

CALL TO ARTISTS: THAISS PARK MURAL IN THE CITY OF FAIRFAX

City of Fairfax, VA

Submittal Deadline: 4:00 p.m. ET, September 7, 2026

Award: \$12,000

Overview

The City of Fairfax Office of Cultural Arts is seeking artist proposals for a large-scale mural to be installed at the newly renovated Thaiss Park, located at 3401 Pickett Road, Fairfax, VA 22031. Reopening in Summer 2026, the revitalized Thaiss Park will feature three standard-sized baseball fields, an interactive playground, an adult fitness area, a walking track, a picnic pavilion, and a concession stand. Together, these amenities will create an inclusive, active public space designed to support recreation, connection, and community wellbeing.

The goal of the mural is to promote a spirit of play throughout the park, celebrating athletic movement in all its dynamic, exuberant, and creative forms. The selected artwork should enhance the park's visual identity, reflect its welcoming and family-friendly atmosphere, and encourage viewer engagement or interaction — whether through energetic imagery, vibrant color, or design elements that spark curiosity and inspire movement from visitors of all ages.

Some examples of engagement strategies that could be included in the mural include:

- Using playful lines or shapes that encourage viewers to move alongside or interact with the imagery.
- Incorporating games or simple instructions into the mural itself, such as wall-ball targets, hop-scotch-style elements, or movement prompts that invite participation.
- Designing interactive “photo-op” moments or character elements that encourage families to pose, play, or imagine themselves as part of the artwork.

The finished mural size will be 8' 8" tall by 12' 3¼" wide. It will be painted directly onto the wall, which is made of concrete masonry units.

Deadline

The deadline for all submissions in response to this call is 4:00 p.m. ET on September 7, 2026.

Eligibility

This call is open to all artists aged 18 and above with preference given to those residing in Northern Virginia.

Submitted designs must be original artwork.

Artists are required to be a licensed business and be insured.

Juried Selection Process

Members of the City of Fairfax Public Art Committee and staff from Fairfax City will review the proposals. The selected design will be chosen, and the artist notified by electronic mail by close of business on September 21, 2026.

Selection Criteria

The panel will use the following criteria:

- Artistic merit and graphic strength of the proposed design;
- Relevance to the project goal;
- Contribution to aesthetic and cultural atmosphere of the City;
- Appropriateness of subject and concept for a public space;
- Completeness of the submission as outlined in this announcement.

Artwork will be deemed inappropriate which portrays: content which violates copyright or other known legal ownership interest; profanity, obscenity, indecency, violence, pornography; discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or nationality; defamation or personal attacks.

Artwork Location

On the west facing façade of the central building in Thaiss Park in Fairfax City. When looking at the building, the mural area is on the far right. The finished mural size will be 8' 8" tall by 12' 3¼" wide.

For further location information, please see the pictures included at the end of this document.

Payment

The selected artist/artist team will be awarded \$12,000 for the design concept/paint/supplies/travel/accommodations needed to execute the project.

The City of Fairfax will own the copyrights and enjoy the unlimited, licensed use of the selected designs for program purposes. The City will not profit from the use of the art.

Submission Requirements

Please email all application materials to Will Quinn at will.quinn@fairfaxva.gov. Please contact me with any questions.

Respondents should submit the following materials by 4:00 p.m. ET on September 7, 2026.

1. Artist/Team Name, Point of Contact, Business Name, Mailing Address, Telephone Number, Email Address, and Website.
2. Statement of Interest briefly addressing the concept, design, and how you approached the project.
3. One-page resume or curriculum vitae.
4. Annotated List of Images: Please include the artist's name as a heading and a brief description of each image including title and original medium.
5. Design Proposal. Designs must be submitted as high-quality image file in web-quality JPG file.

Submission Guidelines and Design Considerations:

1. Submitted designs must showcase original artwork.
2. The art may be a new original piece or an existing work of the artist and may not be on display in other public art programs (not including gallery exhibitions.)
3. Designs that incorporate commercial advertisement will not be considered.
4. Would like the mural to be accessible and equitable in design and concept. For example, if featuring text, also include multiple languages and/or Braille. If including people, feature a display of the diversity in the City.
5. Mural must be painted on site.

Timeline/Disclaimer

Announcement of Call to Artists/RFP Response: June 17, 2026

Response from Artists Due: September 7, 2026

Selection Committee Reviews Proposals: Mid-September

Selected Artist Contacted: September 21, 2026

Mural Installation: September/October 2026

The City of Fairfax reserves the right to delay or reschedule, cancel or reissue this Call for Artists for any reason it deems necessary.

The City of Fairfax does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, ethnicity, religion, national origin, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, sex, marital status, disability or status as a U.S. veteran and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Location of Mural



VIEW LOOKING NORTHEAST



VIEW LOOKING NORTHWEST



VIEW LOOKING SOUTHWEST



VIEW LOOKING SOUTHEAST

In Progress Photo



In Progress Photo (Close Up)



8' 8" tall by 12' 3/4" wide

Thaiss Park Layout



CONCEPT PLAN

THAISS PARK REDEVELOPMENT | 1

04.01.2024
3308-0801

MTFA Gordon