



**AUSTIN
PARKS
FOUNDATION**

Request for Artist Proposals (RFP)
Austin Parks Foundation - Zilker Train Mural
April 1, 2021

Table of Contents

- A. Summary
- B. About
 - B.1 Austin Parks Foundation
 - B.2 Zilker Train
- C. Project Goals and Considerations
- D. Budget
- E. Eligibility
- F. Proposal Deadline
- G. Timeline
- H. Proposal Process
- I. Selection Criteria
- J. Resources & Links
- K. Site Images

For Additional Information, please contact:

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Austin Parks Foundation

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A. Project Summary

Austin Parks Foundation is seeking proposals from artists or artist teams for the commission of a site-specific outdoor mural to be installed on an existing blank wall underneath the [Barton Springs Bridge](#) as part of Austin Parks Foundation's work to revitalize the Zilker Train. The subject wall runs underneath of the bridge and is on the west side of the river. This will be a focal point of the new train route. The wall measures 52 feet long and between 8-10 feet high (at varying points) with no windows or doors (images below in section K).

APF is particularly interested in site-specific artwork with potential to: brand the space, introduce color, serve as a backdrop for photos, and provide visual interest to the space. The piece must be durable and suitable for the outdoors with the ability to withstand interaction with the public.

APF is working with the City of Austin's Art in Public Places Program for this project as the wall we will be using is on public land. Once an artist and design is selected internally by APF, we will work back with Frank Wick and the AIPP team to have the project and art approved.

B. About

B.1 About Austin Parks Foundation

Austin Parks Foundation envisions a community in which the lives of all people are enriched through access to well-maintained public parks, trails and green spaces. Our tagline is People + Parks and our work centers around bringing the two together.

Mission

Austin Parks Foundation partners with our community to enhance people's lives by making our public parks, trails and green spaces better through volunteerism, innovative programming, advocacy and financial support.

Core Values

These are the guiding principles by which APF will make decisions; they define the internal culture, what matters to us and how we're going to do our work in the community:

- **Collaborative:** We accomplish more when we work together, so we seek out different perspectives, skillsets and expertise to meet the needs of our community.
- **Dependable:** We are built on nearly 30 years of committed service, fueled by passion for people + parks and we can be trusted to follow through.

- **Inclusive:** We intentionally work to engage all Austinites because we recognize the power of diversity in our neighborhoods and parks.
- **Innovative:** We embrace new ideas, challenge conventional thinking and pursue creative solutions.
- **Nimble:** We work in an ever-changing landscape, so, like the hummingbird we've taken as our symbol, we strategically take advantage of opportunities, change directions when needed and adapt quickly.
- **Positive:** We love what we do and bring enthusiasm and joy to our work, inspiring others to share in our passion.

B.2 About The Zilker Train

Since 1961, the Zilker Train has created lasting memories for Austinites and visitors alike. Austin Parks Foundation is proud to be taking the lead in restoring it to its former glory.

For 60 years, the Zilker mini train has been operational under different names and operators. Unfortunately, soil erosion caused by storm runoff along the Colorado River and the Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail caused the Zilker Train to close in May 2019. Significant repair costs became untenable for the vendor that operated the train for twenty years.

Because of our decades-long partnership, Austin City Council and the Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) asked Austin Parks Foundation to get the train up and running as safely and quickly as possible. APF is committed to replacing the train and creating a sustainable operating and ongoing maintenance plan that ensures the Zilker Train can continue to bring joy to the young, and young-at-heart, for years to come.

Not just another way to see Zilker Park, the new Zilker train will offer residents and visitors a brief respite of quick, simple joy that creates lasting memories for all and evokes the spirit of Austin, past and present. As one of the most beloved attractions in Austin, the new train will bridge the gap between the Austin that residents remember and its growing future. Reviving the train provides an affordable family activity that is accessible to all—echoing the old Austin adage that everyone is welcome.

C. Project Goals and Considerations

- Develop a visual element that communicates and promotes the driving concept of the new Zilker train - creating an approachable & joyful presence, blending old Austin with new, and appealing to a wide range of potential passengers
- Generate a product that is artistically engaging and sufficiently stimulating to ignite conversation, foster interaction and evoke appreciation by train riders

and the community

- Design work that fits well within the context of the site (in terms of scale, design and theme)
- Consideration of the audience – more than 175,000 train riders and nearly 1.5 million Zilker Park visitors per year
- Consideration of the view corridors within the space
- Materials should be of the highest quality and should be designed and fabricated for durability, as well as for low maintenance

D. Budget

No budget is proposed by APF, however, the project cost will be considered in the selection process. We seek proposals presenting all costs associated with the proposed mural which are to be inclusive of, but not limited to, artist design fee, materials, installation labor, travel to and from the site, per diem expenses, project documentation, contingency to cover unexpected expenses, and any other costs related to the mural. Please develop a line itemized budget as part of your proposal submission.

E. Eligibility

The RFP is open to all professional artists or artist teams over the age of 18.

F. Proposal Deadline

All proposal materials must be submitted electronically **by 5:00pm CST on April 23, 2021**. Submit materials via email to rachel@austinparks.org. Please submit files in a single PDF format, when possible, and limit file size to 10MB.

G. Timeline

- April 5, 2021 - RFP Announced
- April 23, 2021 - Proposal deadline
- April 26-29, 2021 - Review of proposals
- April 30, 2021 - Selection and notification of winning proposal
- May 2021 - Review and confirm project with AIPP
- June 2021 - Clean and prep of site and wall
- July 2021 - Installation of mural

H. Proposal Process

All artists are required to submit the following:

1. Contact information for all team members, including name, telephone number and email address
2. Biographical information or resumes including previous experience for principal team members

3. Maximum of (5) digital images of previously completed work
4. Minimum (2) references
5. Optional additional support material i.e. news articles or other relevant info on past projects
6. One sentence summary describing the proposed work
7. Written narrative describing your proposal (250 words or less)
8. A sketch or images of the proposed work, showing scale and dimensions
9. Line itemized budget

I. Selection Criteria

We will use the following criteria in the selection process:

- Submittal of all required proposal materials as outlined in this RFP
- Success in addressing the Project Goals and Considerations including budget as outlined in Section D
- Originality, creativity and experiential nature
- Quality and craftsmanship exhibited by past work
- Appropriateness of artwork, media and scale relative to site and the train experience
- Maintainability – surface durability and resistance to weathering, excessive maintenance and repair costs
- Appropriateness for placement at the site, including ability for artwork to encourage and withstand public interaction
- Feasibility – artist's proven track record/ability to complete the work on time and within budget

J. Resources & Links

- a. Website - www.austinparks.org and train specific page - www.austinparks.org/zilker-train
- b. APF Brand Guidelines: www.austinparks.org/brandkit
- c. Zilker Train Brand Guidelines: coming soon
- d. Facebook.com/austinparksfoundation
- e. Instagram.com/austinparksfdn
- f. Twitter.com/austinparksfdn

K. Site Images

The wall is approximately 52 feet long and varies in height from 8-10 feet - changing with the curve of the street above.



Interior tunnel wall looking north



Interior tunnel looking north, showing the right side of the tunnel which is open and faces Barton Creek. Underside of the tunnel is being cleaned up and will be painted a natural color.



Interior tunnel wall looking south, showing the pillar which sits as a divider, not quite half-way between the entrances/exits



Up-close image of tunnel wall - showing surface that does have some uneven areas.



Below the elevated train track is the pedestrian trail. This view shows what people walking on this pedestrian bridge see of the wall (the upper portion). All of the underside of the bridge will be power washed and cleaned.



Outside view entering the tunnel, looking north. Both entries have an external wall but this will not be painted as part of the mural. The mural will start inside the tunnel.