

Art in Public Places
City of Austin Cultural Arts Division
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Request for Qualifications

Project: Austin Fire Department/Austin-Travis County Emergency Medical Services (AFD/EMS) Embedded Artist Art in Public Places Projects

Budgets: \$100,000 each; 6 artists or artist teams will be selected

Project Summary

The City of Austin Art in Public Places (AIPP) program of the Cultural Arts Division, Economic Development Department seeks to commission multiple artists to create permanent public artwork for services stations related to fire and emergency medical services.

The artwork must reflect the mission of the Austin Fire Department and Austin-Travis County Emergency Medical Services “to create safer communities through prevention, preparedness, and effective emergency response.” The artists selected for these commissions will embed with the crews of the stations to better understand the work of Austin’s first responders and reflect their experiences with the men and women of AFD/EMS in their artwork.

AIPP seeks qualifications for professional visual artists, or artist teams, who live and work in the Austin metropolitan area, defined as Travis, Williamson, Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Burnet, and Blanco counties. Six artists will be selected to embed with the AFD and EMS station crews and engage in outreach to the surrounding community for inspiration in creating their artworks. Each artist will be paired with a station or stations to outline their time. AIPP will work with the six selected artists as an artist cohort to collaboratively support each other and collectively adhere to best practices in community engagement and public art. Artists will be expected to form a working relationship with each other as well as the AFD/EMS staff and AIPP staff. The artist budget for each of the six commissions is \$100,000.

AFD/EMS Residency Stations:

Three artists will be commissioned to work with these stations:

- AFD Station 2: 506 W Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Austin, TX 78705. Council District: 9
- AFD Station 9: 4301 Speedway, Austin, TX 78751. Council District: 9
- AFD Station 10: 3009 Windsor Rd, Austin, TX 78703. Council District: 10
- AFD Station 12: 2109 Hancock Dr, Austin, TX 78756. Council District: 7
- AFD Station 16: 7000 Reese Ln, Austin, TX 78757. Council District: 7
- AFD Station 32: 2804 Montebello Rd, Austin, TX 78747. Council District: 8
- AFD Training Academy: 4800 Shaw Ln, Austin, TX 78744. Council District: 2

Three artists will be commissioned to work with these stations:

- AFD Station 8 / EMS Station 7: 8989 Research Blvd, Austin, TX 78758. Council District: 7
- AFD Station 23 / EMS Station 13: 1330 E Rundberg Ln, Austin, TX 78753. Council District: 4
- AFD Station 25 / EMS Station 10: 5228 Duval Rd, Austin, TX 78727. Council District: 6
- EMS Station 1: 3616 S 1st St, Austin, TX 78704. Council District: 3
- EMS Station 5: 5710 N Lamar Blvd, Austin, TX 78752. Council District: 7

Project Background

AFD and EMS are committed to maintaining safe and equitable facilities for fire and paramedic staff. Bringing a total of 11 AFD/EMS stations up to a more useable and safer standard will allow personnel to better perform their duties of serving the City of Austin community. The renovations to the AFD and EMS stations address several objectives including:

- The creation of equitable locker and bathroom facilities.
- The addition of a second ambulance and quarters for personnel.
- Lead and asbestos abatement.
- Replacement of a failing station bay.
- Upgrades to meet current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and fire code requirements.
- Remedy structural integrity issues, electrical work, refurbishment, general repairs, and updating.

Departmental Background



The **Austin Fire Department** serves a population of more than 840,000 within a 308 square mile area in Austin, TX. 1,100 AFD employees respond from 45 fire stations and 7 other works sites to more than 85,000 calls a year. Like most fire departments, AFD is responsible for providing a multitude of services. This includes operations and support services, aircraft firefighting and rescue, maintenance shops, medical operations, emergency prevention, arson investigations, professional standards, community outreach, safety, special operations, and educational services.

Known as a leader in the fire service, AFD is on the cutting-edge of technology and training.



Austin-Travis County Emergency Medical Services serves over 1,300 square miles, including all of Travis County and parts of Williamson and Hays Counties. Eighteen cities are included in this service area, including the City of Austin. In 2015, EMS responded to over 120,000 calls from 37 stations in the service area. As with AFD, EMS is responsible for providing a multi-

tude of services including operations and support services, cadet training academy, emergency management preparedness for man-made and natural disasters, professional standards, special event services, emergency communications, community outreach, and educational services. EMS innovations are world recognized and play a key role in earning a nationally recognized accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services.

Project Budget

The funding for these Art in Public Places projects is generated by pooling 2% of the estimate construction budgets for renovations to the AFD/EMS stations. The AFD/EMS stations have been grouped together based on bonds (certified debt and 2018 bond) funding their renovations.

The awards for the artist opportunities are inclusive of embedded artist time, design, fabrication, and installation, including engineering and permitting fees, oversight time, travel and shipping expenses, insurances and other project-related costs.

Artwork Opportunity

These public art opportunities are open to a wide range of ideas to be proposed by the selected artists, in consultation with the City staff and project stakeholders. Proposed artwork should be integrated into the available scope of construction, to the greatest extent possible. Artwork should be sited in areas accessible to the public. A range of materials and conceptual approaches are welcome for this commission as long as the parameters and goals of the project are met (see Public Art Intent & Goals below).

The selected artists will collaborate with City staff and project stakeholders to determine the exact location for their artwork. As the stations are highly specialized in order to deliver services to the public, there are limited locations where an artwork may be sited throughout the facilities. AIPP staff retains the right to modify artists' artwork location(s) as needed by the requirements of the project or the sponsor departments.

AIPP Staff will match selected artist with station locations. Artists can expect to work with one to two stations each.

Possible artwork locations will be discussed during the Artist Information Meeting held by Art in Public Places staff. See Tentative Schedule below for dates.

Public Art Intent & Goals

The Art in Public Places program seeks to commission works of art of redeeming quality that advance public understanding of visual art and enhance the aesthetic quality of public places through the selection of qualified artists or artist teams who can innovatively and thoughtfully design within the context of this project. The goal of these AFD/EMS projects is to select an artist who will design artwork that:

- integrates with either the site, architecture, interior or exterior of the station;
- is relevant to AFD/EMS's role in how the station serves the community;
- is conceptually accessible to station staff and visitors;
- is easily maintained and;
- contributes to the depth/breadth of the City of Austin's public art collection.

Scope of Work

Each artist will be expected to seek inspiration from conversations with formal and informal stakeholder groups as well as interviews (either in person or via online capabilities) with AFD/EMS staff. To allow the artists to be inspired by the AFD/EMS's role in serving the community, each artist will be paired and embedded with station staff. During the artists' embedded time, they will:

- Spend approximately 10-15 hours per week observing and/or documenting the activities of their assigned stations over a minimum of 3 months.
- As allowed by the station, partake in ride-alongs with on-duty AFD and EMS staff as they respond to calls and work with the community.
- Document their experiences and show how this time informs the working designs. Documentation could include written narrative, video, photo blog, drawings, photos, video, recordings, journal notes,

etc., in support of the artists process. The documentation is part of the archival record of the project and will be submitted to the City before the project is closed out.

The artist will share their documentation with AIPP staff and the AIPP Panel to support their Mid-Design presentation, as well as, the required approvals for Final Design phase including the AFD, EMS, AIPP Panel and the Arts Commission.

Each artist's final design submittal must include a summary of embedded artist work/findings, narrative description, images of the proposed artwork in situ, scope of work for the installation of the artwork, budget, schedule, and care/maintenance instructions. Upon approval of the final design, a separate contract will be negotiated with the artist to create and install the artwork.

Each artist is responsible for fabrication and installation of their artwork. The proposed artwork must not impede the stations' operations, or pose safety risk or harm, and must be approved by the AFD/EMS and other stakeholder groups before the artist proceeds with the fabrication and installation.

Artist Information Meeting

An Artist Information Meeting will be held during the open application period to explain the parameters of the project and outline the application procedures. AIPP staff and project representatives will be available to answer questions. The presented materials, along with Q&A, will be posted to the City's website for repeat viewing: www.austintexas.gov/department/aipp-opportunities.

Artist Eligibility

This Request for Qualifications is reserved for:

- Professional visual artists or artist teams
- At least 18 years of age
- Live and work in the Austin metropolitan area, which includes Travis, Williamson, Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Burnet and Blanco counties

Artists who have a lived experience with a station location are encouraged to apply.

AIPP Alignment with City of Austin Vision

As it approaches its 200th anniversary, Austin is a beacon of sustainability, social equity and economic opportunity; where diversity and creativity are celebrated; where community needs and values are recognized; where leadership comes from its citizens and where the necessities of life are affordable and accessible to all.

<http://www.austintexas.gov/page/imagine-austin-vision>

City of Austin's Strategic Direction 2023 (SD23)

The Austin City Council adopted a strategic direction guiding the City for the next three to five years. SD23 outlines a shared vision and six outcomes of which two directly guide Art in Public Places: Economic Opportunity & Affordability and Culture and Lifelong learning.

- As part of the SD23 process Art in Public Places and the Economic Development Department will quantify a number of key performance measures including, participants who are satisfied with City-offered culture and lifelong learning events, activities, and resources, and number of jobs supported. The Department will use that data to better align decision making and budget allocations.

- Because artists are small businesses, Art in Public Places may ask commissioned artists to outline how many jobs were supported based on their current City of Austin contract as well as whether the contract strengthened their overall business operations.

Commitment to Equity

Art in Public Places embraces cultural equity. It is the goal of the program to ensure as many people as possible have meaningful engagements with public art and access to viewing, experiencing, and creating artwork.

- Art in Public Places actively seeks to provide members of historically underrepresented communities, which can include identities such as Black or African-American, Arab-American, Asian-American, Hispanic or LatinX, Pacific Islander, Indigenous Nations, LGBTQIA, or a person with a disability, with equitable access to public art opportunities.
- In support of this commitment, the program will make every effort to expand access to the collection and programmatic decision-making.
- For each project, every effort will be made to comprise project selection panels and finalist pools for Art in Public Places commissions with representatives from a variety of historically underrepresented communities to better reflect the diversity of Austin.

Selection Process

The City of Austin Art in Public Places Panel will convene a jury to evaluate the submissions. The jury and advisors shall review applications and select up to nine finalists (three per opportunity) for interviews *unless there is consensus on the selection of recommending one applicant and one alternate per commission opportunity*. The jury and advisors shall convene again for interviews with the finalists and select one artist/artist team and one alternate per opportunity.

This recommendation will be presented to the City of Austin’s Art in Public Places Panel and Arts Commission for approval. All artist contracts will need Council approval for authority to negotiate, prior to contract negotiations. The approved artists will be put under contract to coordinate with the City and project team to develop a final design, which is subject to approval by the AIPP Panel and Arts Commission prior to fabrication and installation, which will be contracted separately.

Selection Panel & Project Advisors

The selection panel and project advisors will work together to review the applications submitted by each artist. A 5-member Selection Panel shall include at least 3 visual artists. Possible selection panel members include:

- » Rachel Wolfson Smith – Local Artist
- » Laura Hajar – Local Artist
- » Beili Liu – Local Artist
- » Xochi Solis – Local Artist
- » Adrian Armstrong – Local Artist
- » Martin C. Jones – Local Arts Administrator
- » Rebecca Gomez – Local Curator
- » Risa Puleo – San Antonio Curator
- » Phillip A. Townsend – Local Curator
- » Kelly K. Porter – Local Planner
- » Wenjie Zhao – Local Landscape Designer

Project advisors will be invited to participate in the process to provide assistance and expertise to the selection panel. The project advisors to the panel may include:

- Alejandro Wolniewitz – Facilities Planning Manager, Austin Fire Department, City of Austin
- Wesley Hopkins – EMS Division Chief, Emergency Medical Services, City of Austin
- Alison Von Stein – Subproject Manager, Public Works Department, City of Austin
- TBD– AIPP Panel Liaison

No gallery owner, dealer, or art agent may serve as a juror due to the potential for conflict of interest. No juror may serve more than once in any two-year period in an attempt to bring a diversity of interests to the selection process and to more precisely match the expertise of the members to each project.

Submission Requirements

Applications must be received online via www.PublicArtist.org no later than **Thursday, October 1, 2020, 5:00 pm (CST). For technical assistance with your application, please contact info@publicartist.org or 210-701-0775 (9:00 am – 5:00 pm).**

Applications include:

- A Letter of Interest answering the following questions:
 - Do you have a prior personal story or connection to the AFD/EMS community?
 - How do you think working in a cohort might influence your artwork?
 - Why do you think you will be a good match for this project?
- 10 images of recently completed relevant artwork with the required descriptions;
- Resume; and
- 3 professional references.

Selection Criteria

The selection of an artist, or artist team, shall be based on whose qualifications best meet the requirements contained in this Project Outline. In addition to the standard AIPP project selection criteria found on the City of Austin's Art in Public Places website (http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/aipp_selection_criteria.pdf), the Selection Panel will review and consider the following evaluation criteria:

- » artistic merit and technical expertise;
- » demonstrated successful, innovative and effective approach to public art projects of a similar scope;
- » ability to successfully execute a public art project; and
- » expressed interest in creating artwork within this community setting.

Tentative Schedule

2020

July

Prospectus approved by AIPP Panel and Arts Commission
Request for Qualifications open (eight weeks)

August

Artist information meetings

September

Request for Qualifications close
Jury Panel to recommend 6 artists or artist teams and 6 alternates

October

Approval of artist and alternate by AIPP Panel and Arts Commission

November

Request for City Council contract approvals

December

Artists contract execute and Cohort kick-off meeting

2021

January – February

Artist residencies

March

Mid-Design review by AIPP Panel

June

Final Design approval by AIPP Panel and Austin Arts Commission

July

Commission contract and Notice to Proceed with Fabrication

Artwork installation as required

Questions?

Contact Anna.Bradley@austintexas.gov (512)974-7841 or Marjorie.Flannagan@austintexas.gov (512)974-7841

