



Open Call for Proposals

IMAGINE US HERE

**Cultivating Public Space
for Community Resilience**



CITY WORKS
*Spark Innovation.
Forge Connections.
Design Change.*



**RHODE ISLAND
FOUNDATION**

Vision

Providence, like many cities, is challenged by chronic inequity and ecological harm. Climate change introduces unpredictability and vulnerability into our daily lives, while rising sea levels threaten the future of the city and the fabric of its communities. We believe that a place that fosters community and connects people to the Providence River is a necessary intervention to help us imagine a regenerative and collective future. We believe in the power of design as a force for positive change. In IMAGINE US HERE, we seek a project that will channel diverse energies into resilience and problem solving.

Summary

IMAGINE US HERE is a Request for Proposals for the design and fabrication of a temporary public design project along Providence's Riverwalk that explores the themes of community resilience, climate change, and history.

Hosted by DownCity Design's CityWorks Fellows, this design-build competition will create an enriched place near the edge of the Providence River that brings people together in the face of climate change. This activated public space will provide a full spectrum of dynamic engagement in discovery, educational interactions, and connection with people and the river – past, present, and future. The project will invite diverse peoples into an inclusive, communal gathering space where they may envision a resilient and collective future together.

Proposals for IMAGINE US HERE are being accepted through March 8, 2019 at 5:00 pm. One project will be selected, with an installation date this coming summer.

Scope

IMAGINE US HERE seeks to transform a portion of underutilized city parkland into a designed public space on the east side of the Providence Riverwalk. The proposal may incorporate built and/or sculptural components, landscaping, land art, public art, urban design, ecological interventions, and digital aspects such as augmented reality (AR). While it may offer enclosure or respite, this new public place must also encourage connectivity with other parts of the park and with neighboring areas, when possible.

Themes

A successful project proposal will address some or all of these themes:

Community Resilience

- In what ways can the project inspire resilient responses when facing the challenges and vulnerabilities posed by climate change? How can it encourage visitors to take part in finding solutions that are empathetic to one other and to nature? Are there ways that the project itself can model or express resilience through materials, form, access, or in how its design brings people together?

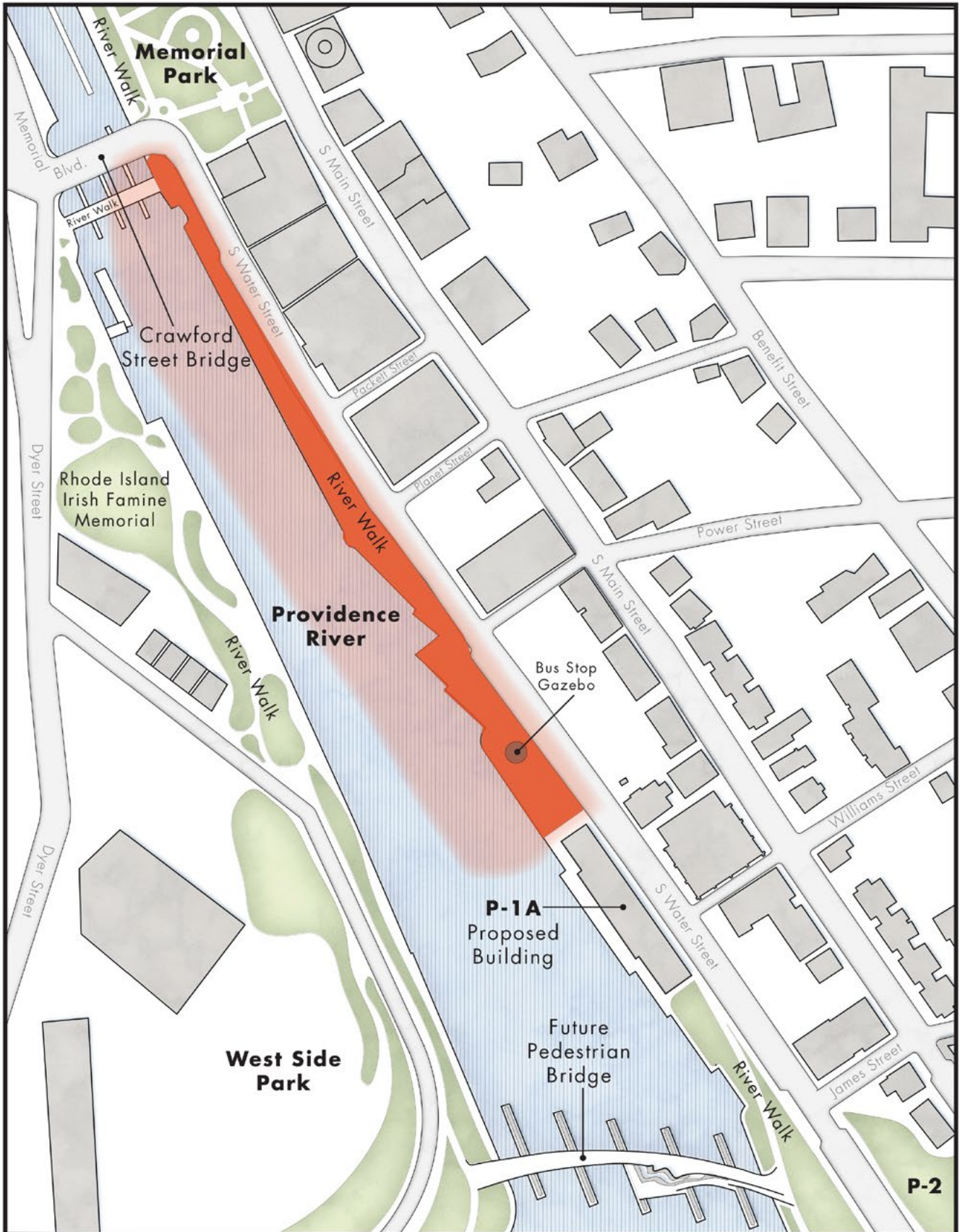
Climate Change

- In what ways can the project relate impacts of sea level rise on the Providence River while supporting visitor agency and connection to the river? How can the project encourage engagement and relationship with the river? How can exploration and discovery at this designed public place promote stewardship, respect and, even love of the water?

Place-Based History

- How can the project use the history of the Providence River to tell a story about our future? Are there ways the project can offer inclusive historical context that encourages self-identification and connection among the current Rhode Island population and visitors? Are there ways the project can embed elements of historical context in its materials or form, or in how its design brings people together?

Site Map



 **PROPOSED SITE**

More about the Site

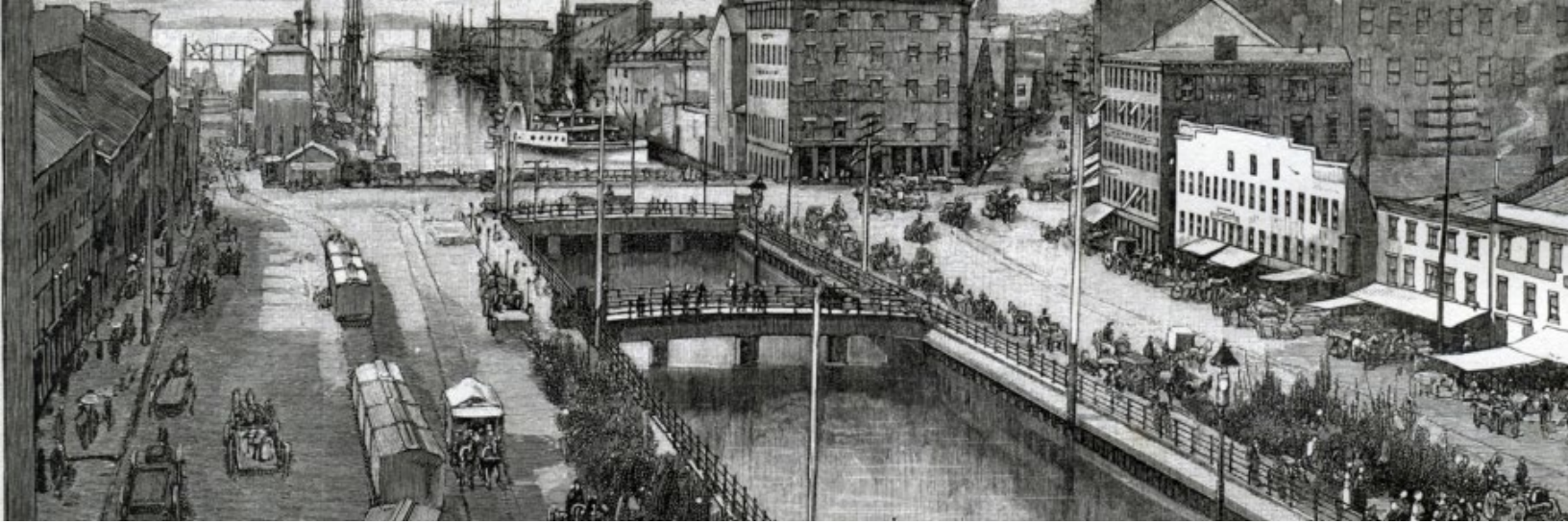
The potential project site for IMAGINE US HERE is city parkland along the east bank of the Providence River in an area known as the Riverwalk. The area designated for proposed projects is located along the walking path that follows South Water Street and is bound by the Crawford Street Bridge to the north and Parcel 1A to the south ([see map on previous page](#)). Applicant proposals must include a site map and/or photographs clearly demonstrating their specific project location within this larger designated area.



The site area is primarily a linear cement pedestrian walkway with flat, narrow, grassy lawns along the river. The river's edge is visually open along the entire site area, with some decorative gating in parts and a few areas that reach down and open up to the water. South Water Street, a high traffic area, borders the site on the east. As a temporary installation, the project must be able to persist at the site for a period of 6 months to 2 years, as design dictates. Installation materials should be able to withstand high winds and high humidity, as well as rigorous public use.

The project area for IMAGINE US HERE is next to a portion of land that was recently made available for public use and recreation by the relocation of Interstate 195, but that is still largely underdeveloped. Just south of the project area is the 50 foot wide pedestrian bridge which, when completed later this year, will provide robust connectivity between the east and west sides of the river. The Providence Riverwalk, consisting of 3/4 mile of cobblestoned pedestrian walkways along the waterfront, runs through the project area, and connects to downtown's Waterplace Park to the north.





Historical Context

Situated on the banks of the Woonasquatucket, Providence, and Moshassuck Rivers, the city of Providence is a place defined historically by the relationship of humans to the water and of diverse groups of people to one another. From indigenous peoples, who shared fishing rights and used the surrounding area as a gathering place, to the Italian, Irish, Armenian, Portuguese, Cape Verdean, Hmong, Dominican, and many other communities who have made their mark on the city throughout the years, the spirit of Providence has always been a confluence of many currents.

Providence was one of the first cities in the country to industrialize, and became noted for its textile manufacturing and subsequent machine tool, jewelry, and silverware industries. Today, Providence is home to eight hospitals and seven institutions of

higher learning, which have largely shifted the city's economy towards service industries. This city that was once nicknamed the "Beehive of Industry" rebranded itself as the "Creative Capital" in 2009 to emphasize its educational resources and iconic arts community.

The designated site for IMAGINE US HERE is in an area of Providence undergoing rapid transformation. The relocation of I-195 completed in 2013 has opened up downtown waterfront parcels to redevelopment, with portions of the newly-available land reserved as open green space. As these urban spaces continue to shed their industrial cast, Providence's waterfront holds the promise of once again being a place where people can come together, to commune with the water and with each other at this culturally and historically rich place.

Image: View toward the harbor from Market Square, circa 1886.
Copyright: Providence Plantations for 250 Years by Welcome Arnold Greene (1886).

Application/Submission

Full proposals must be submitted to DownCityDesign's CityWorks Fellows via email by 5:00pm on March 8, 2019. Send to: cityworks@downcitydesign.org

To be considered, applicants must submit all of the proposal components listed to the right. Design-build proposals must be site-specific and consider pedestrian and traffic patterns, events, weather, and safety. Applicants should consider the environmental impact of the proposed design, both in terms of minimizing harm to the site as well as improving the site's capacity for flood resilience, habitat development, and mitigating point and nonpoint pollution.

All proposals must conform to safety codes (provided in [Resources](#) section) and must be approved by the Providence Parks Department.

Applicants must be 18 years or older.

The CityWorks cohort is looking for proposals from individuals and groups who represent the great diversity of Providence. People of color, women, LGBTQIA+, and applicants who live and work in the greater Providence area are encouraged to apply.

Full proposals should include:

- A narrative of no more than 500 words describing:
 - The strategies implemented to address some or all of the suggested themes: Community Resilience, Climate Change, and Place-Based History
 - How the design responds to and transforms the site.
- A brief artist's statement from the applicant or team
- Resume
- 3-5 examples of implemented / installed work
- The names, phone numbers, and email addresses of 1 to 3 professional references
- A Submittal Package of hi-res images (minimum 1024 x 768 px and 300dpi) that must include:
 - A design concept drawing/sketch/rendering/visual that represents the ideas of the proposed project
 - A site map including the proposed location of the design
 - A to-scale site rendering depicting the proposed design
- An installation plan that includes a brief description of your anticipated technical needs, installation/deaccession timeline (i.e. how long will it take to install and de-install); and anticipated maintenance issues or challenges, including how and by whom they would be addressed
- A detailed budget*

* Projected budget up to \$15,000, including materials, fees, and installation costs

**All files must be clearly named and include the name of the applicant(s) and the name of the proposed project. (Project-Name_LastName_FileName, ex: RiverReboot_Smith_Rendering) We will not consider incomplete or late applications.

Evaluation Selection Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on their alignment with the ecological and community-building objectives of the project. Strong consideration will be given to the quality of the design as illustrated in the rendering and to the treatment of project themes.

Proposals will also be evaluated for feasibility and environmental impact. Proposed designs must align to safety codes (provided in [Resources](#) section) and be approved by the Providence Parks Department. In addition, projects cannot impede or negatively impact existing ADA* pathways and access.

In addition to their alignment with suggested themes, proposals will be evaluated on their ability to:

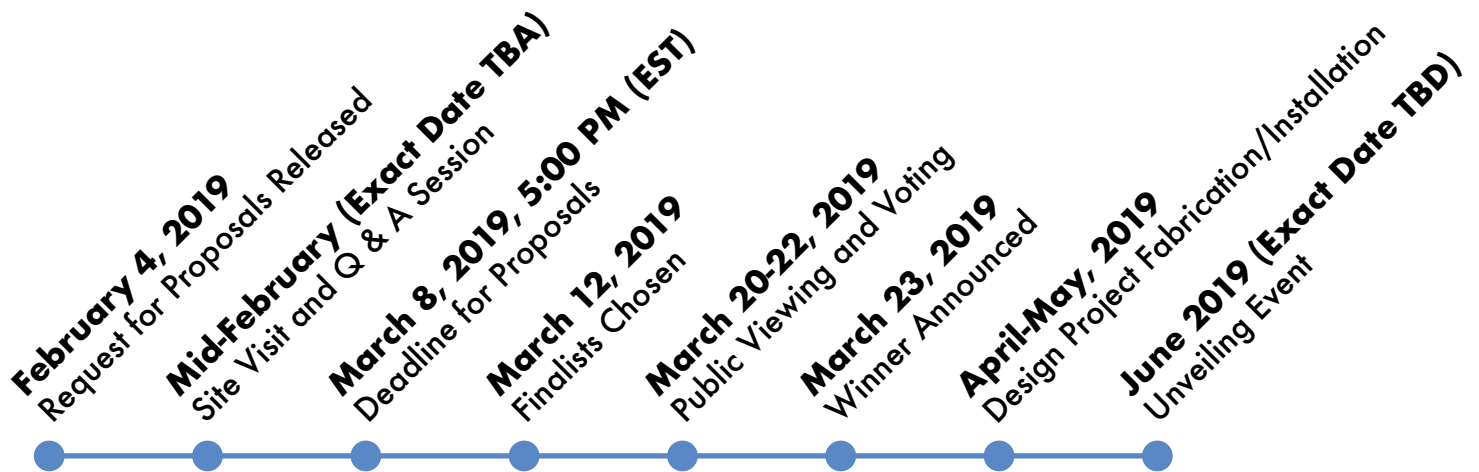
- Increase the resiliency of the site
- Respond to sea level rise
- Incorporate the history of place and people
- Promote inclusivity
- Be accessible to everyone
- Encourage interaction
- Enhance the experience of the river walk

Proposed designs do not need to respond to every criteria, however, proposals that attempt to address multiple concerns are strongly encouraged.

*In accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), the City of Providence, Rhode Island, will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs, or activities.

Key Dates

RFP Schedule for Applicants



Resources

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| City of Providence Key Initiatives | http://www.providenceri.gov/planning/key-initiatives/ |
| City of Providence Office of Sustainability – Take Act Initiatives | https://www.providenceri.gov/sustainability/take-action-2/ |
| City of Providence Permit Handbook | https://drive.google.com/open?id=1v_f0QzODd_ITD0Vf-NG3dZl6mfthoL5sz |
| DownCity Design Change Agent Toolkit | https://www.downcitydesign.org/innovation/ |
| Providence’s Indian History - Raymond Two Hawks Watson | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-7P1O9lbT0&t=244s |
| Providence Innovation & Design District | https://www.195district.com/ |
| Accessibility Guidance | http://www.providenceri.gov/law-department/ada-compliance/ |
| Public Playground Safety Handbook | https://drive.google.com/open?id=1Zw9opCQHU-ggpi-JM-3FPDhu6L_qHUaNc |
| RI Coastal Resources Management Council | http://www.crmc.ri.gov/ |
| Rhode Island Department of Health – Climate Change and your Health | http://health.ri.gov/publications/guides/ClimateChangeAndYourHealth.pdf |
| Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council | http://www.wrwc.org/ |

DownCity Design

DownCity Design is a community organization working to build a city of problem solvers. We empower students, educators, and community members to use design skills to improve the places where they live, work, and play.

DownCity Design was founded in 2009 by Adrienne Gagnon and Manuel Cordero, with the mission of improving Providence by getting young people involved in designing and building solutions for their communities.

Contacts

Questions regarding RFP:

CityWorks Fellows
cityworks@downcitydesign.org

General questions:

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CityWorks

CityWorks Fellows are changemakers, working together to improve the city of Providence. Fellows learn to use the design process as a powerful force for positive community change.

The guiding theme for this year's program is Resilient Providence, with the goal of promoting community resilience in the face of climate change by inspiring new ways for community members to connect with one another and with our Downtown Providence parks and rivers.