



Thursday, November 02, 2006

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**Economic Growth & Redevelopment Services
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION**

ITEM No 4

Subject Authorize negotiation and execution of a professional services agreement with Deborah Mersky, Austin, TX, for artwork in the amount not to exceed \$60,000

Amount and Source of Funding Funding in the amount of \$60,000 is available through the Public Works Department in accordance with the Art in Public Places Ordinance

Fiscal Note There is no unanticipated fiscal impact. A fiscal note is not required.

For More Information Megan Crigger, 974-9312, Meghan Turner, 974-9314

Additional Backup Material

(click to open)

No Attachments Available

Purchasing Language

Boards and Commission Action The Art in Public Places Panel unanimously approved the artist's final design on September 11, 2006. The Arts Commission unanimously approved the artist's final design on September 18, 2006.

Prior Council Action

On September 1, 2005, the Austin City Council approved converting a portion of Cesar Chavez, from IH-35 to Lamar, into a two-way thoroughfare. The project will focus on creating lanes for two-way traffic, additional turn lanes, and urban design enhancements, including the installation of a 22-foot wide sidewalk on the south side of Cesar Chavez between Congress and San Antonio with double row of street trees and benches, the replacement of parking at Buford Fire Tower with a multi-level plaza with benches, installation of enhanced crosswalks, a new connection to the Town Lake trail, and installation of new signal poles and lights similar to 2nd Street. There are several opportunities for public art along the conversion route.

The total artwork budget for the project is approximately \$60,000. The artist will be placed under contract to review the design with the project consultants and create a design proposal. The final design shall be reviewed and approved by the AIPP Panel and the Arts Commission.

SELECTION PROCESS Artists residing within 100 miles of Austin were notified via mail, e-mail, local media and the AIPP website to submit qualifications by March 3, 2006. The Selection Panel and Advisors reviewed the qualifications (cover letter, resume, images of past work, image list and references) of 17 artists.

SELECTION PANEL RECOMMENDATION The Selection Panel and Advisors selected one artist (Deborah Mersky) and one alternate (Barna Kantor) to recommend to the AIPP Panel and Arts Commission. Both are local artists who have experience with a variety of media, commissions, and site-specific installations.

ART IN PUBLIC PLACES PANEL The Art in Public Places Panel approved the Selection Panel's recommendation of artist Deborah Mersky on March 13, 2006 (5-0-0).

The artist presented her final design to the Art in Public Places Panel on September 11, 2006, and received

unanimous approval from the Panel (3-0-0) The artist's design consists of integrated artwork panels that will be installed within the body of the fence railing that will border the pedestrian promenade along the south side of Cesar Chavez The panels will be laser-cut stainless steel in a flowing semi-abstract design that reflects the history of Town Lake flooding, with accompanying photos from the Austin History Center on porcelain enamel embedded into the stainless steel panels

AUSTIN ARTS COMMISSION The Austin Arts Commission approved the Selection Panel's recommendation on March 20, 2006 (7-0-0)

The Austin Arts Commission approved the artist's final design on September 18, 2006 (7-0-0)