

A G E N D A



Recommendation for Council Action

Austin City Council		Item ID	12715	Agenda Number	8.
Meeting Date:	2/9/2012			Department:	Economic Growth and Redevelopment
Subject					
Authorize negotiation and execution of an amendment of the design commission contract with Nader Tehrani, NADAA Inc. for \$50,465 to address changes to the scope for lighting design and engineering requirements, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$194,465 and approve the schematic design for Seaholm Substation Wall Art in Public Places Project prepared by the team led by artist Nader Tehrani, NADAAA Inc., and authorize proceeding with design development services.					
Amount and Source of Funding					
Funding in the amount of \$33,447 is available in the 2011-2012 Capital Budget of Austin Energy and \$17,018 is available in the 2011-2012 Operating Budget of Economic Growth and Redevelopment Service Office.					
Fiscal Note					
A fiscal note is attached.					
Purchasing Language:					
Prior Council Action:	February 25, 2010: Council authorized funding for the design and construction of the Austin Energy Seaholm perimeter wall, not to exceed \$750,000, as part of the Seaholm East Redevelopment District, as a public art project as outlined in Chapter 7-2 of the City Code (Art in Public Places). August 26, 2010: Council authorized negotiation and execution of a design agreement with the team led by Nader Tehrani in an amount not to exceed \$144,000.				
For More Information:	Megan Crigger, Acting Cultural Arts Program Manager / EGRSO, 974-9312; Meghan Turner, Acting Art in Public Places Administrator / EGRSO, 974-9314				
Boards and Commission Action:	Recommended by the Art in Public Places Panel, the Austin Arts Commission, and the Design Commission. Reviewed by the Downtown Commission.				
MBE / WBE:					
Related Items:					
Additional Backup Information					

The Art in Public Places (AIPP) Program is commissioning a work of art, inclusive of design, engineering and construction that will serve as infrastructure in the form of a wall enclosing the Seaholm Substation. Artist, Nader Tehrani, was selected as the commissioned artist, and a professional services contract was executed with him on August 17, 2011.

The artist team has been working closely with project stakeholders and City staff (including Transportation, Public Works, EGRSO and Austin Energy representatives) to inform an appropriate design given the goals of the project and the parameters of the site. In order to ensure sufficient community input into the wall design, staff developed a stakeholder input process, which is being implemented during all phases of the design process. On July 18, 2011, the artist team and AIPP staff conducted a Design Forum with city staff and the community stakeholder group to collect input to inform the schematic design of the wall. Based on the discussion and ideas shared at this workshop, the artist team developed a schematic design proposal and presented it to the Design Forum participants on August 31, 2011, for response and additional feedback. This schematic design consists of preliminary approaches to wall materials, size and scale, functionality, aesthetic aspects, and context.

In action taken on August 26, 2010, Council directed that the design agreement “require that the design team consider including, to the extent possible, green elements both from a vegetative and environmentally conscious perspective, as well as adherence to the urban design guidelines for Austin.” In response to this directive, the artist team has preliminarily identified materials that are easily sourced, low maintenance, and sustainably produced. These material examples include concrete incorporating recycled materials, recycled materials for use in a metal mesh, and Forestry Stewardship Council-rated timbers. Inclusion of vegetative materials is inconsistent with the National Electrical Safety Code, to which Austin Energy adheres, and which disallows a root system that extends into the substation. However, the wall’s design may be complemented by additional landscaping provided by adjacent development, and the team will explore how those options could be considered or incorporated as part of design development.

The schematic design was unanimously approved by the Arts in Public Places Panel and the Austin Arts Commission. The Design Commission approved the schematic design as presented with a request that the artist consider adjustments to the northeast corner articulation design and the scale of the mesh selection. A presentation was given by staff to Downtown Commission on October 19, 2011 and again on January 18, 2012; the Downtown Commission thanked staff for its presentation, and expressed to the City Council their hope that there will be opportunities for improvement in the materials and design, and improvement in pedestrian engagement, as the project progresses. The request for authorization for an increase in funding reflects the increase in scope for lighting design and engineering requirements.