



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:
Artist Call Services for SSA 61 – Hyde Park
Thursday, April 30, 2026**

District Overview

Special Service Area #61 (SSA #61), also known as Downtown Hyde Park, in partnership with the South East Chicago Commission (SECC), invites artists to submit proposals for the design and installation of a permanent outdoor mural at 5297 S. Lake Park Avenue, adjacent to the existing Anthos mural.

SSA #61 encompasses the 53rd and 55th Street corridors connected by Lake Park Avenue and functions as a local business improvement district supporting economic development and community engagement.

Project Goals

The selected artist will create a mural that:

- Reflects the identity and character of the SSA #61 commercial district.
- Highlights neighborhood vitality, diversity, and community pride.
- Enhance Hyde Park as a welcoming destination.

The mural should emphasize place, connection, and neighborhood engagement. It will serve as a long-term visual representation of the SSA #61 commercial district and contribute to neighborhood identity, vibrancy, and placemaking.

General Invitation

SSA 61 invites the submission of responses for an RFP for the Metra 53rd/Lake Park Mural Project.

1. Site to be serviced:
5297 S. Lake Park Avenue – See below photo
2. RFP Timeframe:
 - a. RFP Opens: **Thursday, April 30, 2026**
 - b. RFP Closes: **Monday June 1, 2026**
3. Service Schedule:
 - a. Project Start Date: **Monday July 13th, 2026**



- b. Project Completion Date: **Week of August 31st 2026 pending approvals and weather permitting**

Services Requested

SSA #61/SECC is looking for an artist to create a mural at 5297 S. Lake Park Avenue. This is a wall adjacent to another mural, Anthos, on Lake Park Avenue. The wall belongs to Metropolitan Rail, or METRA, under the Northern Illinois Transportation Authority (NITA).



Anthos - METRA Wall at 5299 S. Lake Park Avenue – Photo Credit: Rod Sawyer



Blank Wall - METRA Wall at 5297 S. Lake Park Avenue – Photo Credit: Rod Sawyer

We encourage all artists to visit the site to assess equipment and material needed to prepare and install the mural at the site above.

SSA #61/SECC will:

1. Secure permission for use of the wall.
2. Pay for permits and manage City processes regarding creation of public murals.
3. Provide project management and oversight.



Proposal Requirements

The Artist will:

1. Create a sketch that best represents the COMMERCIAL DISTRICT Special Services Area #61 (SSA) Hyde Park. See **Appendix 1** for SSA #61 District Map.
 - Mural elements are to be depictions of items within the district.
 - Mural elements CANNOT include actual commercial identifiers. That includes elements that specifically say or mention, for instance, the University of Chicago, any private property or business within the SSA district.
 - Mural elements depicting the City of Chicago, i.e. Lakefront, Burnham Park or other Hyde Park elements outside of the SSA, can be included but note that mural elements within the commercial district should predominate.
2. Provide a written vision statement describing the artists' concept of the sketch above. This statement should be no more than 200 words.
3. Durability. The mural must be designed and installed to last a minimum of seven (7) years. Applicants must submit a clear plan outlining the methods and materials that will be used to support this lifespan.
4. The examples in **Appendix 2** are broadly suggestive of what is being asked from the RFP but are not necessarily indicative of the style that should be used to create a final work.

The Selected Artist will then submit at least three initial samples for internal SSA Program Committee review. Note that final sign-off on artwork by both METRA and the City of Chicago is required for project to proceed. Please figure this into your pricing.

Artist Eligibility Preferences

Preference will be given to artists with:

1. Public mural experience.
2. Familiarity with Hyde Park or the South Side of Chicago.



Proposal Submission

Please submit a proposal for services by noon, **Monday, June 1, 2026**. Proposals should include a scope of services, anticipated timelines, experience and qualifications, and all related fees.

No more than five (5) potential Artists will be invited to give an in-person presentation to demonstrate their landscaping concepts providing more detail during the **week of June 22nd, 2026**

A finalist will be selected during the **week of June 29th**, and a contract will be presented to the full commissioners to be signed during their next meeting, the first week in July

Work will commence beginning the week of **July 12th, 2026**, to be completed no later than the week of **August 31st, 2026**.

Additional Requirements

Special Conditions:

In the event of extreme weather conditions, as determined in consultation with the Artist, the SSA #61/SECC will determine whether work schedules should be modified or curtailed to ensure the safety of the Artist and any personnel they employ.

Ownership of Resultant Work Product

The final accepted design and mural depiction will become property of the City of Chicago under the responsibility of Special Services Area #61. The Artist may use the resultant work as part of a portfolio to demonstrate work experience, but other reproductions of work will be restricted and require permission of SSA #61/SECC.

Compliance with Applicable Laws, licenses and permits

Artist must comply with all applicable federal and state laws and city ordinances related to performing these services as an Artist to the City of Chicago for a Special Service Area.

The Artist must demonstrate the ability to perform their work within the City of Chicago and shall be responsible for acquiring all licenses necessary to perform the contracted services within.

The Artist must sufficiently be insured and bonded in the areas of Workman's Comp and business insurance and will be required to demonstrate proof of insurance.



All responses will include a minimum of the following:

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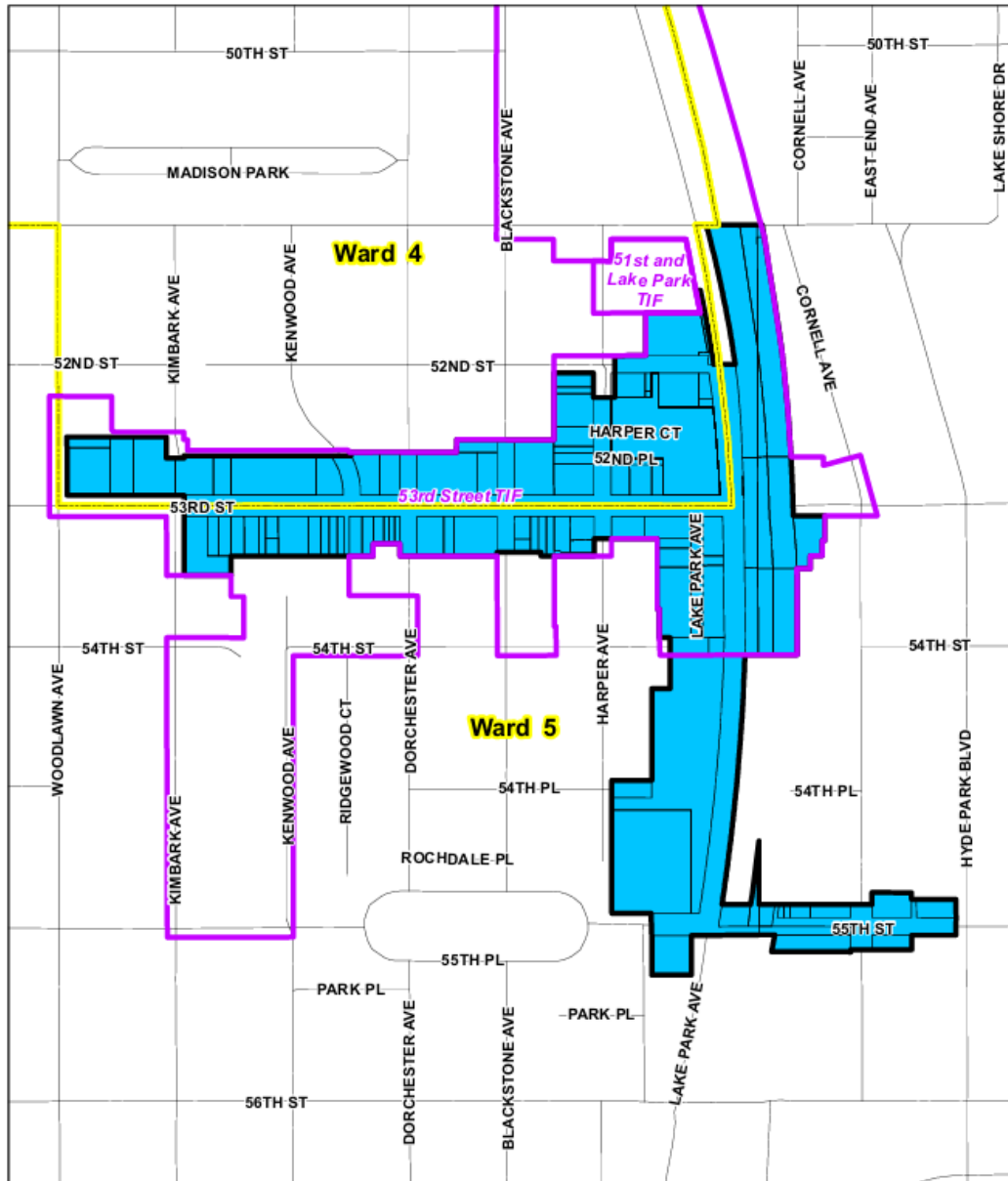
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Please send all responses to this RFP and direct questions to:

Rod Sawyer
Program Manager
SSA 61- Hyde Park
1511 East 53rd Street
Chicago, IL 60615
Email: rod@secc-chicago.org
Office: (773) 324-6926



Appendix 1: Map of Special Service Area #61 – Hyde Park:



- Legend**
- Hyde Park
 - Other SSA
 - TIF
 - Wards (2023)

**Hyde Park
SSA #61-2023**



WORK PRODUCT
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Appendix 2: Sample Mural Suggestions. Ideas from other cities displays. These are not directives.



Photo Credit: Rod Sawyer



Photo Credit: Rod Sawyer



Photo Credit: Rod Sawyer



Photo Credit: Diane Burnham