

AGENDA



Thursday, August 26, 2010

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

Item No. 17

Subject: Authorize negotiation and execution of a design agreement with Jim Isermann, of Palm Springs, CA, (staff recommendation) or one of the other qualified responders to RFQ Solicitation No. CLMP044, for design of the Seaholm Substation Wall Art in Public Places project in an amount not to exceed \$144,000.

Amount and Source of Funding: Funding in the amount of \$144,000 is available in the Fiscal Year 2009-2010 Capital Budget of Austin Energy and was approved by City Council for this project on February 25, 2010.

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

For More Information: Megan Crigger, EGRSO / 974-9312; Vincent Kitch, EGRSO / 974-9310

Purchasing Language: The most qualified artist-led team out of twenty-four (24) teams evaluated through the City's Art in Public Places qualification-based selection process.

MBE/WBE: This contract will be awarded in compliance with Chapter 2-9B of the City Code (Minority Owned and Women Owned Business Enterprise Procurement Program for Professional Services) by meeting the goals of: 7.45% MBE and 3.26% WBE subconsultant participation.

Boards and Commission Action: Recommended by the Arts in Public Places, the Arts Commission and the Downtown Commission.

Prior Council Action: February 25, 2010- Council authorized funding for the design and construction of the Austin Energy Seaholm Substation perimeter wall, not to exceed \$750,000, as part of the Seaholm East Redevelopment District as a public art project.

August 5, 2010- Postponed to August 19, 2010.

August 19, 2010- Withdrawn.

The Seaholm District is a former industrial section of southwest downtown Austin that is undergoing a redevelopment and transformation into an urban mixed-use neighborhood. In addition to residential, hotel and open-space development, the redevelopment project includes construction of a new Central Library for Austin on land that currently contains the southern portion of the Seaholm Electrical Substation. Construction of the new Library requires reduction of the existing electrical substation facility from two city blocks to one city block, and constructing a wall around the reduced substation footprint.

Redevelopment of the Seaholm District is essential to the viability and civic attractiveness of this portion of downtown. In recognition of the value of thoughtful design of the electrical substation wall as well as maintaining the safety and security needs as per Austin Energy (AE) standards a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was executed between the Art in Public Places Program and Austin Energy to commission 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.

The Art in Public Places Program, in collaboration with the Contract and Land Management Department and the Department of Small and Minority Business Resources, released a Request for Qualifications on March 16, 2010 seeking statements of qualifications from artist-led design/engineering teams that could meet the aesthetic and artistic goals of the AIPP Program, design an innovative solution for the wall encircling the Seaholm Substation, and meet the security and safety specifications of Austin Energy as well as any other applicable codes, ordinances and regulations.

The City received twenty-four (24) responsive and compliant submissions. On June 1, 2010 those submissions were reviewed and evaluated by an Evaluation Panel made up of members of the AIPP Panel, EGRSO staff and Austin Energy Staff. The evaluators were advised by AIPP staff, CLMD staff and representatives of adjacent development taking place in the Seaholm Redevelopment District. Based on those evaluations, the top three (3) ranking artist-led teams were invited to present their conceptual approaches to the project and be interviewed by the Evaluation Panel.

On June 29, 2010 the Evaluation Panel viewed presentations, conducted interviews and scored the top three artist-led teams based on their presentations and answers to interview questions. Those scores were added to the previous scores to develop the final ranking of all submissions.

The Art in Public Places Panel reviewed the rankings on July 12, 2010 and recommended to the Austin Arts Commission selection of the top ranked lead artist, Jim Isermann, with the second ranked team led by Nader Tehrani of Office dA as the alternate. On July 19, 2010 the Austin Arts Commission reviewed the rankings and approved the recommendation that City Council authorize negotiation and execution of a design agreement with the top ranked lead artist, Jim Isermann, with the second ranked team led by Nader Tehrani of Office dA as the alternate. On August 18, 2010 the Downtown Commission voted 9-3 to endorse the artist selection process, and recommended that Council authorize staff to begin contract negotiations with the top ranked team. The Commission also recommended that the Project Objectives be expanded to include, 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.

This request allows for the development of a design agreement with a lead artist. Should the City be unsuccessful in negotiating a satisfactory agreement with the authorized lead artist, negotiations will cease with that artist. Staff will then return to Council and request authorization to begin negotiations with the alternate recommendation listed below.

Top ranked lead artist:
Jim Isermann

2nd ranked lead artist:
Nader Tehrani (Office dA)

3rd ranked Lead Artist:
Cliff Garten (Cliff Garten Studio)