Request for Proposals

Project: *African-American Cultural & Heritage Facility*

Budget: $65,000

Deadline: January 10, 2011, midnight

**Project Summary**

The City of Austin Art in Public Places (AIPP) program of the Cultural Arts Division, Economic Growth & Redevelopment Services Office (EGRSO) seeks to commission a professional visual artist to create a work of art for the African-American Cultural & Heritage Facility Art in Public Places project. The goal for the public art is to showcase a work of contemporary public art that honors the cultural heritage of the African-American community in Austin.

The City of Austin requests proposals from professional visual artists who live and work in the State of Texas. One artist/artist team and one alternate will be recommended for the project. The selected artist or artist team will be awarded a design/commission contract.

The **design and commission budget for art is $65,000.**

**Submission deadline is midnight, Monday, January 10, 2011.**

**Project Background**

The City of Austin has contracted for the design of an African-American Cultural and Heritage Facility that will include the rehabilitation of the historic Dedrick-Hamilton house at 912 East 11th Street. The design, by McKinney York Architects, will provide for new construction that will include an approximately 3,500 square foot cultural facility adjacent to the Dedrick-Hamilton house. In November 2006, voters approved $1.5 million as part of Proposition 4 of the 2006 bond package for this purpose. In addition, the Austin City Council allocated $550,000 of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development stimulus dollars to the facility, $2.2 million in Community Development Block Grants funds, and $117,717 of Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Economic Development Initiative funds. The concept for the facility was developed as part of the African-American Quality of Life Initiative, and will serve as an anchor for the newly-established African-American Cultural Heritage District.

In November 2009, Austin became one of seven communities to receive the first official State of Texas Cultural District Designations from the Texas Commission on the Arts. The African-American Cultural Heritage District (AACHD) boundaries are Manor Road to Huston-Tillotson University from north to south, and Airport Boulevard to IH-35 from east to west. The district represents a diverse mix of historic and heritage sites and institutions, contemporary arts and cultural organizations, artist studios and work spaces, and small businesses that represent artists and their work.

The African-American Cultural and Heritage Facility will house office and rehearsal space for Pro Arts Collective (a community non-profit organization) offices for the Capital City African-American Chamber of Commerce, as well as incorporate a Visitors’ Bureau which will provide information and exhibits on the new AACHD.

This new city-owned facility will be a focal point in East Austin to stimulate African-American arts, culture and entertainment, as well as small businesses.
History of the Dedrick-Hamilton House

The Dedrick-Hamilton House, constructed circa 1880, is one of the oldest extant residential buildings in the Robertson Hill area, which dates to the 1870s. The home was owned by the family of one of the first freed slaves in Travis County, Mr. Thomas Dedrick.

The side-gabled, wood-sided dwelling is in poor condition and has suffered from multiple alterations; however, it is one of the few remaining structures representing pioneer African-American settlement in the Robertson Hill area. It is significant for its historic associations with that settlement and represents the efforts of former slaves to establish, build and maintain a new community in the years immediately following Emancipation.

The home is currently owned and maintained by City of Austin’s Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Office (NHCD). The structure is eligible for designation on the National Register of Historic Places (1997 Section 106 Survey). The house is being rehabilitated for use as a Visitors’ Bureau for the cultural district.

Public Art Intent & Goals

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. The public art for this project will be located in a publicly accessible location on the exterior grounds of the facility. The intent of the public art is to showcase a work of contemporary public art that honors the rich history of the African-American community in Austin. The goals of this specific public art project are to select an artist who will design with the following priorities in mind:

- create a unique work of contemporary art for the public;
- engage visitors and showcase the significance of the African-American culture in Austin;
- reflect thoughtful expression and an understanding of how art can contribute to being “whole” as people and communities; and
- reflect the purpose, tradition, creativity and vision of the African-American community and people.

Budget

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. A maximum amount of $65,000 is available for the public art project. The selected artist(s) will be responsible for development of a budget to include all necessary aspects of design, fabrication and construction including design and permitting fees, travel expenses, insurance, and installation costs. Although not required for the proposal submission, Artists should develop preliminary estimates of project costs when developing their proposal design.

Artwork Opportunity

This public art opportunity is open to a wide range of ideas to be proposed by the artist. The artwork is to be located at an exterior location on the site unattached to the building structure.

The restored home may be considered for historical designation and so the proposed artwork may be subject to review by the Texas Historical Commission and the City of Austin Historic Landmark Commission. Presentations of the selected proposals will also be made to the City’s African-American Resource Advisory Commission.

To learn more about the facility and the available opportunity for artwork, Artist Information Sessions will be held. See below for dates, times and description of topics to be covered.

Artist Eligibility

Professional visual artists at least 18 years of age residing in the State of Texas are eligible to apply.
Emerging artists and artists who have not completed a work of public art, but who can demonstrate through their proposal the ability to transfer their artistic vision into a form and materials appropriate for public art, are encouraged to apply.

Full-time, permanent City of Austin employees, all employees of the sponsor department (NHCD), employees of EGRSO, planned tenants of the African-American Cultural & Heritage Facility, including their employees, project consultants, and sub-consultants are ineligible to apply.

**Evaluation Criteria**
The selection of an artist or artists shall be based on which proposal best meets the requirements contained in this Project Outline.

In addition to the standard AIPP project selection criteria found on the City of Austin’s Art in Public Places website, the Selection Panel will review and consider the following in the selection of proposal(s):

- artistic merit and technical expertise;
- demonstrated successful, innovative and effective approaches to creative expression, or public art projects of a similar scope;
- ability to effectively engage with community stakeholders and user groups;
- ability to successfully execute the proposal; and
- demonstrated interest in celebrating the African-American culture and understanding of the history and cultural significance of East Austin, more particularly the Robertson Hill neighbourhood and the Dedrick-Hamilton site.

**Selection Process**
Proposals and other required documentation must be received online via the ASAPP! system by the Art in Public Places Office no later than midnight on Monday, January 10, 2011.

The City of Austin AIPP Panel will convene a selection panel to evaluate proposals. The selection panel and project advisors shall work together to review proposals including drawing(s), project narrative, images of recent and relevant work, resume(s), and list of references by applicants.

The Selection Panel will recommend one artist/artist team and an alternate to the Art in Public Places Panel and Arts Commission for approval. The contract may require authorization from City Council prior to negotiation and execution.

The selected artist will be put under a design/commission contract to coordinate with the City and engage stakeholders to develop a final design for the project. The final design is subject to approval by the AIPP Panel and the Austin Arts Commission and may be subject to review by other relevant City Boards and Commissions, such as the African-American Resource Advisory Commission and the Historic Landmark Commission, as well as appropriate State entities.

**Submission Requirements**
Applicants must submit the following materials through the ASAPP! online application system. The system may be accessed by visiting the Art in Public Places homepage, www.cityofaustin.org/aipp. Click on ASAPP! to begin.

**FIRST: Register with ASAPP!**
Please be prepared to submit the following:

**Professional resume – (artist registry step 1 of 3)**
Please outline your experience as a visual artist/design professional. If applying as a team please enter information as a team and include resumes for each team member in the ASAPP! registry system.
Three references - (artist registry step 2 of 3)
Please include the names and contact information for 3 individuals with whom you have worked, collaborated or who have commissioned your work in the past. Actual letters of reference are not required and will not be accepted.

Digital images - (artist registry step 3 of 3)
Upload a minimum of 10 images (maximum of 40) demonstrating your past work. Installation or 3-dimensional work may be illustrated by multiple images. Formatting requirements:

» Images must be uploaded in .jpg format.

» Image size must not exceed 800 pixels wide x 600 pixels high, and 72 dpi. Note: dimensions are not interchangeable, images cannot be 800(h).

» File size cannot exceed 400KB.

» Images must be named according to the following format example: lastname_firstname_01.jpg

Note: AIPP is not responsible for distortion/alteration of images as they appear on monitors or projected.

NEXT: Apply for Call to Artists
Please be prepared to submit:

Digital images - (10 - 20 images)
Select a minimum of 10 images (maximum of 20) from your registry profile to apply for the call. Artist teams must have each team member’s work represented in the 10 - 20 images selected for review.

At least one image must be a sketch, drawing or rendering of your conceptual proposal. If you are unable to provide an image of your conceptual proposal through the ASAPP! submission, it must be provided in a hard copy format not to exceed 11” x 17”. Hard copies may be hand delivered or sent by U.S. Postal Service by the submission deadline to:

City of Austin
Economic Growth & Redevelopment Office
Art in Public Places Program
Attn: Alyson McGee
201 E. 2nd Street
Austin, TX 78701

Or by FedEx or United Parcel Service (UPS) to:

City of Austin
Economic Growth & Redevelopment Office
Art in Public Places Program
Attn: Alyson McGee
2006 E. 4th Street
Austin, TX 78702

Hard copies will not be returned.

Briefly describe in a narrative format how you propose to approach the African-American Cultural & Heritage Facility AIPP Project. Describe how your piece reflects the purpose, tradition, creativity and vision of the African-American community and people, and celebrates the African-American culture of East Austin. Address how your design process will engage community stakeholders and user groups. Describe the materials and methodology to be utilized in your piece.
Emerging artists and artists who have not completed a work of public art, should provide a description of how their proposal demonstrates the ability to transfer their artistic vision into a form and materials appropriate for public art.

See AIPP Artist Resource Guide 2010 for assistance in developing submission materials and project budgets (http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/aipp/downloads/resourceguide.pdf), or attend one of the three Artist Information Sessions described below.

**Artist Information Sessions**

AIPP Staff will be providing the following three sessions to assist emerging and experienced artists develop their proposals and submit to the call using the online artist registry (ASAPP).

- **Wednesday, December 1, 2010, 6:00-8:00 pm**
  &  
- **Wednesday, January 5, 2011, 6:00-8:00 pm**
  The DeWitty Center, 2209 Rosewood Ave., Room 213
  Learn more about the AAC&HF project and how to navigate the AIPP online artist registry and submission system (ASAPP), including how to format digital images for uploading.

- **Wednesday, December 15, 2010, 6:00-8:00 pm**
  ProArts Collective, 1009 E. 11th St., Suite 100
  Meet one-on-one or in small groups with AIPP staff and Panel Members to discuss how to develop an effective proposal including writing letters of interest and proposal narratives, estimating project costs, and determining what fabrication materials and methods may be appropriate for public art.

Please RSVP to 512-974-7801 or alyson.mcgee@ci.austin.tx.us as space is limited.

**Important Instructions**

- All artists/design professionals must submit via the ASAPP! Online application system. Except as noted above, hardcopy materials WILL NOT be accepted.
- Applications received after midnight, January 10, 2011 will not be considered.
- If your work is best represented by other media types (video or audio), please call the AIPP Coordinator for further instructions.
- E-mail is the fastest way to get the latest project opportunities and information from AIPP! Sign up for our e-mail newsletter through our website, at www.cityofaustin.org/aipp

**Tentative Schedule**

- **Monday, November 22, 2010**
  RFP released
- **Monday, January 10, 2011, midnight**
  Deadline for submission of Proposals
- **Friday, January 28, 2011**
  Selection Panel convenes to review and proposal(s) and recommend an Artist and an Alternate
- **February 7 & 21, 2011**
  Approval of Artist and Alternate by AIPP Panel and Austin Arts Commission
- **March 2011**
  Negotiate/execute contract with selected artist(s)
Project Site:
908 and 912 E. 11th Street

Project Location Plan

©2010 Google - Map data ©2010 Google -
Suggested area for placement of artwork.