

CITY OF EAST PROVIDENCE

EAST PROVIDENCE PUBLIC LIBRARY CALL FOR ARTISTS/REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS RFP EP25/26-01 DESIGN AND INSTALLATION OF LIBRARY LAWN COPPER BEECH TREE TRUNK SCULPTURE

SPECIFICATIONS

I. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The East Providence Public Library Board of Trustees, Mayor DaSilva, the East Providence Tree Commission, and the Department of Planning and Economic Development, in partnership with the East Providence Arts Council, invite sculptors, artists and artisans to submit proposals for the design and transformation of the remaining stump and trunk of our iconic, historic Copper Beech Tree on the Weaver Library lawn. The goal is to honor this majestic tree with a sculpture that makes the library lawn a destination for all ages.

II. SITE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

The Weaver Library is located at 41 Grove Ave, East Providence. The site is in close proximity to City Hall, a post office, two schools, and various local shops. The land Weaver Library sits on was bequeathed in 1938 in the will of Susan S. Anthony in memory of her mother, Susan M. Weaver. The original part of the Library was built that year.

Our dying Copper Beech (*Fagus Sylvatica 'Purpurea'*) on Weaver Library lawn is estimated to be 125-150 years old, and the Rhode Island Tree Council added it to the Helen Walker Raleigh Champion Trees of Rhode Island registry in 2021 for its significant size as well as cultural and historical importance in Rhode Island. The tree has a crown spread of over 80 feet, a height of over 60 feet, and a circumference of 17 feet.

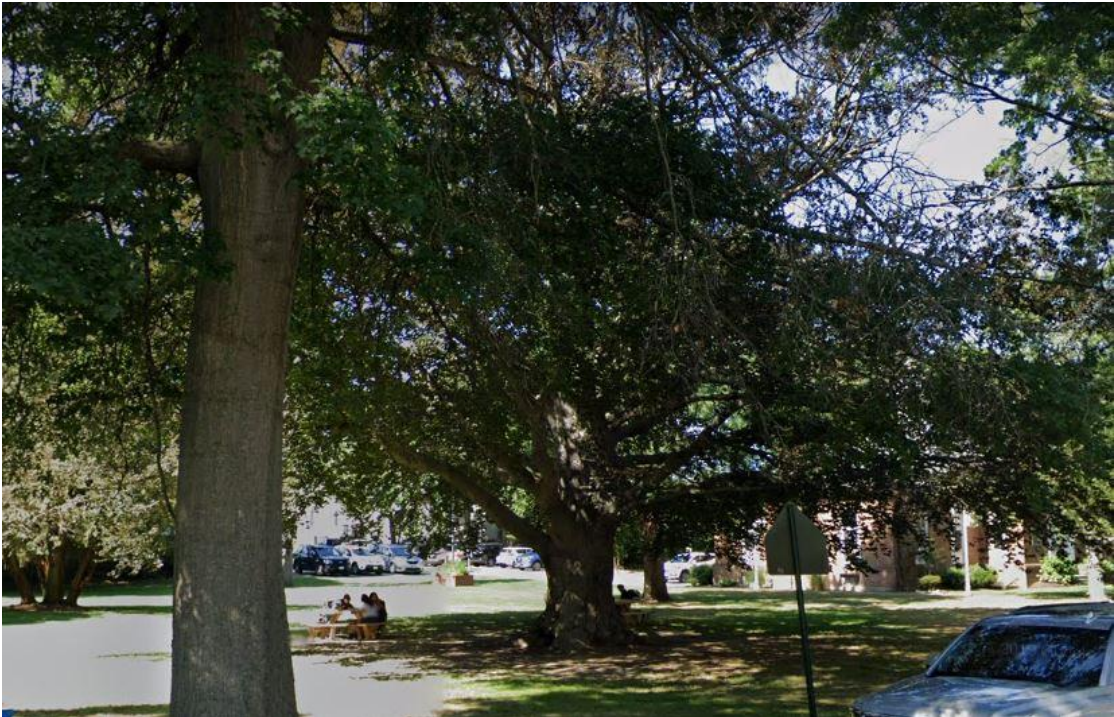
Beech leaf disease (BLD) has devastated the beech population. The disease kills and causes dieback of American beech trees in North America. BLD was first detected in the United States in 2012. It is caused by a microscopic worm called a nematode. The City of East Providence has taken measures to mitigate the negative impacts of BLD and extend the life of our elder tree. Under the care of a professional arborist, it received annual soil aeration, antifungal bark spray, a proprietary vaccine, and had a custom-built fence for its protection.

For over a century its location on the library lawn has created a beautiful backdrop for community events and programs and provides shade for people to enjoy this public space. It has been a valued environmental, social, and cultural asset in East Providence. The lawn is also home to other mature trees, including a Ginkgo tree that also received the Champion Tree designation. There are also 3 octagonal picnic tables, 2 benches, and a playhouse for children. The Weaver lawn also has 20 Story Walk podiums along the perimeter with a new story each month for families to enjoy outside. The lawn is actively used by people of all ages at the

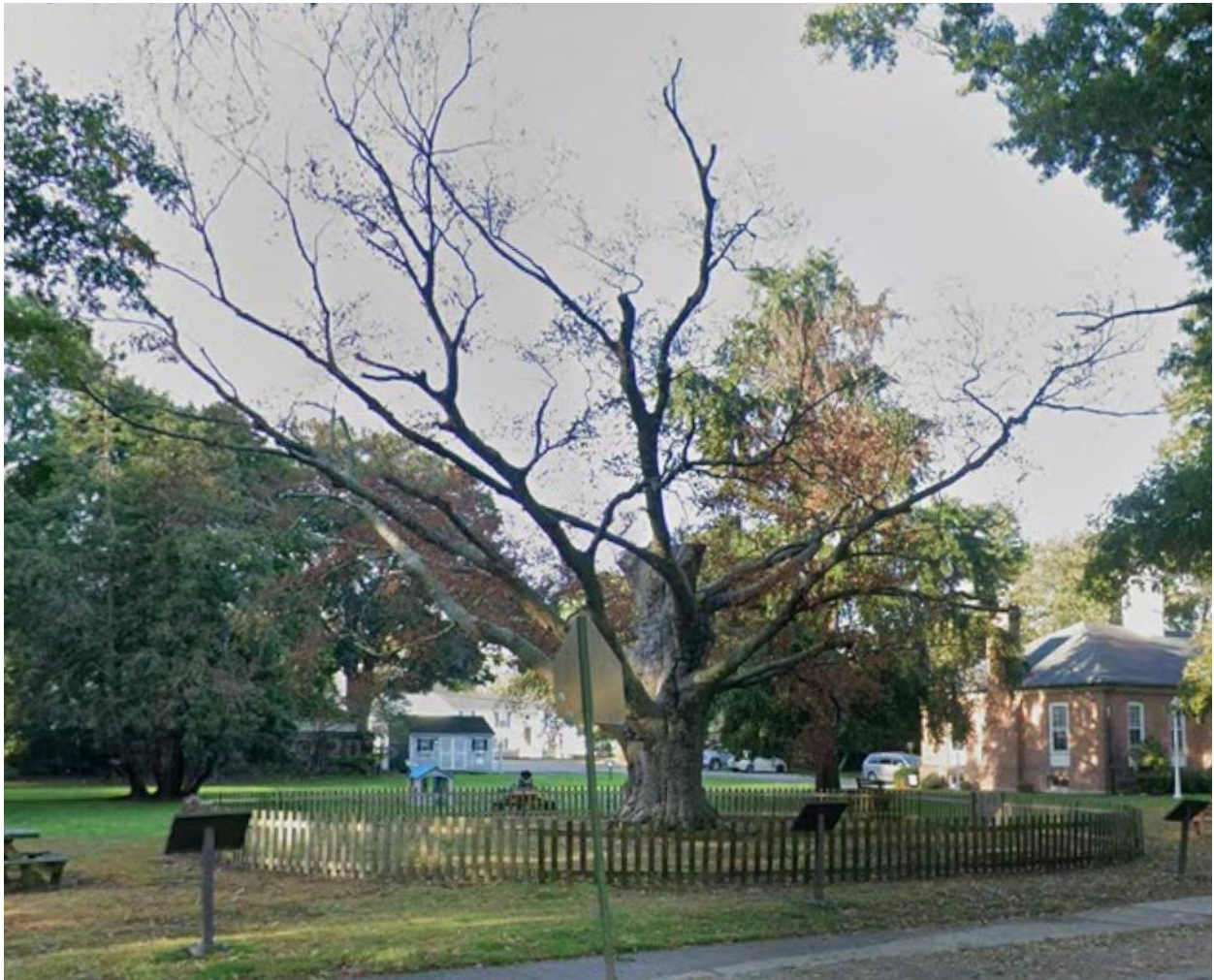
Library’s summer concert series, block parties and annual Pumpkin Stroll. In good weather the lawn is also the setting of weekly story times, performers for family events, classroom visits from local schools, children playing and even the occasional informal wedding.



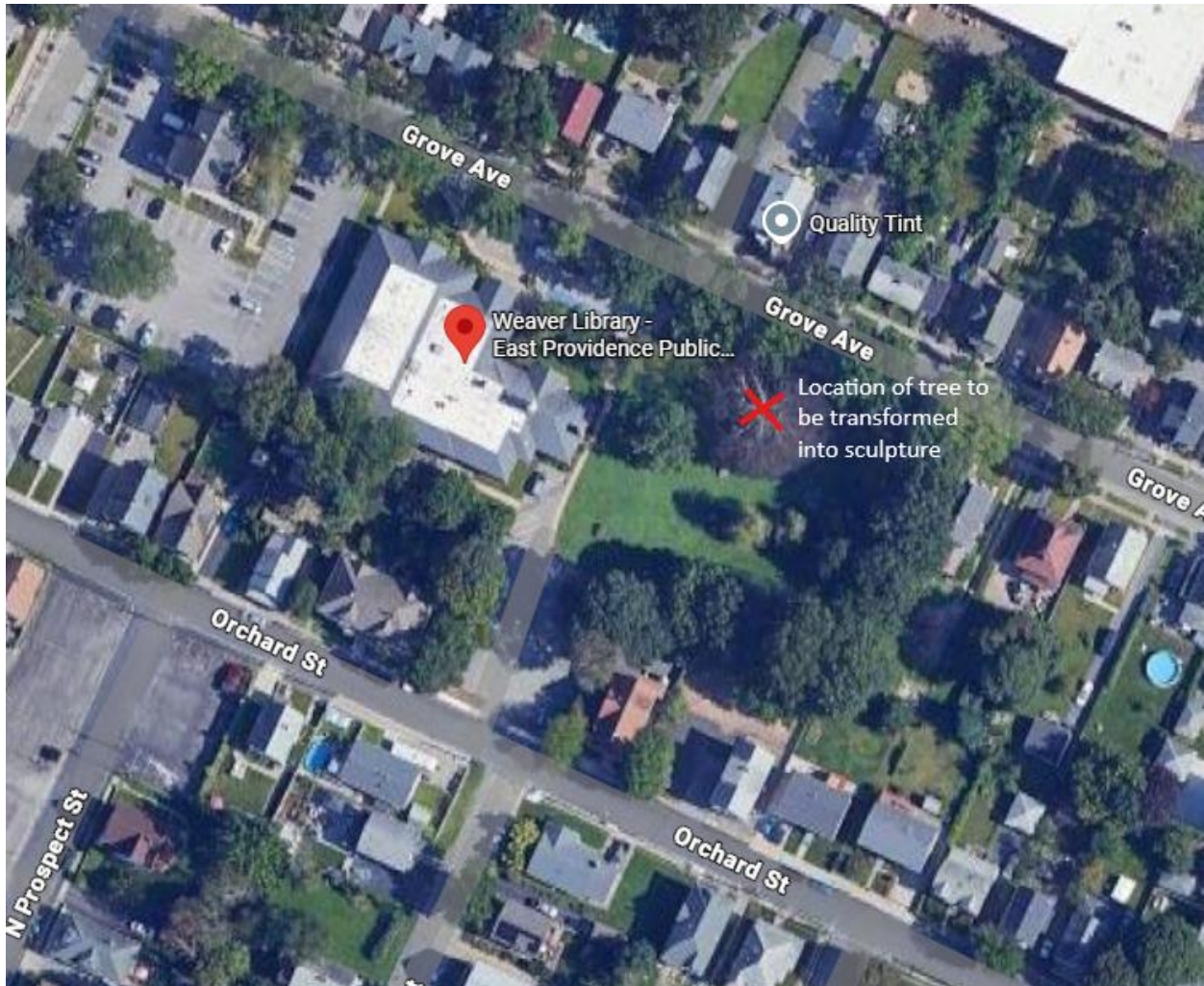
Above: the Weaver Beech tree in 2020 (Grace Kelly via EcoRI News)



Above: the Weaver Beech sits on the lawn, providing shade to visitors (via EP Urban Forest)



Above: the Weaver Beech in its current state (Fall 2025 via City of East Providence)



Above: Site map via Google Maps

III. SELECTION PROCESS

There are two phases to the artist selection process:

Phase 1: Response to RFQ / Qualifications Package

Phase 1 is in response to this RFQ. Submission of the artist's qualifications package must be received by the application deadline. All submitted responses to this RFQ will be reviewed by a Selection Panel as follows:

- The City shall form a Selection Panel, which is to be comprised of local artists, community residents, a Library Trustee, and City staff.
- The Selection Panel shall review all accepted qualifications packages and recommend up to three finalists, based on evaluation of prior work samples submitted, to be invited to Phase 2, with final approval by the Mayor.

Phase 2: Selection of Final Design

Phase 2 will be open *by invitation only* to up to three artists selected as finalists from Phase 1. Finalists will be invited in writing to submit concept designs for further consideration, as per the *Scope of Services* below. Finalists will each be paid a stipend of \$500 for the development of a concept design. The \$500 will be paid once the concept design has been presented to the Selection Panel. The concept design and other items submitted in the proposal will remain the property of the artist. However, the City reserves the right to retain proposals for up to one year for display purposes and the right to reproduce final proposals for documentation and public information purposes.

Phase 2 submissions will also include a proposed project budget which shall include costs for labor, materials, preparation, travel (including any room and board), subcontractors, and any other related costs.

Invited finalists will present their concept design to the Selection Panel, who will review the artists' submissions and make a final recommendation of an artist for award of the project based upon the submitted concept design proposal. The Selection Panel will forward their recommendation, and the final design concept proposal shall be reviewed by City staff for technical evaluation. Final approval of the recommended artist for award of the project shall be granted by the Mayor.

IV. SCOPE OF SERVICES

NOTE: The City of East Providence will have the tree professionally cut down to the appropriate size of 15-20 feet in height, depending on wood quality to be determined by arborist; this is not the responsibility of the artist.

Up to three artists selected as finalists from Phase 1 RFQ are expected to conduct and/or submit the following for Phase 2:

A. Assessment of Existing Conditions

Conduct field visits to gain a thorough understanding of the site in order to develop a site-specific design concept.

B. Concept Design Proposal

Concept Design Proposals submitted by up to three finalists must include (but shall not be limited to) the materials listed in Section XI (page 8) of this document.

C. Concept Design Presentation

Up to three finalists shall present design concepts to the Selection Panel.

D. Deliverables

The final artist(s) selected from Phase 2 for award of the project will be expected to produce the following:

1. Final versions of all Concept Proposal items listed in Section B. above, and.
2. Development / installation of sculpture

3. Photos of the sculpture during each major stage of its development for documentation and reporting purposes
4. Warranty of workmanship for a period of 24 months from project completion
5. Photos during major stages of installation for documentation and reporting purposes
6. Maintenance plan that the City can carry on for the life of the sculpture

V. RFQ SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS (Phase 1)

A. Qualification package must include:

1. Name and contact information of artist(s) or business / studio owner(s)
2. Resume or CV (3-page max per artist)
3. Links to professional websites or social media accounts
4. Artist statement. Please include:
 - a. Who you are as an artist
 - b. Themes and ideas you explore in your artwork
 - c. Your interest in this project
 - d. Your artistic approach to this project
 - e. Past or present connection to East Providence (if any)
5. Up to 5 examples of prior completed public or private works of 3-D wooden sculptures that are comparable in scope:
 - a. Include the following for each example submitted:
 - i. High resolution images
 - ii. Artwork title
 - iii. Brief description
 - iv. Materials and dimensions
 - v. Completion date
6. Names and contact information for three professional references

B. Insurance

The artist must hold comprehensive general liability and property damage coverage of at least \$1,000,000 for themselves and any employees/subcontractors. Proof of insurance shall be provided prior to the start of any site work, excluding site visits.

C. Qualification Package Submission

Qualification packages must be submitted in a sealed envelope clearly marked “COPPER BEECH TREE TRUNK SCULPTURE – RFQ# EP25/26-01” and addressed to:

East Providence City Hall, Controllers Office, Room 103
Attn: Jessica Lamprey, Procurement Specialist
145 Taunton Ave., East Providence, RI 02914

Qualification packages shall be received no later than **February 12, 2026, at 11:00 am.** Please submit three (3) hard copies, along with an electronic version saved as a PDF on one (1) USB drive, in one (1) sealed envelope.

VI. DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Work must be original
- The work must be structurally sound
- The work must be capable of withstanding adverse weather conditions common to the area
- The work must be suitable for community interaction
- Design may be representational or abstract but should take into consideration the local context, the public library site, the audience and the goal of the project
- Work cannot include logos, branding, copyrighted or trademarked images
- Work must not contain profanity
- As the tree stands now, the circumference at 4.5 feet high is 17 feet. We hope to keep up to 20 feet of the trunk and several feet of each healthy limb as the starting point.
- High quality products suitable for outdoor conditions must be used to preserve the life of the sculpture

VII. EVALUATION CRITERIA (Phase 1)

- Evidence of being an established and experienced artist/artisan/sculptor/craftsperson in this medium
- Evidence of mastery of technical skills in this medium
- Uniqueness and creativity of prior work completed
- Evidence of ability to work on a project of this scale within a certain time period and budget
- Quality of references

Additional Evaluation Criteria for Design Submissions (Phase 2)

1. Artistic merit, uniqueness and creativity of proposal
2. Technical expertise of proposal
3. Use of best practices for sculpture preparation and durability
4. Proposed cost

VIII. COMPENSATION

The budget range for this project is between \$6,000-\$12,000 depending on the artist's experience level, project scope and complexity, and time and materials. If selected to submit a formal proposal, applicants should provide a detailed budget breakdown. The Library and Office of the Mayor will also provide the artist with exposure in the form of press releases, social media posts, and an unveiling event.

IX. ELIGIBILITY

- Artist must be 18 or older.
- City of East Providence employees and East Providence Arts Council board members are not eligible to apply

X. PROJECT TIMETABLE

Phase I: Call for Artists

RFQ Period begins January 12, 2026

RFQ Phase 1 Submission Date: February 12, 2026, at 11:00 am

Notification: On or before March 12, 2026

Selected artists will be invited to move on to Phase II.

Phase II: Design proposals, compensated (by invitation)

Design proposals due: April 2, 2026, at 4:00 pm

Notification: April 30, 2026

XI. RFP SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS (Phase 2)

A. If selected for phase II, the design proposal package must include:

1. Written project description
2. Drawings, sketches, renderings, and/or other graphics that depict the proposed project in context of the project site. Proposal must include a high-resolution color image and a scaled site rendering that can be printed 24” x 36”.
3. Description of materials and techniques to be used
4. Installation plan including anticipated technical needs, including site preparation
5. Maintenance plan
6. Detailed budget
7. Proposed timeline
8. W-9 form for \$500 compensation

B. Insurance

The artist must hold comprehensive general liability and property damage coverage of at least \$1,000,000 for themselves and any employees/subcontractors. Proof of insurance shall be provided prior to the start of any site work, excluding site visits.

C. Design proposal package submission

Design proposal packages must be submitted in a sealed envelope clearly marked “COPPER BEACH TREE TRUNK SCULPTURE – RFQ# 25/26-01” and addressed to:

East Providence City Hall, Controllers Office, Room 103

Attn: Jessica Lamprey, Procurement Specialist

145 Taunton Ave., East Providence, RI 02914

Design proposal packages shall be received no later than **April 2, 2026, at 11:00 am.**

Please submit three (3) hard copies, along with an electronic version saved as a PDF on one (1) USB drive, in one (1) sealed envelope.

XII. GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive any informality, and to select and negotiate management services in the best interest of the City.
2. The Consultant will abide by all Federal, State and City regulations in the performance of the scope of work specified in this Request for Proposal.
3. The City reserves the right to accept all or part of any proposal, and to negotiate a contract for services and cost with the selected Firm.
4. The Consultant shall provide all necessary personnel, materials, equipment and facilities to perform and complete all work under this proposal.

XIII. ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTION AND NOTIFICATIONS

- This Open Call RFQ is open to all artists over the age of eighteen (18).
- All questions and/or requests for additional information shall be submitted in writing and may not be submitted orally. Requests may be submitted to Jessica Lamprey, Procurement Specialist, at jlamprey@eastprovidenceri.gov, and Meredith Bonds-Harmon, Library Director, at mbondsharmon@eastprovidenceri.gov, no later than February 4, 2026 at 4:00 pm.
- Any amendment to this RFQ will be made public and posted on the City of East Providence website no later than February 6, 2026, at: <https://eastprovidenceri.gov/rfp>
- All costs associated with developing or submitting the initial qualification package in response to this Request, or to provide written clarification of its content, shall be borne by the bidder. The City assumes no responsibility for these costs.
- It is the artist's responsibility to examine all specifications and conditions outlined in this RFQ thoroughly and comply fully with specifications and all terms and conditions. Artists must comply with all Federal, State, and City laws, ordinances and regulations, and meet any and all registration requirements where required for contractors as set forth by the State of Rhode Island. Failure to make a complete submission as described herein may result in a rejection of the proposal.
- A submittal may be withdrawn by written request by the artist prior to the stated submission deadline.
- Prior to the proposal deadline established for this RFQ, changes may be made to a proposal already received by the City if that artist makes a request to the Procurement Specialist, in writing, to do so. No changes to an artist's submission shall be made following the deadline for submission.
- Artists are advised that all materials submitted to the City for consideration in response to this RFQ shall be considered to be public records as defined in Title 38 Chapter 2 of the Rhode Island General Laws, without exception, and may be released for inspection immediately upon request once an award has been made.
- The artist(s) selected will be required to enter into a Public Artwork Agreement with the City, which will outline the responsibilities and expectations of both parties.
- The City of East Providence reserves the right to not move forward with the Scope of Work and/or rebid this RFQ if it deems that the bids received are not adequate and/or qualified.