



Prospectus

Project: Austin Energy District Cooling Plant #3

Artwork Budget: \$420,500

Selection Process: Direct Selection (in conjunction with Austin Energy System Control Center Satellite project)

Project Summary

The City of Austin Art in Public Places (AIPP) program of the Cultural Arts Division, Economic Development Department (ED) seeks to commission a professional visual artist whose work celebrates and highlights natural energy sources, to design and create an iconic artwork for Austin Energy and the city that is integrated into the architecture and site of the planned Austin Energy District Cooling Plant #3.

- This project will join with the funds approved and available for the System Control Center Satellite AIPP project and will become the satellite location intended for the System Control Center project.
- The AIPP Panel will direct select Ned Kahn, who was previously selected through the AIPP process via a competitive, national RFQ for the System Control Center AIPP Project.

Project Background

Austin Energy (AE) is the nation's 8th largest publicly-owned electric utility which provides electric service to a population of almost one million. It has been owned by the City of Austin since its inception in 1895. Austin Energy is one of the top performing renewable energy programs in the nation and owns the nation's first and largest green building program. Each year Austin Energy returns profits to the community – helping to fund City services such as parks, libraries and public safety. These local investments help drive economic growth and contribute to Austin's attractive and vibrant quality of life.

Austin Energy plans to construct a district cooling plant in the Seaholm District. Austin Energy's District Cooling Program contributes to the City of Austin's economic development plan and the Utility's demand side management plan. The Cooling Plant contributes to the EcoDistrict's district scale sustainability priorities by shifting eight to nine megawatts of electric power to off-peak hours during the summer to help lower AE's costs of power on the open market.

District Cooling

District cooling provides HVAC requirements for downtown buildings through a network of underground pipes, serving multiple buildings within a particular service area. The Downtown Cooling piping system distribute chilled water to heat exchangers located in a building's mechanical room. The new cooling plant will help increase the efficiency of the entire downtown cooling system and increase its capacity to provide chilled water services as new development continues to densify Austin's core.



Site Context

The site is 0.6 acres and bordered by Union Pacific train tracks to the north and east, the Gables Park Tower development to the west and West 2nd Street (aka Electric Drive) to the south. The site was recently used for a temporary chiller to serve Seaholm Power Plant redevelopment while underground connections were constructed, but has now been removed. It is within the Seaholm District and will serve some of the customers soon to arrive there. District Cooling Plant #3 will become the western-most facility on the chilled water loop. The plans for the permanent facility are in development and Austin Energy expects the construction to be completed in early 2019. The chiller plant building will hold equipment but no offices. There will not be staff housed on site.



View of an early concept of Cooling Plant #3, from Electric Drive.



Conceptual rendering of Cooling Plant #3, from the north, showing planned trail linking to Bowie Street Underpass to the left.

Artwork Opportunity

Austin Energy District Cooling Program values the role the Art in Public Places program played in cleverly disguising the Thermal Energy Storage facility at District Cooling Plant #2 (located in the Austin Convention Center parking garage) through the *Big Chiller Blues* installation, which has become a downtown landmark. The artwork intervention for District Cooling Plant #3 could play a similar role by integrating the chiller building into the Seaholm District by contributing a moment of visual interest in keeping with the site's surroundings.

The artist for the Austin Energy District Cooling Plant #3 will be expected to work with the Design Team and Contractor to integrate the art installation into the facility. This exterior artwork is intended to be highly visible from Cesar Chavez and/or W. 3rd Street, as well as the surrounding neighborhood. It is desired that the artist be available to work with the Design-Team early in this process in order to successfully and efficiently integrate the artwork with the building.

Public Art Goals and Priorities

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 a qualified artist who can innovatively and thoughtfully design within the context of this project. The goal of Austin Energy District Cooling Plant #3 project is to commission an artist who will design artwork that:

- » reveals energy to the viewer through the observation of natural processes;
- » reflects the vision of Austin Energy, which wants Austin to be the most livable community in the country;
- » is aligned with sustainable principals defined by the Seaholm Eco-District;

- » contributes to a local, regional and national contemporary art dialogue; and
- » enriches or adds to the depth/breadth of the City of Austin's public art collection

Budget

The total award for the artist contract is **\$420,500**, inclusive of design, fabrication and installation, including permitting fees, travel and shipping expenses, insurance and other project related costs.

- The funds for this project are derived from the 2% for public art portion of the City of Austin's contribution to the estimated construction budget for the Austin Energy District Cooling Plant #3. **This totals \$253,635**
- In addition, funding is available through the 2% for public art portion of the System Control Center AIPP Project. **This totals \$166,865.**

Selection Process

AIPP staff recommends the direct selection of Ned Kahn for the Austin Energy District Cooling Plant #3 AIPP project and the joining of this project with the funds from the System Control Center AIPP project.

System Control Center AIPP Satellite Project

Austin Energy purchased and remodeled the former Tokyo Electron building on Montopolis Drive to serve as the new System Control Center (SCC), which was relocated from West Avenue to allow for the redevelopment of the downtown Seaholm District.

In 2009, Ned Kahn was selected and approved through the standard AIPP process as the artist for the System Control Center (SCC) AIPP project, from a pool of 128 artists who responded to a national Request for Qualifications. Kahn was commissioned to create artwork at the SCC for the users of this secure Austin Energy facility **as well as at a satellite Austin Energy location that would be publicly accessible and highly visible to the public.** Both artworks were to explore timely themes of energy, energy usage and sustainability.

- In 2012 Kahn completed an artwork, titled *Magnetic Column*, for the lobby of the remodeled SCC building.
- Kahn has continued to explore locations and concepts for the satellite artwork in conjunction with the Seaholm Redevelopment.
- On August 22, 2013 City Council approved negotiation and execution of a design and commission contract with Ned Kahn for the satellite SCC project with the 2% funding remaining after *Magnetic Column* was completed.
 - The site being considered at that time was the west side of the Seaholm Substation Screen Wall which subsequently became unfeasible when plans for the Seaholm Substation Screen Wall changed.

AIPP staff and Austin Energy staff recommend that the satellite SCC project be the Austin Energy District Cooling Plant #3. If approved by the AIPP Panel, this recommendation will be presented to the Arts Commission for final approval. The contract will require authorization from City Council prior to negotiation and execution of the contract.

A direct select is in accordance with the AIPP Ordinance (No. 861009-A) Guidelines Section VI:

B. The Art in Public Places Panel shall, with the assistance of the Administrator, determine the method of artist selection to be used for each project. The method of artist selection

employed and the determination as to how that method is to be implemented will depend upon the Panel's overall approach to each project and its commitment to fulfilling all aspects of the stated intent of the Art in Public Places Program.

Evaluation Criteria

The recommended selection of Ned Kahn as the commissioned artist for this project is based on the following considerations:

- » artistic merit and technical expertise; with particular experience in artwork that highlights energy in a sustainable way
- » demonstrated successful, innovative and effective approach to public art projects of a similar budget, scale, and scope; and
- » ability to design in a context-sensitive manner and address architectural-scale projects;

Ned Kahn has a significant international presence and his work clearly matches the goals of both the System Control Center and AE's District Cooling Plant #3 AIPP projects. His commission would reduce administrative costs for selection and staffing, and allow Austin Energy to leverage funds to achieve significant artwork. It would also facilitate the early engagement of the artist with the design team. The work of Ned Kahn can be seen at www.nedkahn.com.

Selection Committee

The Art in Public Places Panel will function as the selection panel by approving the direct selection of Ned Kahn (Hollis Hammonds, Chris McCray, Jade Walker, Ilse Frank, Emily Little, Dharmesh Patel and Brett Barnes.) The project advisors will work closely with AIPP staff and the artist to implement the integration of artwork into the Austin Energy District Cooling Plant #3 site. Project advisors include:

- » Carol M. Stewart, Project Manager, Austin Energy
- » Jim Collins, Director of On-Site Energy Resources , Austin Energy
- » TBD, AIPP Panel Liaison

Stakeholder groups include:

- » Downtown Austin Neighborhood Alliance/Downtown Austin Alliance
- » Seaholm EcoDistrict
- » Electric Utility Commission
- » Design Commission

Tentative Schedule

Dec.2015	Design phase of CIP project begins
May 2016	Approval of Artist Selection Process by AIPP Panel and Arts Commission
June 20, 2016	Electric Utility Commission approval to negotiate artist contract
June 23, 2016	City Council approval to negotiate artist contract
July 2016	Execute Design contract with Artist - Artist begins design process
Sept 2016	Mid-design presentation to AIPP Panel

Nov 2016 Final Design approval by AIPP Panel, Arts Commission
Execute Commission contract with Artist

Early 2019 Artwork installation coincides with completion of the CIP project construction

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