



Public Art Commission, RFQ

Woodland Park-North Gateway

City of Wichita



Issue Date: 10/24/2025
Qualifications Due: 11/14/2025



Introduction

The City of Wichita invites professional artists and artist teams with a demonstrated history of completing permanent outdoor public art projects to submit their qualifications for a \$49,000 public art commission for Woodland Park-North. The start of this project is estimated to begin in early 2026 with the execution of the art will be completed in late 2026. Emerging artists are encouraged to apply.

Woodland Park-North (841 W 21st St North) is located within the historic North End community and has many amenities including the La Familia Senior Community Center, a baseball field, a large shade structure, a playground, a basketball court, and a portion of the Little Arkansas River Pathway. The park is also used as an activity hub during the community event, Open Streets ICT: NoMar. The iconic NoMar International Market is also located in the North End.



Park Background

This neighborhood park, purchased in 1921, includes a Hispanic Senior Center (La Familia). The building housing the senior center was remodeled in 1993 using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. A portion of the Little Arkansas River Pathway runs through the park. Beginning in 2007 staff worked with the community to upgrade the park by relocating the basketball court, adding lighting a shelter and walking paths.

The gateway structure should complement the anticipated history walk signs which will be added to the park. These signs will provide a detailed account of North End's impact and significance. (See appendix A at the end)



Art Location

To increase the sense of place and community pride in the North End a gateway sculpture within the park is envisioned. The general location of the artwork will be near the Little Arkansas River Pathway and the 21st Street pedestrian crosswalk, as shown to the right. It is anticipated that the history walk will be in close proximity to this gateway sculpture

The exact location of the gateway will be determined during the selected artist's concept development phase.



Inspiration Images

The gateway is envisioned to be colorful and promote the North End's identity. Inspiration gateway images are shown below.



Project Budget

ART BUDGET: \$49,000

The art budget is inclusive of all costs and fees for the artist to execute the project from design through structural engineering, site preparation, transportation/delivery, and installation. Installation, structural engineering, site preparation, and delivery will be coordinated with the project team.



Eligibility

The City of Wichita welcomes submissions from artist and artist teams based nationally. Emerging artists are encouraged to apply. The City of Wichita has a vibrant art community and many local firms that can assist with the development, fabrication, and installation of the artwork. The committee prefers to have local artists and firms involved in the project and will give preference to artists who plan to utilize these local resources.

This could include:

- Engineers for developing stamp drawings
- Concrete firms for pouring the footers
- Fabricators
- Installation crews
- Lighting specialists
- Landscape architects

It is the declared policy and practice of the City of Wichita to extend equal employment opportunities to all qualified persons without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, ancestry, marital status, age, political affiliation, sexual orientation, disability, or other non-merit factors.



Selection Process

Applicants will be reviewed and ranked by a selection committee comprised of City staff and relevant stakeholders. Interviews are not anticipated to be a part of the selection process but may be used to in the event of a narrow margin between rankings.

Questions

All inquiries should be emailed to Tim Kellams at tkellams@wichita.gov by 11/7/2025, 4:00 p.m. CST.



Selection Criteria

Applicants will be selected based on a competitive review of the following:

Artistic excellence: demonstrated vision, professional process and presentation, and quality craftsmanship in examples of past work; examples provided should be relevant to how the artist will approach this public art opportunity.

Creative process: examples of past work should illustrate the artist's experience in large 3-dimensional work; examples should be relevant to how the artist will approach this public art opportunity.

Ability: demonstrated experience in sculptures, experience in materials that achieve outdoors durability, delivering contractual milestones, and managing budgets in a timely fashion.

Meaningful relationship of the creative and conceptual aspects of their artistic process with the purpose of this project as expressed in the Letter of Interest (LOI).



Submittal Requirements

Each artist or artist team must submit an entirely digital application. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

1. Submit five to ten images of relevant examples of past work (video accepted). Images should represent the artist's style, format, medium, or breadth of work.
2. Please include an annotated image list for all work examples including scale, budget, medium, year installed, and location.
3. Submit a one-page Letter of Interest (LOI) with a brief description of your project approach. Letter of interest should outline location you're most interested in and why.
4. Resume or CV.
5. Three professional references.



Project Timeline

- RFQ open via CAFE' online application system: 10/24/2025
- Artists questions due: 11/7/2025
- Qualifications due: 11/14/2025, 4:00 p.m. CST
- Review of qualifications: 11/17/2025
- Notification of Award: 11/19/2025
- Contract: 12/3/2025
- Presentation to Councils and Boards: Spring/Summer 2026
- Art Fabrication and Installation: TBD

**All dates are approximate and subject to change*



Thank You

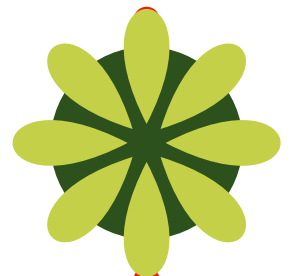
Please submit your application on CaFÉ (callforentry.org) by 11/14/2025, 4:00 p.m. (CST) .



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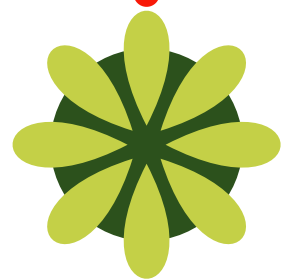
BEGINNINGS

North End History Walk



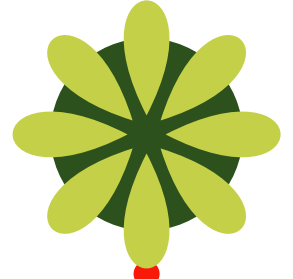
Pre-Columbian Era-Mexican War

In 1492, Columbus arrived in the Caribbean from Spain. Prior to that, Native Americans had settled in North America around 15,000 years ago, resulting in diverse communities, societies, and cultures. The indigenous population before Columbus's voyage was estimated at over 70 million, with 562 tribes inhabiting the contiguous U.S. European countries like France, Spain, and Great Britain claimed significant portions of the Americas. The name 'Wichita' comes from the Native Americans who lived near the Arkansas River. Spain initially claimed this land, which later became part of Mexico after its independence in 1821. In 1848, the United States acquired this territory at the end of the Mexican War. The presence of Mexicans in Kansas predates the state itself.



Bleeding Kansas

The fight over slavery in Kansas, following the territory's creation in 1854, intensified the debate on slavery's future in the United States and served as a precursor to the Civil War.



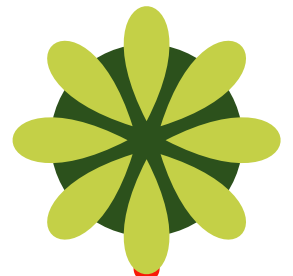
Incorporation of Wichita

1870

Wichita, nicknamed Cowtown, was incorporated as a city. Spanish settlers brought horses to America, and the vaqueros (traditional cowboys) emerged from Spanish culture. Cowboys who herded cattle on horseback included Mexican Americans with mixed European and Indigenous heritage. Wichita became a hub for cattle drives, attracting vaqueros from Texas.

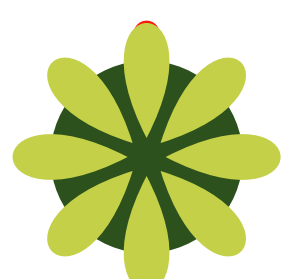
1872

The Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad extended to western Kansas, including Wichita. Vaqueros transported Texas cattle via the railroad to eastern markets. The train carried household goods, farming equipment, and over half a million dollars in cash. Immigrants from England, Germany, Russia, and Sweden settled in Kansas, establishing homes and fields for farming on the plains.



Early Twentieth Century

Between 1900 and 1930, a significant influx of Mexican immigrants arrived in Kansas due to conditions in their home country and labor shortages in the United States. Initially, many worked as railroad laborers, but they also found employment in sugar beet farming, meatpacking, and salt mining. Between 1882 and 1924, several significant labor acts shaped immigration policies in the United States. The Chinese Exclusion Act restricted Chinese immigration, particularly in industries like railroads and mining. The Immigration Act of 1907 required immigrants to pass a literacy test. Finally, the National Origins (Quotas) Acts of 1921 and 1924 established nationality-based quotas, limiting immigration from specific countries. Despite these restrictions, Mexican immigrants played a crucial role in filling labor shortages in various industries.

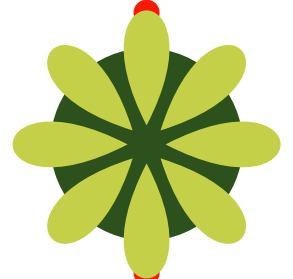


Bracero Programs

1917-1921 and 1942-1964

The Bracero Program, also known as the Mexican Farm Labor Program, was initiated between the United States and Mexican governments (1917-1921) and allowed Mexican workers to fill seasonal agricultural jobs. In 1942, the railroad version of the program addressed a shortage of rail crews by recruiting workers from Mexico. This railroad Bracero Program shared similarities with its agricultural counterpart and lasted until 1964.

Calavita, Kitty (1992). Inside the State: The Bracero Program, Immigration, and the I. N. S. New York: Quid Pro, LLC. p. 1.



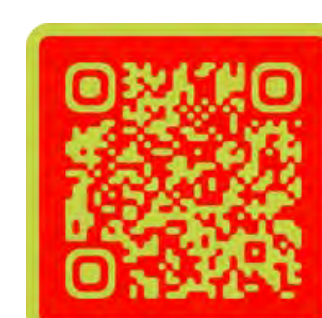
Operation Wetback

Operation Wetback legislature was implemented in June 1954 by the Eisenhower administration. The operation used military style methods to expel Mexican immigrants, some of them American citizens by birth or naturalization, from the United States. Though millions of Mexicans legally arrived in the country through joint immigration programs in the first half of the 20th century, Operation Wetback was designed to send them to Mexico.

Blakemore, Erin (March 23, 2018). The Largest Mass Deportation in American History. History. Retrieved April, 2018.



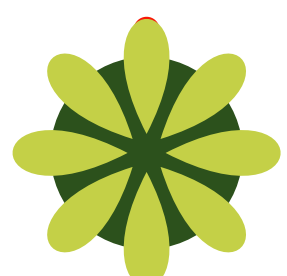
NorthEndWichita.org



Panel 1 de 9

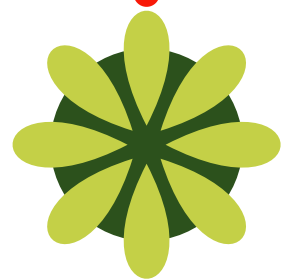
PRINCIPIOS

Recorrido Histórico por el North End



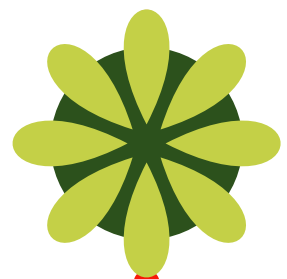
Era Precolombina - Conflicto Mexicano

En 1492, Colón llegó al Caribe desde España. Previamente, los nativos americanos se habían establecido en América del Norte hace aproximadamente 15.000 años, dando origen a diversas comunidades, sociedades y culturas. Se estima que la población indígena antes del viaje de Colón superaba los 70 millones, con 562 tribus que habitaban los Estados Unidos contiguos. Países europeos como Francia, España y Gran Bretaña reclamaban importantes porciones de América. El nombre «Wichita» proviene de los nativos americanos que residían cerca del río Arkansas. España reclamó inicialmente esta tierra, que más tarde se convirtió en parte de México tras su independencia en 1821. En 1848, Estados Unidos adquirió este territorio al finalizar la Guerra de Independencia de México. La presencia de mexicanos en Kansas es anterior a la formación del estado.



Kansas Herido

La contienda por la esclavitud en Kansas, después de la formación del territorio en 1854, agudizó el debate sobre el destino de la esclavitud en los Estados Unidos y actuó como precursor de la Guerra Civil.



Incorporación de Wichita

1870

Wichita, conocida como Cowtown (Pueblo Vaquero), se estableció como ciudad. Los colonos españoles introdujeron caballos en América, y los vaqueros (vaqueros tradicionales) emergieron de la cultura española. Entre los vaqueros que cuidaban el ganado a caballo se encontraban mexicano-estadounidenses con ascendencia mixta europea e indígena. Wichita se transformó en un centro de arrees de ganado, atrayendo a vaqueros de Texas.

1872

El Ferrocarril de Atchison, Topeka y Santa Fe se extendía hacia el oeste de Kansas, abarcando Wichita. Los vaqueros trasladaban ganado texano por ferrocarril a los mercados del este. El tren transportaba artículos domésticos, maquinaria agrícola y más de medio millón de dólares en efectivo. Inmigrantes de Inglaterra, Alemania, Rusia y Suecia se establecieron en Kansas, construyendo hogares y campos para la agricultura en las llanuras.



Principios del Siglo Veinte

Entre 1900 y 1930, una notable afluencia de inmigrantes mexicanos arribó a Kansas debido a las condiciones en su país de origen y la falta de mano de obra en Estados Unidos. Al principio, muchos se emplearon como obreros ferroviarios, pero también encontraron trabajo en el cultivo de betabel azucarera, la industria carnícera y la minería de sal. Entre 1882 y 1924, diversas leyes laborales significativas moldearon las políticas de inmigración en Estados Unidos. La Ley de Exclusión China limitó la inmigración china, especialmente en sectores como los ferrocarriles y la minería. La Ley de Inmigración de 1907 requería que los inmigrantes superaran un examen de alfabetización. Finalmente, las Leyes de Orígenes Nacionales (Cuotas) de 1921 y 1924 establecieron cuotas basadas en la nacionalidad, restringiendo la inmigración de ciertos países. A pesar de estas limitaciones, los inmigrantes mexicanos jugaron un papel fundamental en la cobertura de la escasez de mano de obra en diversas industrias.

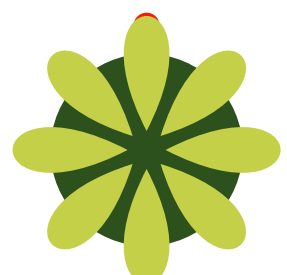


Programas Bracero

1917-1921 y 1942-1964

El Programa Bracero, conocido también como el Programa de Trabajadores Agrícolas Mexicanos, fue establecido por los gobiernos de Estados Unidos y México entre 1917 y 1921, permitiendo a los trabajadores mexicanos ocupar empleos agrícolas temporales. En 1942, se implementó una versión ferroviaria del programa para abordar la escasez de personal en las vías, reclutando a trabajadores mexicanos. Este Programa Bracero ferroviario presentaba similitudes con su versión agrícola y se mantuvo en funcionamiento hasta 1964.

Calavita, Kitty (1992). *Dentro del Estado: El Programa Bracero, Inmigración y el Servicio de Inmigración y Naturalización (INS)*. Nueva York: Quid Pro, LLC. p. 1.



Operación Espalda Moja

La Operación Espalda Mojada se llevó a cabo en junio de 1954 bajo la administración de Eisenhower. Esta operación utilizó tácticas militares para deportar a inmigrantes mexicanos de Estados Unidos, incluyendo a algunos que eran ciudadanos estadounidenses por nacimiento o naturalización. A pesar de que millones de mexicanos ingresaron legalmente al país a través de programas de inmigración conjuntos en la primera mitad del siglo XX, la Operación Espalda Mojada fue concebida para enviarlos a México.

Blakemore, Erin (23 de marzo de 2018). La mayor deportación masiva en la historia de Estados Unidos. Historia. Recuperado en abril de 2018.



NorthEndWichita.org

