

Art in Public Places Project Prospectus

Project: Pharr Tennis Center Renovation, District 9

Artwork Budget: \$30,000

Project Summary

The City of Austin Art in Public Places (AIPP) program of the Cultural Arts Division, Economic Development Department seeks to commission a permanent exterior public artwork that reflects the culture and people of the Burnett “Blondie” Pharr Tennis Center and the surrounding community in an energetic and inspiring way.

Project Background

The Burnett “Blondie” Pharr Tennis Center is located on traditional [Tonkawa](#) and [Nemah](#) [Sookobit](#) (Comanche) land (Temprano, 2019). East of I35 off of Airport Boulevard, the center is located next to Patterson Neighborhood Park and adjacent to the Mueller Development. Pharr Tennis Center is one of four municipal tennis centers, offering year-round tennis play and supervised tennis activities to the community through comprehensive programs for all ages.

The Pharr Tennis Center was named for Burnett “Blondie” Pharr. Blondie Pharr (1898-1976) was the band director at the University of Texas and is credited with writing the university’s fight song. During his lifetime, Mr. Pharr also managed the Caswell Tennis Center and was an influential music educator in central Texas. The Pharr Tennis Center was named in his honor on December 11, 1975 for the tremendous contribution to the development of tennis in Austin. The Center was constructed in the late 1970s during a period where the Austin Tennis League experienced exceptional growth in the City of Austin. Today, the Pharr Tennis Center tennis courts have reached the end of their service life and need to be modernized.



Burnett “Blondie” Pharr Tennis Center at 4201 Brookview Road

The Pharr Tennis Center is situated within Cherrywood Neighborhood. In 2018, the area was home to single residents as well as families, with 55.7% of residents living in family households (City of Austin, 2014-2018b). The community’s largest age group was 25 to 34 years old (27.9%), with children (under age 18) making up 15% and are seniors (age 65 and older) 10.4%. 94.9% of residents identifying as white (alone or in combination), 3.8% as Black (alone or in combination), and 5% as Asian (alone or in combination). 19.8% of residents identify as Hispanic or Latino and more than 1 in 10 residents (11.69%) speak Spanish. The area on the other side (east) of Airport Boulevard is a part of the Mueller Development; here, 20.4% of residents identify as Hispanic or Latino, 77.2% identify as white (alone or in combination), 9.9% as Black (alone or in combination), and 12.1% as Asian (alone or in combination) (City of Austin, 2014-2018a).

While Pharr Tennis Center is available to its surrounding communities for play, Pharr—and the other City of Austin tennis centers—are also utilized by tennis players from across Austin. In 2014, about 40% of players lived sixteen to thirty minutes away from the City of Austin tennis centers they used (City of Austin, 2014). Pharr currently features eight tennis courts and offers top-level tennis instruction to both juniors and adults. The center hosts diverse leagues, tournaments, and special events every year, making it a “pillar of play” in the Austin tennis community. Organized tennis groups associated with the City of Austin’s tennis centers include: Austin Tennis League, Austin Tennis Net, Austin Women’s Tennis Association, Capital Area Tennis Association, Central Texas Tennis Association, and Women’s Team Tennis Association.

Burnett “Blondie” Pharr Tennis Center Renovation

The City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARC) will be rehabilitating the Burnett “Blondie” Pharr Tennis Center. The Pharr Renovation project seeks to renew the forty-plus year tennis courts and the pro shop building facility with new improvements meeting accessibility compliance and address various site issues. The project will seek to add energy efficient sports lighting; refurbish the courts; replace fencing, windscreens, court amenities; provide accessible parking, security site lighting, and proper drainage. Additionally, the project will provide new facility signage, shade structures, and park furnishing.



Pharr Tennis Center Pro Shop

Budget

The City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department received authorization of a bond in 2018. This bond featured \$4 million for the Pharr Tennis Center, including a \$2 million construction budget. The 2% for the AIPP project is generated from this 2018 bond. The total award for the artist contract is \$30,000, inclusive of design, fabrication, and installation, including engineering fees, travel and shipping expenses, insurance, and all 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.

To engage local voices, AIPP collaborated with the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department to hold a virtual public meeting about the Pharr Tennis Center Renovation on June 11, 2020. During the meeting, the AIPP

project was presented and community members were asked to provide feedback for the art project. Feedback was collected during the meeting as well as after via a public online survey. The feedback was compiled into AIPP project goals, which were then finalized after a period of additional community comment.

The resulting goals for the Pharr Tennis Center AIPP Project are to select an artist/artist team who will design artwork that:

- Represents the energy, activity, and camaraderie of tennis through inspiring or vibrant design;
- Showcases the unique character or history of the surrounding neighborhood, park, and/or tennis facility;
- Creatively embodies the diversity and culture of Austin, specifically East Austin; and
- Is safe, easily maintained, and vandal resistant in an exterior environment.

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.

AIPP actively seeks to provide members of historically underrepresented communities with equitable access to public art opportunities. These communities may 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.

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 juries and finalist pools for AIPP commissions with representatives from a variety of historically underrepresented communities to better reflect the diversity of Austin.*

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 AIPP 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, AIPP 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.

Artwork Opportunity



Possible artwork location for the Pharr Tennis Center

The community has stated a preference for artwork that reflects the culture and people of the tennis center and the surrounding community in an energetic and inspiring way. Artists familiar with the Pharr Tennis Center and surrounding community and/or who are intimately connected to the history and heritage of the area are highly encouraged to apply. The proposed artwork should be integrated into the space of the tennis center. One potential artwork location (the gate adjacent to Airport Boulevard) is designated on the plan drawing below. The final artwork site will be determined in collaboration between the selected artist, City staff, and the community.

Artist Information Meeting

To ensure information about the project is available to all interested artists, an artist information meeting will be held during the open application period on **Wednesday, September 23, 2020 @ 6-7 PM CST**. Due to the constraints of COVID-19, this meeting will likely be held **virtually**. The purpose of the meeting is to further explain the parameters of the project and outline the application procedures. The meeting will include discussion of possible locations and opportunities for artwork. AIPP staff and project representatives will be available to answer questions. The presented materials will be posted to City's website after the meeting: www.austintexas.gov/departments/aipp-opportunities.

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, October 22, 2020. For technical assistance with your application, please contact info@publicartist.org or 210-701-0775 (9:00 am – 5:00 pm).



Applications include: a series of short answers; 10 images of completed relevant artwork with the required descriptions; resume; and 3 professional references.

The short answers will be response to the following prompts on the application. These are some questions that we've formulated to help you put your best foot forward in introducing yourself and your practice to the jury. Applicants are asked to respond to each question below in 100 – 300 words per question.

1. What does the jury need to know about you to better understand you and your work as an artist? How long have you been working as artist and in what media? What is your public art experience?
2. What excites you about the Pharr Tennis Center public art project?
3. What is your connection to the Pharr Tennis Center community? Are you familiar with the history or heritage of the surrounding neighborhood or East Austin? Do you have an interest (past or present) in tennis or athleticism?
4. As an artist, what role has community engagement or social practice played in your work? If you haven't worked with community, are you interested in doing so and why?

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 Jury 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.

For more information on AIPP project selection criteria, see:

http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/aipp_selection_criteria.pdf

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 jury to evaluate the submissions. The jury 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 jury 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 and Austin Arts Commission for approval. The approved artist(s) will be put under a design + commission 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.

Jury & Project Advisors

A 3-member jury shall be chosen to include at least 1 visual artist. Possible jury members include:

- » Kel Brown, TEMPO 2D Artist, Commissioned for mural at Rosewood Tennis Court (Austin, Texas)
- » Maddy Webster, BA Studio Art (Sculpture); Staff at Sawyer Yards Artist Complex; Former Collegiate Tennis Player (Houston, Texas)
- » Jamie Robertson, Visual Artist and Educator; Experienced Community Artist (Houston, Texas)
- » Janavi Folmsbee, Artist, Writer, and Scuba Diver (Houston, Texas)
- » Luis Angulo, Artist and Muralist (Austin, Texas)
- » Shiva Jabarnia, Landscape Designer at dwg. (Austin, Texas)
- » Ingrid Gonzalez Featherston, AIA, NCARB, RID, Design Architect at Matt Fajkus Architecture (Austin, Texas)

Project advisors will be invited to participate in the process to provide assistance and expertise to the jury. The project advisors to the jury may include:

- » George Maldonado – Project Manager, Parks and Recreation Department, City of Austin
- » Lonnie Lyman – Event Coordinator Senior, Parks and Recreation Department, City of Austin
- » Audra Biediger – Project Manager, Public Works Department, City of Austin
- » TBD – Community Advisor, Tennis Player at Pharr Tennis Center
- » TBD – Neighborhood Association Advisor
- » TBD – AIPP Panel Liaison
- » Maria Luisa "Lulu" Flores – Austin Arts Commission, District 9

The jury will be supported by:

- » Sue Lambe, AIPP Program Manager, Cultural Arts Division, Economic Development Department, City of Austin
- » Alex Irrera, AIPP Project & Collection Manager, Cultural Arts Division, Economic Development Department, City of Austin

No gallery owner, dealer, or art agent may serve as a juror due to the potential for conflict of interest. No juror may serve more than once in any two-year period in an attempt to bring a diversity of interests to the selection process and to more precisely match the expertise of the jury members to each project.

Tentative Schedule (Subject to Change)

2020

August

- Tuesday, August 25, 2020, Request for Qualifications (RFQ) released

September

- Wednesday, September 23, 2020 @ 6-7 pm (CST), Artist Information Meeting

October

- Thursday, October 22, 2020 @ 5 pm (CST), Call closes

November

- Week of November 2, 2020, Jury review of applications
- Week of November 16, 2020, Artist Interviews

December

- Monday, December 7, 2020, Approval of artist and alternate by the AIPP Panel
- Monday, December 14, 2020, Approval of artist and alternate by the Arts Commission

2021

January

- Week of January 11, 2021, Artist design + commission contract executed
- Week of January 25, 2021, AIPP Project Kick-Off Meeting

February - March

- Artist community engagement

April

- Court renovation construction starts
- Monday, April 6, 2021, Mid-Design review by AIPP Panel

June

- Monday, June 7, 2021, Final Design review by the AIPP Panel
- Monday, June 21, 2021, Final Design review by the Arts Commission

July - September

- Fabrication

October

- Installation

December

- Renovation construction complete
- Artwork dedication

Contact/Questions

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Works Cited:

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