

Questions and Answers

Art in Transit

CALL FOR ARTISTS: Request for Proposals (RFP) for Providence Bus Shelter Art Panels and Seating – North Main & Broad Street R-Line Route

Q: Who should apply?

A: This RFP is written such that an **artist with prior 3D public art experience** can apply or **an artist without such experience can apply by teaming up with a fabricator**. If the proposal involves a fabricator, this individual (or company) must have required 3D public art experience and also provide you with information about the materials used so that your proposal can speak to our requirement of durability. If you are teaming up with a fabricator, your fabricator must cosign your application and submit their resume, past work examples and references in addition to your own.

Q: If an artist has worked extensively with significant 3D installation but not done so outdoors in the public realm does this artist need to also find a fabricator partner?

A: It's your judgment call here. If your work has in the past involved processes and materials that are on par with our materials guidelines then say so and describe that. If not, then yes please do partner with a fabricator who can produce a durable end product.

Q: What is the limit of proposals that can be submitted?

A: We have decided to limit an artist (or artist team) to two proposals total — that could be one per corridor (one per theme) or two distinct proposals within the same corridor. We are terming “one proposal” to mean one conceptual idea. It is fine if that one idea is expressed across many elements (back panel, seating, etc.) or if that idea translates to a series of shelter panels that are intended for several bus stops. If a fabricator co-signs multiple proposals it is fine for that fabricator to exceed the limit of two, providing they can handle the work load if multiple awards are made.

Q: How rigid are the themes?

A: The themes are meant to be expansive and rich. There is definitely relevant content far beyond what we included in the RFP and what we presented at the Information Session. We encourage you to connect to an element of each theme and do your own research to expand upon the provided themes. Please discuss your interpretation of the theme within your artist statement. Feel free to have your artist output filter the idea through your own lens. These art panels are not intended to be historical way-finding signs or plaques, but we do expect the art panels to be either directly or abstractly linked to the provided themes for each corridor.

Q: How are the 30-year durability standards defined? Do you need a written guarantee?

A: The 30-year durability standards are meant as a benchmark guideline. No written certification is needed.

Q: How specific are the guidelines on materials?

A: The essential part of the materials guidelines are the durability requirements — work with a 30-year goal there. The material that you choose must be able to slot into or attach to the shelter in some way on all four sides (top, sides, bottom). The best way to do this is to slot into the provided channel in the shelter frame and thus the panel would be held in place by pressure and the constructed structure. You are free to select a material of your choosing provided it fits both these requirements.

Q: How opaque can the panels be? Does a person waiting need to be able to see through?

A: There needs to be some consideration given to comfort and convenience of the bus riders that will be waiting in the bus shelters. We recommend, but are not requiring, that there be some level of transparency or a transparent zone within your panel. Please use good design/end user sense to determine whether a person would feel safe waiting for a bus within the shelter. RIPTA will be the final arbiter of whether the concept is sufficient in this way and may ask for amendments to be made.

Q: Does each panel need to be one contiguous plane without any cut outs? Or can there be small openings, i.e., a screen?

A: There can be openings, however the panels must still provide sufficient shelter from the elements, particularly from rain, wind, and snow. Also refer to Q and A above.

Q: The renderings of the various bus shelters included in the RFP depict multiple panels although the RFP seems to indicate that you would like one monolithic panel in each area (except for the large back panel comprised of two panels). We would prefer to use the multiple panel approach for a variety of reasons including ease of material handling, ease of installation, far more cost effective to replace in case of damage, etc. Please advise.

A: Occupying the panel area with multiple smaller panels is fine as long as waiting bus riders are still sufficiently protected from the elements.

Q: Is the red panel image on the schematic shelter drawings representing a panel which is given to us, or open space in which we create a panel?

A: The red area on the schematic shelter drawings (Attachment 3 of the RFP) is intended to highlight the open space within which you will create your own panel. As the artist, you are required to produce your own panel to be inserted there.

Q: Is the top canopy/roof of the shelter off limits?

A: The roof of the shelter is off limits. You cannot alter the top of the bus shelter.

Q: Will the other side panel have an etched "R" on it, as shown in the schematic drawings and, if so, who is making that panel and what are the specifications?

A: Brasco, the manufacturer of the pre-manufactured bus shelters, will be providing the other side panel and will be etching an "R" on it as roughly illustrated in the schematic drawings in Attachment 3 of the RFP. That glass panel will be 3/8" thick shatter proof glass. Additional details will be available after initial artist selection.

Q: Will we have access to the color palate (mix) being used for the shelters, signage, and branding?

A: Yes. The shade of green that is being used for the R-Line branding is Pantone color PMS348.

Q: What other freestanding signage will be at the stop?

A: On the shelter itself, there will be a sign indicating the stop name attached to the top shelter support at the roof. There will also be bus schedule information (and in some cases, real-time arrival information) attached to the standard glass panels (not to the art panels). We will share the exact plan for your stop(s) when an award is made in August.

Q: Can the panels have a dimensional aspect?

A: Yes, the panels may have a dimensional aspect within reason. The comfort and safety of people waiting in the shelter or walking by it must be considered. Sharp protrusions or very bulky ones would likely not work, however we are very open to panels with some dimensionality.

Q: What are the weight loads and wind loads associated with the shelter? Can it carry a steel panel?

A: Yes, the shelter frame can bear a steel panel. Brasco's design specifications for the shelter provide for that. The shelters will be reviewed by an engineer in order to ensure that they are capable of this.

Q: Is there a maximum or minimum occupancy requirement when designing seating?

A: Shelters must leave a 36" wide area that is unimpeded for wheelchair access. Benches should accommodate no less than 3 people. Ideally, bench design should include anti-vagrancy measures to prevent people from laying down across the bench surface.

Q: What are the specifications of the seating provided in the shelters that will not be receiving artistic seating installments?

A: The standard seating drawing is provided in Attachment 4.

Q: What are the dimensions for the slot in which the panel must fit?

A: The channel that sits within the shelter frame on all four sides is ½" deep and 3/8" wide. Drawings depicting this channel are provided in Attachment 5.

Q: Are we required to provide a contractor to install the panel?

A: No, you are not required to provide a contractor to install your panel(s). If chosen to create a panel or panels, you will be assigned a specific time at which RIPTA's contractors will be installing your specific shelter at the site. You will be required to deliver your piece to the installation site at that specific time. RIPTA's contractors will then install your panel into the shelter frame.

Q: Is there any flexibility in the "channel" in the frame that holds the art panels in the shelter?

A: No, the channels must remain as is and not be altered. Please see Attachment 5 of the RFP for details on the channel. There may be room to discuss and work out something that attaches on top of or around the channel without altering it. The channels must remain intact in case something happens to the art panel (rock kicks up from road and smashes it) and RIPTA quickly needs to re-install the standard panel to make the shelter safe.

Q: Can you provide the exact gasket material and compression tolerances of the pressure fit system of the channels in the frame?

A: Details regarding the gasket material and compression tolerances will be provided after artists are selected in August. In the meantime, please refer to Attachment 5 for basic drawings of the channel that the panels will attach to within the shelter frame.

Q: Does the lower channel have weep holes?

A: Details regarding the channels will be provided after artists are selected in August. In the meantime, please refer to Attachment 5 for basic drawings of the channel that the panels will attach to within the shelter frame.

Q: What is the payment schedule? How will the second payment work, as most fabricators will not release the work until they have payment in full?

A: The first half of the payment will be made upon receipt of the final drawings and upon signing of the contract at the end of August. The second half of the payment will be made at or a few days prior to installation. We are sensitive to the issue of payment before receipt of art from a fabricator and will prepare for that and work closely with you to ensure that this works out.

Q: Can you provide more detail on the insurance requirements?

A: At this time, we want you to assure us on the application that you have or plan to procure comprehensive general liability insurance for the fabrication and delivery of your piece. By the time awards are made and the scope of each piece is understood we will discuss with each artist what the needed dollar amount of insurance coverage is. At that time we will also have detailed information regarding the exact time period from creation through to site installation that will need to be covered.

Q: Please clarify who is responsible for the cost of installing the art panels?

A: RIPTA will be paying for the installation of the panels, however the artist must be at the site at the time of installation to deliver the art, oversee the attachment and such. Your design should think through installation but we are hiring the installer and paying them.

Q: What happens if my panel is cracked during installation by the RIPTA hired contractors? Whose insurance applies?

A: Again, we are still working on this kind of specific contract detail. We will provide this answer at the time of awards and contracting and do what makes most sense.

Q: Is there a potential to design lighting?

A: No. Additional lighting could alter the streetscape in a way that neighboring residents would not appreciate and would potentially cause additional maintenance.

Q: What are the specs of the lighting provided? What if my intent was to have my art relate to that lighting in some way?

A: One solar panel will be installed on the roof of all shelters by the manufacturer, Brasco. This solar panel will be used by RIPTA for lighting and real-time arrival information. If you wish to relate or orient your panel in a precise way to the existing shelter light please speak to that in your proposal. Exact specifications on the existing lighting will be provided in August after artist awards are made.

Q: Can the solar panels used by the shelter be used to power our panels i.e., digital art?

A: Our initial sense is that this is probably not feasible. If this sort of concept is your intent, we recommend that you discuss a powered and unpowered version of your concept within your narrative so that there is some flexibility.

Q: Can I propose many drawings for a whole route? What if they relate to the same narrative element? Do I need to show all the drawings?

A: If you are proposing an idea that could come to life in a sequence of sites and stops please address that in your narrative/artist statement. It would be wise to show us more than one execution example within your concept drawings to convey the idea of a series, however the entire series does not need to be shown at this time. Please use your best judgment and provide drawings that sufficiently convey your idea and help us understand what would compel us to award you multiple sites.

Q: Can I submit two narratives for Broad Street?

A: Yes, you may submit two narratives for one corridor, but we ask that any one artist limit themselves to two proposed concepts total. If you submit two proposals please submit two distinct artist statements and their associated concept drawings (five copies each).

Q: Do I need to provide recommendation letters from my references or is only contact information required?

A: Please do not submit recommendation letters from your references. We do however ask that you provide contact information for each reference so that we may contact them to verify your experience.

Q: Do the final drawings that are due in August need those to be architectural or will a sketch with measurements be acceptable?

A: After awards are made in August, each artist will be asked to submit a schematic, detailed hand drawing or computer generated drawing by the end of August. FOR THIS RFP, only a conceptual sketch or computer image is needed. For July 8th, please give us what we need to understand your art proposal in context. Color would be appreciated if that factors into your piece.

Q: Who owns the intellectual property of the work once it is created? The City, RIPTA or the artist?

A: The artist will own the intellectual property rights to their own work. The City/RIPTA owns the actual artwork produced.

Q: If I am a fabricator signing multiple proposals does each lead artist need to copy my resume, past work examples and references — or is there a way around this?

A: Either have each artist submit your information with their proposal or contact us before July 8th to arrange for one set of 5 copies of your fabricator proposal pages to be submitted.