

T Transportation Committee

Meeting date: October 13, 2008

For Metropolitan Council meeting: October 22, 2008

ADVISORY INFORMATION

Date:	October 9, 2008
Subject:	Award Public Art Contract for Central Corridor Light Rail Transit
District(s), Member(s):	District 7: Annette Meeks District 8: Lynnette Wittsack District 13: Richard Aguilar District 14: Kirstin Beach
Policy/Legal Reference:	Procurement of Public Artists
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Brian Lamb, General Manager, 612-349-7510 Mark Fuhrmann, Project Director, 651-602-1942 Chris Gran, Director of Purchasing 612-349-5060 Jim Alexander, Assistant Dir. of Transitways Engineering, 651-602-1937 Robin Cauffman, Manager Public Involvement, 651-602-1457
Division/Department:	Metro Transit / CCPO

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator:

- To negotiate and execute professional services contracts with Myklebust and Sears, Roberto Delgado, Janet Lofquist, Seitu Jones and Nancy Blum to design, fabricate and install public art on the 15 Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (CCLRT) stations, in an amount not to exceed \$560,000 per artist. The cumulative amount of the contracts is not to exceed \$2.8 million.
- To issue notices-to-proceed to the artists for preliminary and advanced preliminary design work through April 2009, in an amount not to exceed \$100,000 per artist. The cumulative amount of the notices-to-proceed is not to exceed \$500,000.

Background

Eighty-seven artists responded to the Council's request for qualifications. Of these applicants, 66 were deemed responsive. In July, an Artist Selection Committee (ASC) representing the Council and project partners evaluated and ranked the qualified artists in accordance with established Council procedures for FTA funded projects and developed a shortlist of ten artists. The ten shortlisted artists were invited to propose on the public art work and were interviewed by the Evaluation Panel, ASC members and several Central Corridor Project Office design team members.

The contracts will include provisions:

- To issue separate notices-to-proceed for preliminary design, final design and fabrication/installation. Any contract activities beyond April 2009 including fabrication/installation work will require Council approval.
- To give the Council the right to terminate the contract at any time, should that be necessary.

Rationale

The Evaluation Panel and advisors evaluated the proposals and ranked the artists in accordance with established Council procedures for FTA funded projects and based on the following criteria:

- Artistic merit,
- Demonstrated grasp of the work,
- Expression of neighborhood and/or local identity,
- Approach to public involvement process and outreach,
- Impact on mass transit customers,
- Appropriateness and durability of proposed materials for outdoor environment, including minimum maintenance and resistance to vandalism,
- Artists qualifications, and
- Successful completion of similar projects.

The following artists were ranked the highest and deemed most advantageous to the Council:

- Myklebust and Sears – Union Depot, Raymond Avenue and Westgate stations
- Roberto Delgado – 4th and Cedar Streets, Snelling Avenue and Stadium Village stations
- Janet Lofquist – 10th Street, Capitol East and 29th Avenue stations
- Seitu Jones – Rice Street, Dale Street and Lexington Parkway stations
- Nancy Blum – Fairview Avenue, East Bank and West Bank stations

Funding

The budget for the public art is \$2.8 million; approximately \$187,000 is allocated for public art at each of the 15 stations.

Funding in the amount of \$75.2 million is available for all Preliminary and Advanced Preliminary Engineering activities including contracted service costs through April 2009.

Both Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority (RCRRA) and Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority (HCRRA) have approved the Central Corridor LRT Preliminary Engineering Funding Agreement.

Known Support / Opposition

The artists and station assignments are consistent with the recommendation made by the ASC (see Attachment 1).

The project partners and community support integrating public art into Central Corridor LRT.

Central Corridor LRT Public Art RFP Artist Selection Committee Recommendation

Summary

The Met Council solicited artists to design, fabricate and install art at the 15 stations on the Central Corridor LRT (CCLRT). This solicitation included issuing an RFQ, identifying a shortlist of qualified artist and issuing an RFP to the shortlisted artists for final selection. An Artist Section Committee (ASC) representing project partners is assisting the Met Council in the procurement process by providing recommendations on the finalists.

Proposals were received on September 10, 2008 and distributed to participating ASC members. Interviews were conducted with the 10 artist finalists on September 17 and 18, 2008. Each interview was 40 minutes and included a presentation by the proposing artist followed by a question and answer session. The interviews were attended by the ASC and members of Met Council's evaluation panel.

Following the interviews the ASC and evaluation panel members discussed the merits of the 10 presentations and proposals.

The ASC provided the following recommendations:

- Myklebust and Sears – Union Depot, Raymond and Westgate stations
- Roberto Delgado – 4th and Cedar Streets, Snelling and Stadium Village stations
- Janet Lofquist – 10th Street, Capitol East and 29th Avenue stations
- Seitu Jones – Rice Street, Dale Street and Lexington Parkway stations
- Nancy Blum – Fairview Avenue, East Bank and West Bank stations

Details on the evaluation/selection process are provided below.

Discussion

Prior to conducting interviews, ASC members participated in a pre-interview meeting with Metro Transit's procurement director, Chris Gran. Chris reviewed the evaluation and selection process for this procurement. The Met Council has requested that the ASC recommend up to five artists from the shortlisted 10 proposers (the 10 shortlisted artists were previously recommended by the ASC as part of the RFQ process). Jim Alexander noted that two of the original ASC members were no longer participating in the selection process: Erin McLennon with the Minnesota State Arts Board had a scheduling conflict and Marcus Young representing Saint Paul chose not to participate in the proposal evaluation process.

Elimination Round

Following the interviews, the ASC agreed to identify the artists that should not be considered further. These include:

Wing Young Huie and Locust Architecture – the ASC expressed a favorable impression of Wing's photography, however the technology and materials suggested by the team to integrate Wing's photos with the stations is untried by the team and drew serious concerns with the committee.

Michael Singer – this artist offered some intriguing concepts incorporating art with water. While some of the artist's work has been implemented in cold weather climates, the ASC felt that the station environment was not of sufficient scale to accommodate the proposed artwork. CCPO technical advisors also suggested that the proposed art work would pose technical challenges to the design.

Braaksma/Huerta – this team did not blend well together and the proposal was not well researched or presented. Concerns were also raised with this team's ability to work with the community.

Urban Rock Design – members of the ASC expressed concerns with the proposed design and approach. The design was neither well researched nor tested. The ASC discussed the possibility of

using this team for thread art, but concluded that the team's proposal would interfere and/or conflict with other artist's work at the stations.

Jefre – the ASC expressed concerns with Jefre's proposal because it essentially ignores the station design concepts that were provided with the RFP. It was noted that the artist's proposed process does not apply to art but rather to urban design and planning. It was also noted that the artist did not convincingly demonstrate a grasp of materials or fabrication.

Finalists

Myklebust and Sears – Union Depot, Raymond and Westgate stations

This team was recommended because of its well grounded approach to public art on the stations. The team's approach is particularly well suited to designing art for stations located in historical districts (the team conducted extensive research on the history of station areas in its proposal). The team has a good track record with other public art projects and understands the concept of integrating art into the station design. CCPO technical advisors indicated the team works with materials that are well suited to the Twin Cities environment.

Seitu Jones – Rice Street, Dale Street and Lexington Parkway stations

Seitu Jones' proposal offers a plethora of art possibilities for Rice, Dale and Lexington stations. It was felt that this artist and his team would be well suited to work at these stations based on the artist's strong knowledge of the neighborhood and its history. Jones' proposal incorporating architectural references to architect Clarence Wigington is particularly insightful. Jones has included three emerging artists on his team who will assist in the design which was favorably viewed by the ASC. This artist has a good local track record with other public art projects and has demonstrated flexibility in the development and implementation processes. CCPO technical advisors indicated that the materials and concepts proposed would work well with the stations; the one exception is the aluminum canopy would not be appropriate, but it was felt that because of the artist's expressed flexibility that significant modifications to this part of the concept is not anticipated to be an issue.

Janet Lofquist - 10th Street, Capitol East and 29th Avenue stations

Janet Lofquist's art technique is to incorporate words and language in a variety of media. The ASC recommends Lofquist for the 10th Street and Capitol East stations because of the appropriateness of subtle, dignified art at these stations and her strong background developing public art with an architectural quality. The ASC and technical advisors also suggested that her choice of materials and use of words would also work well with the Prospect Park community on the 29th Avenue station. There was extensive discussion by ASC members on Lofquist's past public art projects and ASC members felt she would work well on the ASC identified stations and be able to adapt her designs as needed.

Nancy Blum – Fairview Avenue, East Bank and West Bank stations

Nancy Blum is recommended for the East and West Bank stations because of her environmentally themed approach with flora and fauna and because of the large scale of her proposed artwork. The ASC also recommended that Blum design the art for the Fairview Avenue station, the station which she proposed. The ASC noted that this artist has a good track record working with institutional entities and would work well in the university environment. The CCPO technical team advised that they could work with Blum to develop an integrated design with the stations.

Roberto Delgado – 4th and Cedar Streets, Snelling Avenue and Stadium Village stations

Delgado's approach using photo murals was well received by the ASC. The committee felt that the artist would work well with the community in the development of public art, particularly with local schools. It was felt that because of Delgado's intense color palette that this artist should work on stations scattered along the entire line rather than at adjacent stations. The ASC felt that Snelling Avenue station was an ideal choice for Delgado's work and there was a strong desire to include his work in downtown Saint Paul and the Stadium Village station at the University.

The CCPO technical advisors indicated that Delgado's material selection would work well with the stations, but cautioned against applications that would be subject to foot traffic.