City of Auburn, Maine
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REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

Lake Grove Park Tree Sculpture Services

INTRODUCTION

The City of Auburn, Maine, through Public Services and its Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB), is seeking qualifications from professional chainsaw artists, wood sculptors, and public art professionals to transform a standing maple tree trunk into a permanent public art installation at Lake Grove Park in Auburn, Maine. Lake Grove Park is a cherished community park situated along the shores of Lake Auburn. The selected artist will create a one-of-a-kind sculpture from an existing maple tree measuring approximately 3 feet in diameter and 16 feet in height. The PRAB envisions a whimsical and family-friendly design featuring woodland, water, and air creatures commonly found in Maine engaging in recreational activities similar to those enjoyed by visitors at Lake Grove Park.

LAKE GROVE PARK

Lake Grove Park is a popular neighborhood park located along the scenic shoreline of Lake Auburn, one of Auburn's most valued natural resources and the primary drinking water source for the communities of Auburn and Lewiston. The park provides residents and visitors with opportunities for outdoor recreation, family gatherings, and enjoyment of the area's natural beauty. Recently improved, the park amenities include an accessible playground, basketball court, open green space, picnic areas, grills, waterfront access, and walking areas that attract families, children, and outdoor enthusiasts throughout the year. During the summer months, Auburn’s park ranger team is stationed at the park and runs the city’s Recreation Station, which is filled with games and activities that are free to use while at the park. The Rangers also assist visitors with canoeing, paddle boat and life jacket rentals.

Surrounded by mature trees and offering picturesque views of Lake Auburn, the park serves as an important community gathering place where visitors can experience the region's wildlife and changing seasons. Common Maine wildlife observed in and around the park and lake include loons, ducks, squirrels, raccoons, turtles, songbirds, and other native species. The park's blend of recreation, nature, and waterfront scenery makes it an ideal location for a public art installation that celebrates both the local environment and the family-friendly character of the community.

The proposed tree sculpture will become a unique landmark within the park, enhancing the visitor experience while reflecting the City of Auburn's commitment to preserving natural spaces, promoting outdoor recreation, and creating engaging public destinations for residents and visitors of all ages. The sculpture should complement the park's natural setting and recreational amenities while serving as an artistic focal point and memorable destination feature for the community.

PROJECT GOALS

Celebrate local wildlife; reinforce Lake Grove Park as a family-friendly destination; create a memorable landmark and photo opportunity; enhance the aesthetic appeal of the park; provide a durable public art feature. Transform a remnant maple tree into a celebration of Lake Grove Park, Lake Auburn, and the wildlife that call this area home through imaginative depictions of animals enjoying playground and lakeside activities.

EXISTING TREE INFORMATION

Species: Maple. Diameter: Approximately 3 feet. Height: Approximately 16 feet. Condition: Standing trunk suitable for carving. Determined to be nearly dead or dead in spring 2026.

DESIGN EXPECTATIONS

The PRAB prefers designs featuring local wildlife engaged in playful activities associated with parks and lakes. Examples include a raccoon floating in a swim ring, a duck sliding down a playground slide, a bear paddling a canoe, a loon with a beach ball, or a squirrel on a swing. The selected carver will work with the City and PRAB to further develop a concept and plan with artistic flexibility to use the tree that exists. Designs should be family-friendly, imaginative, and visible from multiple angles. Project cost should not exceed $5,000 with a downpayment in fall of 2026 to schedule the work and completion and final payment in 2027 within 30 days of completion.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Development of final design concepts; coordination with City staff; all labor, equipment, and materials to complete the carving; site protection; cleanup and debris removal; application of protective finishes; maintenance recommendations.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must be submitted in accordance with the following instructions to bidders. Please submit sealed envelopes plainly: **"BID# 2027-004 Lake Grove Tree Carving." All submissions are due on Tuesday, November 24, 2026, at 2pm.**

Please submit the following:

- Artist Information
- Statement of Interest
- Relevant Experience
- Portfolio of at least five completed projects
- Three References with preference given to local references in Maine
- Concept Approach
- Preliminary Timeline
- Cost Proposal

QUESTIONS

Questions shall be directed to Jenna-Rae Brown, Executive Assistant, City of Auburn, at jrbrown@auburnmaine.gov Reference "BID#2027-004 Lake Grove Park Tree Carving Project RFQ" in the subject line. Site visits are encouraged and can be scheduled or can occur

independently during daylight hours. **Questions are due at 4pm on Thursday, November 19, 2026**. Questions will be answered in the form of an addendum.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The city will use the following criteria and point system in evaluating proposals:

- Experience with chainsaw carving and wood sculpture (30 points)
- Portfolio quality and creativity (25 points)
- Public art and municipal project experience (20 points)
- Understanding of project vision and site (15 points)
- References (10 points).

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

The selected artist shall provide proof of insurance acceptable to the City of Auburn prior to commencement of work.

CITY OF AUBURN RIGHTS

At any stage of the proposal process, the City of Auburn reserves the right to terminate, suspend, extend, amend, or modify this selection process; reject any or all submittals at any time; and waive any informalities, irregularities, or omissions in submittals, as the best interests of the City may appear. The City of Auburn is governed by Title 1 M.R.S.A. § 401-410, otherwise known as the Freedom of Information Act, which considers bid specifications as public documents. In awarding any Bid, the City may consider, but not be limited to, any of the following factors: Bidder qualifications, price, experience, financial standing with the City, warranties, references, bonding, delivery date, and service of Bidder. Successful Vendors/Contractors shall be current on all amounts due to the City of Auburn prior to the City entering into any contract agreement. The RFQ process shall in all respects be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the laws of the State of Maine.

TENTATIVE PROJECT SCHEDULE

RFQ Issued:	Tuesday, November 10, 2026
Deadline for Questions:	Thursday, November 19, 2026, by 4pm
Qualifications Due:	Tuesday, November 24, 2026, at 2pm