

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS



The City of Austin Art in Public Places program
is seeking artists to apply for the
Austin Convention Center Warehouse Public Art Project

SUMMARY

Artist Budget: \$100,000, inclusive of ALL project-related costs

Deadline to Apply: Thursday, May 27th, 2021; 5:00 PM (CST)

Artist Information Meeting, to be held via Zoom

Date: April 29th, 2021 Time: 6:00 PM CST

See recorded presentation after meeting date here:

<https://www.austintexas.gov/department/aipp-opportunities>



Open Call: This opportunity is ideal for experienced muralists, mural groups, and artists working in other 2D disciplines, however, a range of materials and conceptual approaches will be considered. **See Goals.**

Location: A new warehouse and marshalling yard to be sited at the northwest edge of the intersection of U.S. Highway 183 and Texas Highway 71. The complex will be tucked between the Riverside Meadows and Cactus Rose neighborhoods and an existing set of private industrial warehouses.



**PLEASE VISIT
PUBLICARTIST.ORG/AUSTINAIPP
TO READ DETAILS AND APPLY!**



Questions?

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Project Background

Austin Convention Center Warehouse and Marshalling Yard

To address the need for off-site storage and alleviate event traffic downtown, the Austin Convention Center Department (ACCD) has initiated the construction of a new warehouse and marshalling yard to be sited at the northwest edge of the intersection of U.S. Highway 183 and Texas Highway 71. The complex will be tucked between the Riverside Meadows and Cactus Rose neighborhoods and an existing set of private industrial warehouses. The facility will also be equipped to serve as an emergency shelter during large “Katrina-like” events should the need arise.

The off-site marshalling yard will be located on an undeveloped tract and feature a new 70,000-square-foot building with 5,000 square feet dedicated to administrative space, and another 5,000 square feet meant for shipping and receiving. The administrative office will be put into a node jutting out on the western side of the warehouse. A separate small building on the site will be a lounge for arriving drivers. The warehouse will be positioned away from those neighborhoods and face the connecting highways. Truck traffic will be able to enter the complex from U.S. 183, and exit onto Texas 71.

The preliminary site plan includes natural buffers, with green space and new trees, on the western edge of the property to separate it from the nearby residential neighborhoods. A water quality pond and a detention pond will also be on site. Future plans call for the development of a public hike and bike trail along the same natural buffer To be developed by the Urban Trail Program within the Austin Transportation Department. For more information, please go to <https://www.austintexas.gov/urbantrails>.

ACCD has selected SpawGlass Contractors, Inc. as the design/build contractor for the project. Subconsultant PGAL will be providing design and construction documents and construction phase services.



Artwork Opportunity

The selected artist will be charged with integrating artwork into or adjacent to the design of the new warehouse structure. The medium and location of the artwork will be determined through discussions between the artist, community stakeholders, the design team and the AIPP Panel. The artist or team will be expected to gather community input in the development of their design.

Measuring approximately 340' long x 30' high, the south-facing wall of the warehouse and adjacent entrance corner will be visible from Airport Commerce Drive and provides strong potential for a large-scale mural project. Alternatively, a free-standing artwork located in the open space near the entrance of the building might also be considered. Due to the technical challenges of the site, this opportunity is best suited for artists experienced working large-scale.

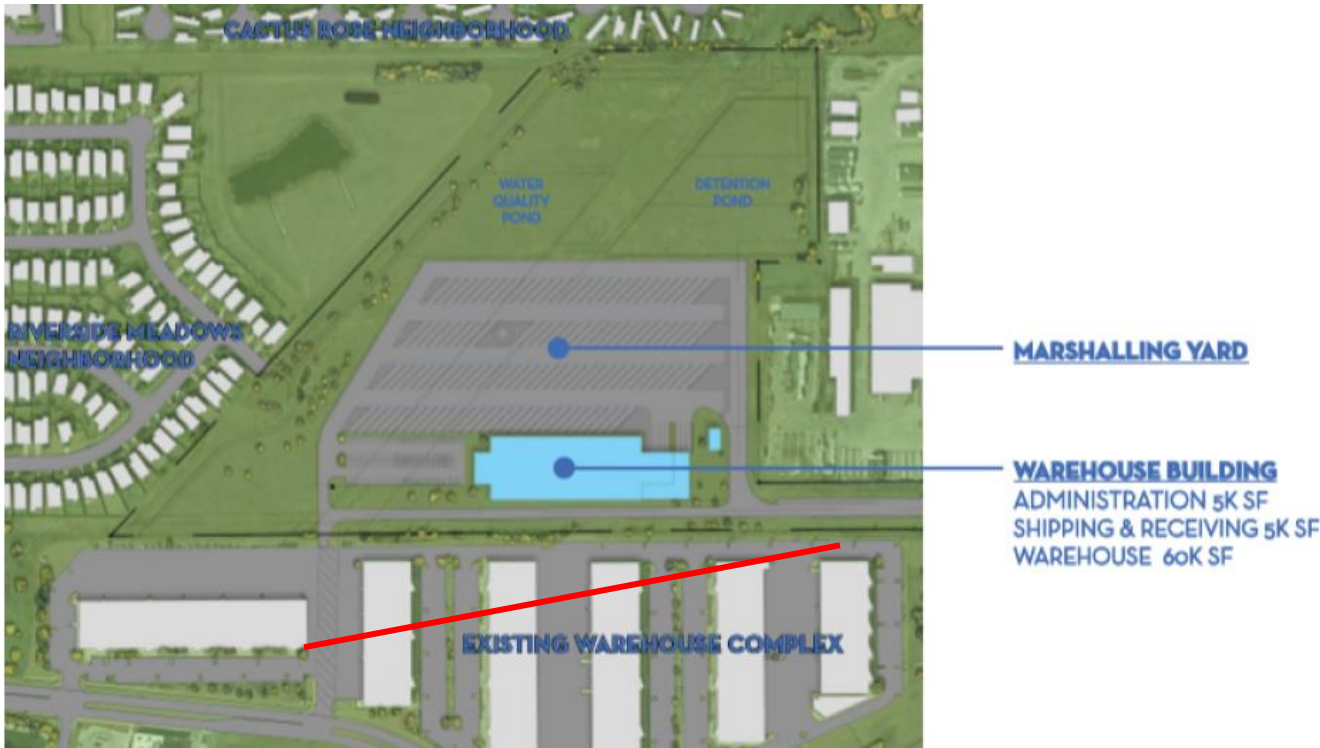
Artists familiar with the Montopolis community and/or who are intimately connected to the history and heritage of the area are highly encouraged to apply. Multilingual artists and/or artists able to interact with the community in languages other than English are also encouraged to apply. Due to the challenges for maintenance of the artwork, only artwork of substantial durability and low maintenance needs will be considered.

Project Site





Possible artwork locations



Budget

On April 20, 2017, Council approved the acquisition of 41.167 acres of land located at 838, 840 and 904 S. U.S. Highway 183 for the purpose of building a mixed-use warehouse and marshalling yard facility for the Austin Convention Center Department's operational needs. The AIPP 2% for this project is derived from ACCD's capital improvement budget for the sponsoring project. Additional funds from this appropriation will be used for a separate AIPP project likely to be located at the Palmer Events Center.

The total award for the artist contract is **\$100,000**, inclusive of design, fabrication, and installation, including engineering and permitting fees, travel and shipping expenses, insurance, and other project-related costs.

Public Art Goals & Priorities

The AIPP 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. This can be accomplished through the selection of a qualified artist or artist team who can innovatively and thoughtfully design within the context of this project.

The goal of this project is to create artwork that:

- conceptualizes a strong overall design approach that integrates with the site;
- is consistent with and mindful of the values of the Montopolis community and Austin Convention Center Department;
- inspires curiosity and imagination in a visually appealing way;
- is safe, easily maintained, and vandal-resistant in an exterior environment; and
- Contributes to the depth/breadth of the City of Austin's public art collection.

Artist Eligibility

Applicants should meet the following requirements:

- Professional visual artist, or artist team;
- At least 18 years of age; and
- Live in the 7-county Austin metropolitan area (Williamson, Travis, Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Burnet, and Blanco counties).

Full-time, permanent City of Austin employees are ineligible to apply. Employees of the project

consultants and sub-consultants are also ineligible to apply. Artists who are under an active contract with the Art in Public Places program at the time of application are ineligible to apply. Applications not meeting all eligibility criteria will be withdrawn from consideration.

Submission Requirements

Applications must be received online via www.PublicArtist.org no later than 5:00 pm (CST) on Thursday, May 27, 2021. 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 stating what makes you a good fit for the project; 10 images of 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 artist qualifications that best meet the requirements contained in this Project Prospectus. The Selection Panel will review and consider the following evaluation criteria:

- » Artistic merit and technical expertise;
- » Ability to engage the community in which the artwork is being proposed; and
- » Demonstrated success completing works of art.

Selection Process

A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) will be distributed and applications must be submitted through PublicArtist.org by the deadline. The City of Austin Art in Public Places Panel will convene a selection panel to evaluate the submissions. The selection panel and advisors will review qualifications and select three to five finalists for interviews *unless there is consensus on the selection of recommending one applicant and one alternate*. The selection panel and advisors will then convene for interviews and select one artist/artist team and one alternate. This recommendation will be presented to the Art in Public Places Panel, the Austin Arts Commission, and the Austin City Council for approval. The approved artist(s) will be put under a design contract to coordinate with the City and project team to develop a final design, which is also subject to approval by the AIPP Panel and the Austin Arts Commission prior to fabrication and installation. Upon approval of the Final Design, the City will execute a commission contract with the Artist for fabrication and installation.

A 3-member selection panel shall be chosen to include at least 1 visual artist.

Potential Selection Panel Jurors:

- » Matthew Briar Bonifacio Rodriguez – Local Artist
- » Luis Angulo – Local Artist
- » Sadé Lawson – Local Artist

Potential Project Advisors:

- » Susana Almanza – Montopolis Neighborhood Association
- » Fred L. McGhee, PhD – Founder, Montopolis Neighborhood Association
- » Amanda Jasso – Equity Office Program Manager, City of Austin
- » Alison von Stein, Public Works Project Manager, City of Austin
- » Anthony Collier, Austin Convention Center Project Manager, City of Austin

AIPP and AAC Project Advisors:

- » Jonathan Muzacz – Liaison, Art in Public Places Panel
- » Felipe Garza – Liaison, Austin Arts Commission, District 3

The jury and advisors will be supported by Sue Lambe, AIPP Program Manager, and Curt Gettman, AIPP Project Manager.

Community Background

History of Montopolis

Located in City Council District 3 southeast of Lady Bird Lake, the Montopolis neighborhood was established in 1830 as a separate community southeast of Downtown Austin in south-central Travis County when Jessie C. Tannehill built a casino and laid out a townsite to be originally called "Montopolis", for its location on top of a hill. Prior to its establishment, the area was home to the Native American Tonkawa tribe who lived along the Colorado River that was part of the El Camino Real de los Tejas. After the Civil War, the area became a freedmen's town known as "Montopolis", home to newly freed slaves who worked as sharecroppers. In the early 20th century, the neighborhood saw a large influx of Mexican immigrants. The City of Austin partially annexed Montopolis in 1952 and fully annexed the remainder during the 1970s.

Riverside Meadows and Cactus Rose Communities

Bound to the south by Texas State Highway 71 and U.S. Route 183 to the east, Riverside Meadows and Cactus Rose are the Montopolis communities in closest proximity to the project site (Census Tract 23.12, population: 8,380). This area includes the Riverside Meadows Apartments and the Cactus Rose Trailer Home community.

- » **Age:** A survey conducted by the American Community Survey between 2014 and 2018 revealed the community to be younger than the majority of Austin neighborhoods with 63.1% of the population being under the age of 34 and just 12.8% being over the age of 55 (Median Age: 29).

- » **Ethnicity:** 73.6% of the population identifies as Hispanic or Latino (of any race) with 15.1% identifying as White alone and 9.6% as Black or African American alone.
- » **Income:** With a median household income of \$37,173, the survey reveals the community to be more economically disadvantaged than the average Austin community with 27% of the population living below poverty and 28.8% of children under the age of 18 living in poverty.
- » **Housing:** Of the 2,437 occupied housing units, 42.1% are owner occupied and 57.9% are renter occupied. A large percentage of these housing units are relatively new with 46.9% of the inventory being built after 2000.
- » **Place of Birth:** 69.3% of the population was born in the United States and 30.7% was born abroad. Of those born abroad, 93.3% were born in Central or South America (including Mexico) and 79.3% retain the citizenship of their country of birth.
- » **Language:** 37.75% of the population over the age of 5 speaks only English at home. 60.99% of the population speaks Spanish at home as a primary or secondary language.
- » **Technology:** 85.1% of households in the community report owning a computer and 73.4% report having a broadband internet subscription.

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.

Tentative Schedule (Subject to Change)

2021

April	Request for Qualifications (RFQ) released
April 29	Artist information meeting
May 27	RFQ closes
Late May	Selection Panel review of applications
June	Artist interviews and Selection Panel recommendation
July	Approval of artist and alternate recommendations by AIPP Panel and Arts Commission
August	Request for City Council authority to negotiate contract with Artist
September	Execute Design Contract with Selected Artist AIPP kick-off meeting
October	Artist community engagement
Fall 2021	Target Substantial Completion of Warehouse Construction
December	Mid-Design review by AIPP Panel

2022

January	Final Design approval by AIPP Panel and Arts Commission
February	Execute Commission Contract with Selected Artist
March	Installation of AIPP Project Begins

May Target Project Completion and Community Dedication Event

Contact/Questions

Curt Gettman, Art in Public Places Project Manager, (512) 974-9310 or curt.gettman@austintexas.gov