



City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 25-0759, Agenda Item #: 4.

5/8/2025

Posting Language

Authorize negotiation and execution of an agreement with artist Emily Eisenhart, for artwork for the Red Bud Isle Art in Public Places Project for a total amount not to exceed \$625,000. Funding: \$625,000 is available in the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Capital Budget of the Transportation and Public Works Department.

Lead Department

Office of Arts, Culture, Music & Entertainment

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$625,000 is available in the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Capital Budget of the Transportation and Public Works Department.

For More Information:

Angela Means, Director, Office of Arts, Culture, Music & Entertainment, (512) 974-1534; Matthew Schmidt, Acting Cultural Arts Division Manager, Office of Arts, Culture, Music & Entertainment, (512) 974-6415.

Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:

March 3, 2025 - the Art in Public Places (AIPP) Panel approved selection process recommendations for the Red Bud Isle AIPP Project, naming Emily Eisenhart as the selected artist, and Philippe Klinefelter as the alternate artist. (Motioned by Andrew Danziger, Seconded by Taylor Davis, 5-0-0).

March 24, 2025 - the Arts Commission approved the selection process recommendations for the Red Bud Isle AIPP Project, naming Emily Eisenhart as the selected artist, and Philippe Klinefelter as the alternate artist. (Motion by Commissioner Gray, second by Commissioner Schmalbach approved 9-0 vote with Commissioner Kracheni absent).

Additional Backup Information:

The Office of Arts, Culture, Music & Entertainment's AIPP seeks to commission one professional visual artist or artist-led team to design, fabricate, and install an exterior artwork at Red Bud Isle at 3401 Redbud Trail, Austin, TX 78746.

The goal of the project is to commission a local, Austin-area artist and/or artist team who, in collaboration with City staff and community stakeholders, designs, fabricates, and installs a work of art of redeeming quality that advances public understanding of visual art and enhances the aesthetic quality of public places; links together the varied historical stories about the island including the nearby dam, the flooding, and the current use of the site as a dog park; creates a peaceful, calm and serene setting for visitors of all ages and species; integrates with surrounding rocks, trees, water, foliage, fish, biodiversity and all the beautiful natural surroundings; is accessible physically and conceptually by visitors of all ages and abilities to the park; is easily maintained and vandal resistant in an exterior environment; and is permanent with an expected life span of at least 20 years. The artist or artist-led team selected for this project will be expected to coordinate with staff during the implementation of the project so as to minimally impact operations.

On September 24, 2024, a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was released to local, Austin-area artists at least 18 years of age. Artist outreach included multiple artist information sessions held online via Zoom and in person, information posted on the AIPP website, multiple notices in Economic Development Department and Cultural Arts Division newsletters and social media, Glasstire, Texas Commission on the Arts, and assistance from the Transportation and Public Works Department. The total budget available for the project is \$625,000 inclusive of embedded artist time, design, insurance, and all fabrication and installation-related costs. The RFQ closed on November 7, 2024.

Forty-six applications were received and AIPP staff determined thirty-six applications were eligible. On December 18, 2024, selection panelists were given access to review and score applications on PublicArtist.org. On January 8, 2025, the selection panel met for four hours and determined Emily Eisenhart, Wevolve, Philippe Klinefelter, and Steven Parker, as finalists to submit concept proposals and participate in interviews. On February 13, 2025, selection panelists were given concept proposals to review from the four finalists. On February 18, 2025, the selection panel met for four hours to interview the four finalists and determined one recommended artist - Emily Eisenhart - and one recommended alternate artist - Philippe Klinefelter - for the \$625,000 commission.

Selection Panel Voting Panelists

- Ernesto Hernandez - Austin Artist, AIPP artist
- Paloma Mayorga - Austin Artist
- Katie Stahl - Austin Curator
- Maryam Taghavi - Artist
- Elizabeth Williams - Austin Fabricator

Selection Panel Non-Voting Advisors

- Dion Kauffman - Tarrytown resident
- Taylor Davis - AIPP Panel Liaison
- Paulinda Lanham, Sponsor Project Manager, Capital Delivery Services
- Ah Young Seo, Engineer C, Transportation & Public Works
- Reynaldo Hernandez, Project Manager, Parks & Recreation

Selection Meeting Facilitators

- Lindsay Hutchens, AIPP Coordinator
- Jaime Castillo, AIPP Program Manager.