

## Abstract

This Request for Proposal (RFP) outlines the opportunity to design an improved Giant Strawberry prop for Crane Creations Theatre Company's participation in the "Paint the Town Red" Canada Day Parade. In 2024, Crane Creations designed a large 3m x 3m x 3m Giant Strawberry prop carried by actors dressed as ants to emphasize the "*city's transformation from a strawberry farming community to an urban city*" [1] through the collaborative efforts of Mississaugans. However, the theatre's production team faced challenges with the transportability and durability of the prop due to its size and environmental factors like wind and rain. The theatre seeks an innovative redesign that improves these aspects while preserving the prop's symbolic and visual impact.

The primary stakeholders include the Crane Creations artistic production team, which is responsible for the prop's construction and implementation, and the parade actors who interact with the prop. Secondary stakeholders include parade attendees and the "Paint the Town Red" Port Credit Community Association.

A solution to this RFP must be strawberry-shaped, 3m x 3m x 3m, transportable, and durable. It must be instantly recognizable as a strawberry to effectively convey the theatre's artistic message. Its large scale ensures high visibility and enhances the size difference between the actors and the prop to further emphasize the illusion of ants carrying a strawberry. Ease of assembly supports transportability, while strategic disassembly enhances the theatrical effect, helping to symbolize the community's role in the city's transformation. To accommodate the fast-paced, volunteer-driven nature of the parade, the solution must be lightweight, easy to handle by one person (per part), and resistant to rain and wind, ensuring prop transportability and durability in a dynamic outdoor setting.

To inform the prop's design requirements, reference designs such as a collapsible tent, an interlocking furniture system, and an inflatable ball were analyzed for structural integrity, portability, and assembly. In addition to these, the previous year's props and prototypes are analyzed to inform material choices, modularity, and user interaction to align with the theatre's needs.

Beyond its role in the parade, the redesigned prop could become a long-term asset for Crane Creations, aiming to repurpose it for farmers' markets, children's puppet shows, and other public exhibitions, maximizing its value and usability in the community.

This project presents a unique intersection of engineering and the performing arts, requiring a balance of functionality, creativity, and feasibility. The successful redesign of the prop will allow Crane Creations Theatre Company to continue inspiring audiences while overcoming practical constraints in theatrical production.

[1] "Crane Creations Theatre Co.," Crane Creations Theatre Company, Dec. 21, 2024. <https://Cranecreations.ca/> (accessed Feb. 16, 2025).