

# 2026 DESIGN BRIEF

# WaterWork

## OVERVIEW

Design Austin is excited to announce *WaterWork*, a projection-mapped art and light show set to transform the historic Seaholm Intake Building along Lady Bird Lake. This event celebrates and showcases the vibrant culture and unique spirit of Austin, Texas, through a stunning visual experience that brings together the creative talents of local artists, designers, and innovators.

Design Austin is seeking 10-15 visual artists or creative teams to participate in the third iteration of *WaterWork*. Each artist or team will create original artwork to be projected onto the facade of the Seaholm Intake building after sunset on September 25 and 26. Artwork should consider the theme, and be created by artists local to Austin or with a connection to Austin. Final artwork should be delivered as a motion file that will be combined into a unique, one-of-a-kind show.

## ARTWORK GOALS

1. **CELEBRATE AUSTIN:** Artists are invited to share their unique POV of what makes Austin special.
2. **HIGHLIGHT THE SEAHOLM INTAKE BUILDING:** Transform the renewed Seaholm Intake Building into a luminous masterpiece using state-of-the-art projection mapping technology, emphasizing its status as a beloved Austin landmark.
3. **INSPIRE AUDIENCES:** Encourage viewers to see Austin as a unique and creative hub full of talented artists and designers.
4. **CREATE DYNAMIC VISUAL EFFECTS:** Utilize projection mapping techniques to create three-dimensional visual effects, turning the building's façade into a living, breathing canvas of art, light, and motion.

## ARTWORK THEME: TRANSFORMATION

*WaterWork* is a celebration of Austin's evolving cityscape and our multifaceted community. We encourage pieces that reflect how the city and nature coexist and inspire one another, with an emphasis on the dynamic interplay between the urban environment and the area's rich biodiversity, including the landscape itself (lake, trail, sky, flora & fauna, etc.) Abstract interpretations are welcome.

*Austin is a city in constant motion. Buildings rise, neighborhoods shift, and new communities continue to shape the cultural landscape.*

*With transformation comes both renewal and loss. This year, we are interested in work that reflects on what endures and what emerges. How can identity, memory, and a sense of place persist even as the landscape evolves? How does the meeting of old and new create something vibrant and unexpected?*

## HONORARIUM

Each artist or team will receive a \$1000 honorarium. Artist name(s), bios, and links to website portfolios/socials will be shared on our website, in the show program, and in promotional materials.

## ELIGIBILITY

Artists and designers of all mediums are encouraged to submit interest by filling out an application [here](#). Preference will be given to local artists, but those outside of Austin will be considered. To allow space for new artists, previous participants are asked to wait one year before reapplying.



## ARTWORK + TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

### CONTENT

Proposed artwork should:

- Treat the Seaholm Intake Facility building as a canvas for dynamic projection mapping. Use of graphics that specifically map to, amplify, or play with elements of the facade are particularly of interest. Please also consider the facade is an uneven surface that will distort the image for viewers at various angles. Small text discouraged. Title, artist name, and credits will be listed elsewhere.
- Be suitable for all audiences and refrain from including any of the following: graphic images, profanity, pornography/sex/nudity, depictions of weapons or violence, alcohol/drugs/smoking, frightening or intense scenes, offensive language or references

**SOUND:** Artist files should be delivered as visual files only. No audio.

**FILE FORMAT:** .mp4 or .mov

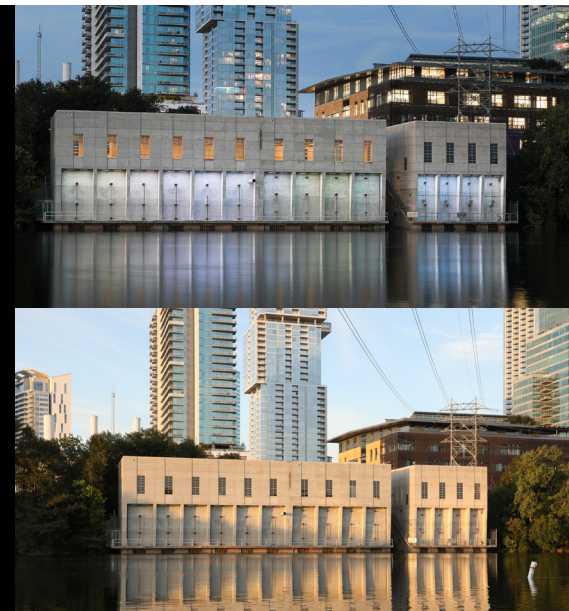
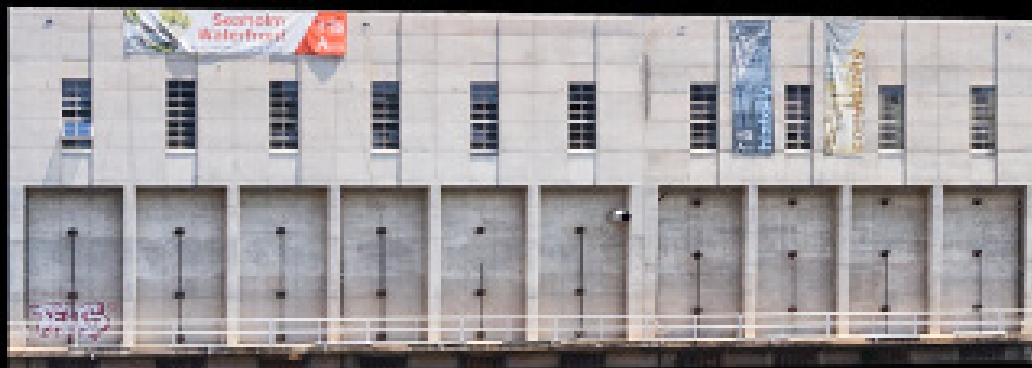
**RESOLUTION AND ASPECT RATIO:** High-resolution, exact pixel dimensions TBD (see below photo for building facade: 3840 x 2160 total canvas resolution)

**FRAME RATE:** 30 frames per second (FPS)

**LENGTH:** 2 minutes

**REFERENCES:** Check out the 2025 highlight reel [here](#) to be used only as a visual reference for projected art, not as creative direction – we are seeking your unique touch!

### 3840 x 2160 TOTAL CANVAS RESOLUTION



## PROJECT BACKGROUND

- **A COMMUNITY EFFORT** — *WaterWork* is a community-driven event that aims to inspire Austinites by highlighting the innovative work of artists and designers from the city and beyond. By showcasing this preserved building and demonstrating its significance for both the past and future of the city, *Waterwork* celebrates the city's rich heritage while embracing its dynamic evolution.
- **HISTORY OF THE SEAHOLM INTAKE FACILITY** — The Seaholm Intake Facility, an iconic Art Moderne structure, served as the pump house for the Seaholm Power Plant until 1989. Stretching over 200 feet along Lady Bird Lake, it provided cooling water to the steam condensers in the Turbine Generator Building located to the north. Decommissioned in 1996, the structure remained vacant until 2016 when Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) and key partners engaged Studio Gang to develop a plan for its public use. In 2022, extensive exterior cleaning revealed its beautiful Art Moderne features, marking progress towards its future public accessibility.



## TIMELINE

**MAY 3, 11:59PM:** Application deadline

**MAY:** Design Austin notifies selected artists

**JUNE:** Announcement of artists, public save the date released

**JULY 31:** Deadline for completed motion file from participating artists

**SEPTEMBER 25 & 26:** *WaterWork* show debut (2 nights, A/V rehearsal TBD)

This project is supported in part by the City of Austin  
Arts, Culture, Music and Entertainment Department.

