.

Indigenous peoples include First Nations, Métis and Inuit people. The City understands that the term Indigenous Peoples includes diverse communities and cultures that originate from all areas across Canada.

#### B. Project Site

The Underpass is located in Toronto on Coxwell Avenue between Gerrard Street East and Hanson Street in Toronto.

Map of Project Location:



The surfaces for the artwork include the east and west walls of the underpass including the retaining walls under the rail lines and the concrete wing-walls to the north and south for a total surface area of approximately **711.75 m<sup>2</sup>**:

View of the underpass looking south on Coxwell Street immediately south of Hanson Street:



View of the underpass looking north on Coxwell Avenue from Gerrard Street East:



### C. Bridge History

The circa 1913 bridge is situated under the Metrolinx rail line, and was rehabilitated this past summer. The project involved repairing the concrete deck, soffit, wingwalls and retaining walls; constructing a new concrete barrier wall, curb, and sidewalk; installing new accessible stairs; resurfacing the pedestrian path; designing and installing a new lighting system; and installing new traffic signs. The mural will mark the final stage in this underpass rehabilitation project, making the underpass a celebrated feature within the community.

### D. Context & Design Concept Themes

This project forms a central part of a larger underpass initiative by the City of Toronto called *East End Bridges to Art*. Produced by StreetARToronto, *East End Bridges to Art* was initiated by Councillor Fletcher in 2017 to transform all 9 underpasses in Ward 14. This is the third underpass art project in the East End Bridges to Art series.

The outcome of this project will be a high-quality mural that completes the transformation of the underpass into a celebrated community feature representative of the local, historical Indigenous perspective and celebrates the creativity and continued impacts of Indigenous artists.

The over-arching visual and contextual themes for all 9 underpasses is attached to this REOI as 'Appendix A'. Five short-listed artists will be invited to develop a design-concept that responds to these themes (one concept per short-listed artist).



## E. Final Mural Deliverables

Overview of **final** project deliverables and artist responsibilities are as follows:

- The final mural shall be a permanent mural that is durable and requires minimal maintenance over a five-year period. The mural should be painted with appropriate and durable materials, and artists should take into consideration the sustainability of the artwork. The selected artist(s) will be asked to provide a maintenance plan.
- A work plan will demonstrate how the project will be completed on time, within budget, and in compliance with all applicable health and safety regulations
- Mentorship is a key component of all StART projects. Shortlisted artists will be asked to name their Mentee and describe their Mentorship Plan.
- Short-listed artists may be asked to attend and participate in a community engagement sessions facilitated by Denise McLeod.
- The Artist whose concept is selected for implementation will be responsible for renting, purchasing and supplying all materials and equipment required for the project including anti-graffiti coating. The StART team will arrange for any required permits.
- Short-listed artists will meet all deadlines as outlined in Section H: "Competition Schedule and Mural Completion Timelines"

## F. Overview of Selection Process

### *Stage One: Artists Respond to this Request for Expression of Interest*

Interested Street Artists may respond to this Request for Expressions of Interest by phone, video or PDF submission. All Expressions of Interest must include the components detailed below.

When submitting a written electronic copy of your application please ensure that **one** PDF document containing all of the below information below is submitted and saved as "First name\_Last name\_Coxwell". Electronic submissions can be submitted by email or delivered on a USB key. Videos must be zipped and no longer than 15 minutes.

### *Expressions of Interest should include:*

1. Full name or names (if collaborative), address with postal code and contact details (telephone and email), social media addresses and/or website if you have these.
2. Artist Information and Experience – Highlights (up to but not more than ~850 words in 12-point font)
  - a. Artist Statement and Bio - To understand how and why you do the art work you do, please tell us about your artwork, creative process, inspirations and the materials you work with.
  - b. Statement of Interest – Describe your interest in this project and your goals related to creating street art in the public realm.
  - c. Relevant Work History - Please elaborate on your history of working on large scale projects. Include experience working on scaffolding and/or lifts and details on health and safety training if you have it.
  - d. Community Experience - Describe your experience working on projects where you have incorporated community ideas and/or feedback into your final artwork design concept.

- e. Resume or CV (Optional) - if you are submitting as a team/collaborative, each member may provide a resume.
3. Two references who can speak to your art-making experience – please provide their name, phone number and email address.
4. Images of past work - up to 5 images. Please include digital images of past work in any medium that best illustrates your qualifications for this project. Please include the following information for each image: Title of work, your role (eg., Artist, Lead Artist, Artist Assistant, Member of Collaborative), medium, dimensions (approx), location, date of installation.

### ***Stage Two: Advisory Committee Review of Expressions of Interest and Selection of Short-Listed Artists***

Artists' Expressions of Interest will be reviewed by an Advisory Committee comprised of individuals who identify as Indigenous persons and will include, at minimum: one arts representative with expertise in mural-making, one resident from the community, one business-owner from the community, and a knowledge-keeper with knowledge of the pre-colonial history of the land. Non-voting members at meetings will include a representative from the local Councillor's office and a representative from StreetARToronto who will be on hand to answer questions. The Advisory Committee will shortlist and invite up to 5 Artists to respond to a site-specific Request for Proposal. Selections will be based on the selection criteria set out in Section G below.

The Request for Proposal will include technical details of the site, budget guidelines for the project and direction overarching themes from a series of community engagement sessions hosted to inform the overall East End Bridges to Art project. Shortlisted Artists will be paid a design fee of \$1,500 to prepare their Proposal. Artists should be prepared to attend a community consultation and/or respond to community feedback to further guide their work and provide an opportunity for community input into the design. The final submissions will be reviewed by the Advisory Committee and a winning design recommended based on the highest total score as evaluated by the Committee.

### **G. Selection Criteria**

The following evaluation criteria will be used in Stage Two of the selection process:

- Demonstrated excellence of past work in projects of similar size and scope: 40 points
- Proven capacity to engage and collaborate with the Indigenous community in concept development and final artwork rendering: 40 points
- Completeness of submission package and quality of Statement of Interest: 20 points

## H. Competition Schedule and Mural Completion Timelines

REOI Released	January 6, 2020
Deadline for submission of Expression of Interest	February 6, 2020 by 4:30pm (EST)
Notification of short-listed artists and Request for Proposals distributed.	Week of February 24, 2020
Short-listed artist full Proposal deadline	April 6, 2020 by 4:30pm (EST)
Community/Stakeholder Consultations or Online Consultation period	April 9-30, 2020
Final Selection panel meeting	Week of May 4, 2020
Notification of successful artist and contract signed	Week of May 11, 2020
Deadline to complete mural on east side of underpass	October 30, 2020
Deadline to complete mural on west side of underpass	September 30, 2021

## I. How to Apply

Completed Expressions of Interest are due **no later than 4:30pm (EST) on February 6, 2020.**

Please send as one PDF document by **email to [Carolyn.Taylor@toronto.ca](mailto:Carolyn.Taylor@toronto.ca)** subject: **Coxwell Underpass Art Project**

or

deliver on a USB key **as one PDF document** saved as "First name\_Last name\_Coxwell" and deliver to:

Carolyn Taylor  
Project Manager, **StreetARToronto**  
City Hall, 23rd Floor, East Tower 100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, Ontario, M5H 2N2

Or contact Denise McLeod at [denise.b.mcleod@gmail.com](mailto:denise.b.mcleod@gmail.com) or **(647)707-2243** if you would prefer to respond to the REOI questions by phone.

Submissions will not be accepted past the deadline.

For further information or questions related to this Request for Expression of Interest please contact: **Denise McLeod, Project Facilitator: at [denise.b.mcleod@gmail.com](mailto:denise.b.mcleod@gmail.com) or (647)707-2243**

More information about StreetARToronto (StART) is available here [www.toronto.ca/streetart](http://www.toronto.ca/streetart). You can follow us on Instagram: start\_streetarttoronto; Facebook: @StreetARToronto; Twitter: @StART\_Toronto and check out our Street Art Map at [www.streetarttoronto.ca](http://www.streetarttoronto.ca).

## **Appendix A**

The curatorial vision and strategies for implementation of all 9 art projects in the East End Bridges to Art program are guided by the following principles:

- Visual language should be bright, positive and contemporary in feel (even while the actual subjects may be historical).
- Themes, visual language and subjects should run across history, the present and future, and each project should reflect a significant site-specificity with respect to the selection of landmarks, stories and points of connection with the immediate surroundings of the project site.
- Strategies for engagement, participation and representation should be cross-generational and have a strong mandate for youth engagement, participation, learning and empowerment.
- The cultural diversity of Ward 14 should be reflected in both the composition of project Advisory Committees and artist selection, as well as the visual elements of the mural projects.
- At a minimum, two of the projects within the overall program of 9 murals should focus on indigenous histories, elements, themes, symbols and/or stories in the area, and should be executed by Indigenous artists. Further, it is not advisable to have non-Indigenous artists portraying Indigenous histories, elements or symbolism, even with Indigenous advisors. The opportunity to tell the contemporary and historical Indigenous narrative should be reserved for Indigenous voices.

## **CURATORIAL VISION**

### **CONCEPTUAL: BRIDGING PLACES AND PEOPLE**

Conceptually, the underpass projects that make up the Ward 30 StART program will present bridges as both physical structures and metaphors of connection between different spheres of life in this area. For example these murals capture stories that bridge between: Nature and humanity (Ward 14 is bounded by the lake to the south, the river to the east, and has plenty of green spaces that are open public areas where people gather and spend time).

Many communities and neighbourhoods (Ward 14 hosts a diversity of neighbourhoods, with cultural clusters and areas of more and less affluence) Different generations, Different cultures, life experience and socio-economic backgrounds Past, present and future

### **VISUAL: WATER IS OUR COMMON GROUND**

Linking this conceptual thematic to each individual mural installation, will be a visual motif that is interpreted and implemented by each artist in a way that is unique and relevant to their practice: each mural will include in some way a through-line that connects the works to each other. Ward 14 includes a section of the Don River, and stretches south to Lake Ontario, and is criss-crossed with buried creeks and waterways, so this through-line will be a reference to water, represented abstractly or literally depending on the artist's interpretation. Water speaks to all the aspects of the conceptual theme, as it can refer to or suggest nature, biology, transport, trade, migration, flux, movement and processes of change.

The essentialness of water is something that unites all humans and links us with a broader world, it is also constantly in motion and it captures the dominant tenor of the community input, which overall is optimistic, inclusive, positive and looks to the future with a keen understanding of the importance of the past.