

Friends of Central Park Gardens
Davis, California

Request for Qualifications

Public Art for Central Park Gardens

Open to artists residing & working in the Sacramento Valley region



All applications due by:
Wednesday, September 30, 2009 at 5:00 pm
Late applications will not be accepted

Submit applications to:
Central Park Gardens,
c/o Emily Griswold, 1508 Duke Drive, Davis, CA 95616

For more information:
centralparkgardens@gmail.com
www.centralparkgardens.org

SUMMARY

The Friends of Central Park Gardens are seeking artists with an interest in creating a permanent outdoor sculpture for Central Park Gardens, a volunteer-managed demonstration garden dedicated to promoting sustainable gardening located in downtown Davis. The selected artist will assist the Friends of Central Park Gardens in preparing a proposal to the City of Davis Civic Arts Commission Art Contract grant program for project funding up to \$4,000.

PROJECT SETTING

Central Park Gardens is located in Davis Central Park along B Street between 3rd and 4th Streets. Visitors to the garden can explore seven themed planting areas that feature a variety of roses, herbs, wildlife attracting plants, California natives, edibles, and drought-tolerant plants. Plant labels and educational signs provide learning opportunities, as do monthly workshops led by Yolo County Master Gardeners. The gardens are managed and maintained by community volunteers, who have undertaken great efforts over the last three years to plan and implement comprehensive garden renovation and improvement projects.

The gardens were originally created as part of a major park expansion project in the early 1990s that included the development of a permanent home and market pavilion for the popular Davis Farmers Market (recently named "America's Favorite Large Farmers Market"). Central Park won a Centennial Medallion in 1999 from the American Society of Landscape Architects as one of the most important designed landscapes of the 20th century. This very successful and well-loved park teems with visitors every week, especially on market days. The gardens provide a restful place of beauty as a complement to the bustle of the nearby market. Central Park Gardens, like the park, attracts a broad cross-section of Davis residents, including older garden enthusiasts, college students, teens, and children.

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

The project will be located in an open 20-foot diameter circle of decomposed granite that serves as a pathway intersection point at the north end of the garden (see Figures 1 and 2 below). A major east-west pathway passes through the circle connecting people from 4th and B Streets to the center of the park. The circle is also the terminus of the pathway system that winds through the center of the garden along its entire length. The design for the sculpture in the circle must accommodate easy pedestrian traffic flow through the space.

To the north of the circle lies a water-wise garden featuring drought-tolerant ornamental plants. To the south of the circle lies a productive vegetable garden surrounded by a beneficial insect habitat border and California native plants. In contrast to the south end of Central Park Gardens, which feature structured, geometric, and more formal spaces, the north end of the garden has a looser, more informal character. The Friends of Central Park Gardens plan to incorporate a series of "kid-friendly" features around the vegetable garden to engage more children in garden activities.

The project area has recently served as a staging ground for garden construction projects. This area will be redefined with new path edging, leveled, and resurfaced with decomposed granite this fall as part of a pathway renovation initiative.



Figure 1. Image of project location looking southeast from B Street.

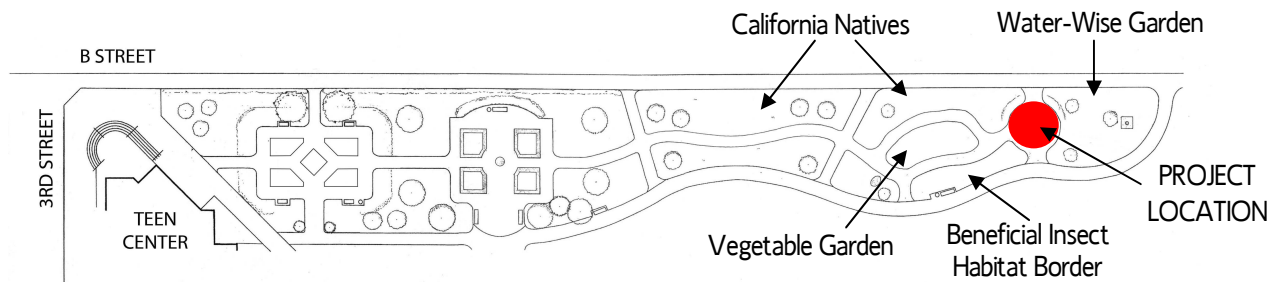


Figure 2. Map showing project location within garden.

PROJECT CONCEPT

The new artwork has the potential to serve as a visual anchor and focal point for the north end of the gardens that will attract visitors and help engage them with the surrounding plantings. The Friends of Central Park Gardens are seeking a site-specific design that will reflect and complement the themes of garden plantings in the area and support the garden's mission to inspire an interest in plants and gardening. Ideally, the artwork will also fit gracefully within the context of Central Park and the nearby Farmers Market. Possible garden and nature-related themes include insects; local vegetables, flowers, or fruits; California native plants; and water conservation. A functional element, such as seating, may also be creatively incorporated but is not necessary. Since this end of the garden is popular with families and small children, the artwork should be appealing to this audience. Special attention will need to be paid by the artist(s) to issues of durability, safety, maintenance, and vandalism.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The artist(s) will be selected based on the following criteria:

- Ability to create artwork with thematic relevance to the garden,
- Artistic quality of past work,
- Ability to respond creatively and uniquely to site-specific design challenges,
- Ability to complete public art projects on time and on budget,
- Expertise in selecting durable materials that are easily maintained in a heavily-used outdoor setting,
- Ability to work collaboratively and positively with community organizations.

PROJECT BUDGET

The Friends of Central Park Gardens plan to work with the selected artist(s) to seek funding from the City of Davis Art Contract grant program. The total budget available for artwork in an Art Contract grant is \$4,000 inclusive of all artist's fees, as well as associated expenses for design, fabrication, insurance, transportation, installation and travel costs.

RFQ SELECTION & APPROVAL PROCESS

Submissions will be reviewed by a selection committee composed of representatives from the Central Park Gardens steering committee, City of Davis staff, the City of Davis Civic Arts Commission, and local artists. Up to three finalists will be invited to an on-site interview to discuss the project with members of the selection committee. A final artist (or artist team) will be asked to create and deliver a site-specific design proposal (including a project narrative, a scale drawing or model, an itemized budget, a project timeline, and general maintenance guidelines). The artist(s) will work with Friends of Central Park Gardens to create a compelling Art Contract grant proposal to the City of Davis Civic Arts Commission. Final approval of the contracts will be by the Davis City Council. The City of Davis reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Artists interested in this project must prepare and submit the following:

1. A 1-2 page letter of interest, describing your approach to creating public art, any past relevant experience, and your insights regarding artwork for this location.
2. A current professional résumé/CV (not to exceed three pages). Artists working collaboratively must submit a résumé for each collaboration member.
3. Printed photographs or CD-R with no more than 10 (ten) color JPEG digital images of recent related previous work of public art/public spaces. Maximum image file size 1500 KB.
4. A numbered image list with the artist's name, title of artwork, execution date, materials, dimensions, location, project budget, client or commissioning organization, and a brief description of each image.
5. References: List the name, address, e-mail address, and telephone number for three professional references. Letters of recommendation are not required.
6. A self-addressed stamped envelope, large enough to return photographs or CD-R. Submissions without the SASE will not be returned.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

September 30:	RFQ submission deadline
October 4-10:	Up to 3 finalists participate in on-site interviews
October 12:	Finalist selected to develop Art Contract grant proposal in collaboration with Friends of Central Park Gardens
November 15:	Proposal submitted to City of Davis Art Contract grant program Civic Arts Commission reviews proposal and makes final recommendation to City Council for final approval
January-February 2010:	Final proposal approved by City Council
February 2010:	Artist to start working on project
January 2011:	City of Davis deadline for completing project