May 1, 2014

Action Sandy Hill

c/o Suneeta Millington

Re: Rideau River Crossing – Public Art Opportunity

The City of Ottawa completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) Study in 2012 for a future multi-use connection across the Rideau River at Donald Street and Somerset Street East, and preliminary designs for the bridge were presented at a public open house in June 2013 at the Overbrook Community Centre. The intent of this future bridge and pathway connection is to provide better pedestrian and cycling links between the communities of Overbrook and Vanier on the east side of the river and Sandy Hill and downtown on the west side of the river.  Construction of the bridge is anticipated to begin in summer 2014 and be completed the summer of 2016.

The Public Art Program at the City of Ottawa is seeking your input on a draft public art plan that will result in permanent artwork being designed and integrated into the bridge structure. Funding for this art commission is provided through the designation of 1% of the overall construction budget towards public art.

As part of the public art commissioning process, the city is consulting with potential stakeholders to ensure that the public art vision and design requirements for this public art project are responsive to the interests of the community and future users of this bridge. Attached is a draft Public Art Plan that outlines the consultation and commissioning processes, the public art vision and design requirements for the project.

As a potential stakeholder you are invited to review the attached draft Public Art Plan and provide input on the proposed consultation process and proposed art plan. In addition, you are invited to:

* Identify a liaison to the Public Art Program for the project
* Identify community resources/archives that could be made available to artists to assist them in researching ideas for their proposals
* Suggest appropriate methods for distributing the call to artists within your community

To assist us in meeting our timeline for this project, we ask that you reply with your input and additional information by May 29, 2014 to Lynda.Hall@ottawa.ca.

For more information on the Rideau River Crossing, please refer to documents on the city website at [Ottawa.ca](http://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/planning-and-development/transforming-ottawa/open-house-june-10-2013).

Examples of previous public art commissioned by the City of Ottawa can also be found [online](http://ottawa.ca/en/residents/arts-culture-and-community/commissions).

Look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



**Julie DuPont**

Portfolio Manager | Gestionnaire de portefeuille

Public Art Program | Programme d'art public

Cultural Services Branch | Direction des services culturels   
City of Ottawa | Ville d'Ottawa   
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**Community Consultation Process**

The following potential stakeholders have been identified for inclusion in the consultation process for this public art project, based on the history, culture, geography and location of the bridge:

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Algonquins of Ontario

Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn First Nation   
Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation

National Capital Commission  
Overbrook Community Association

Rideau Valley Conservation Authority

Vanier BIA  
Vanier Community Association   
Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health

Public consultation for the art commissioning process will include:

* Identification of stakeholder liaisons to the Public Art Program for the project (April)
* Review and comment on the draft art plan prior to finalizing the plan and releasing the call to artists (May)
* Identification of community resources/archives available to artists to assist them in researching ideas for their proposals (May-June)
* Information meeting for artists interested in submitting a proposal
  + June 19 from 6 – 7:30 pm at Overbrook Community Centre in Ottawa
* Inclusion of stakeholder representatives on the selection committee (August)
* Public open house to view short-listed artists’ proposals and provide comments for consideration by the selection committee (October)

**Vision**

Public art for the Rideau River Crossing must be conceptually and visually innovative and original, while remaining sensitive to the history, architecture, social commentary and natural geography of the site. In particular, artists are asked to consider the historical significance of the Rideau River and the bridge’s dual functions as a connection between communities and observation platform.

**Eligibility**

Artists and artist teams are eligible to submit one proposal for this public art commission. Artists must either be Canadian citizens or have permanent resident status and live within 150 km radius of Ottawa, or must be Algonquin artists who reside in Canada.

**Art Selection Process**

Selection of public art for this site will follow a standard two-stage juried process:

* Public call to artists is released seeking qualifications (June)
* Information meeting for artists to present bridge plans and answer questions (June)
* Selection committee reviews submissions and short-lists up to 5 artists (August)
* Short-listed artists develop proposals and prepare for a public open house (September)
* Public invited to view short-listed proposals, meet the artists and provide comments (October)
* Selection committee reconvenes to interview short-listed artists, review proposals and read comments provided by the public (October)
* Selection committee chooses one proposal as the finalist (October)
* Artist is contracted to design the artwork and prepare final drawings for December

The selection committee will be determined in consultation with the project stakeholders, and will be comprised of:

* One member of the construction project team
* One Algonquin Anishinabeg representative
* One representative from the surrounding neighbourhoods
* Two professional artists

**Site**

Consultation with the project team for the bridge construction resulted in the identification of two potential sites for the integration of art:

* bridge handrail panels at 4 observation areas where the bridge widens
* concrete deck, fascia, curb and soffit of the bridge

However, only one proposal will be selected for fabrication and installation.

**Design requirements for public art**

Completed works of art shall:

* Be incorporated into the design of the bridge railings or concrete deck
* Be envisioned as a conceptually coherent body of artworks situated along the bridge
* Demonstrate contemporary artistic excellence (conceptual, aesthetic and technical)
* Be conceptually timeless and enduring
* Be engaging to pedestrians and cyclists using the bridge
* Be safe for the public
* Not impede movement across the bridge
* Not disrupt or negatively impact the natural habitat and wildlife
* Be made of highly permanent materials that are suitable to the environment and require minimal maintenance
* Be designed to allow for the installation of protective hoarding in the winter
* Comply with building and electrical codes and bylaws, etc.

**Reference Material**

The call to artists will include links to documents and websites that will assist artists in their research. For example the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority website and the Environmental Assessment conducted for this construction project.

We encourage suggestions for online reference material, and welcome opportunities for artists to access photos, plans and other original documentation and archived material that may be available in your community.