

# CITY OF ROCHESTER MINNESOTA

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### A Vision For The Public Realm Downtown Commercial Historic District

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The City of Rochester Minnesota is soliciting proposals from qualified consulting firms (“Consultant”) to create *A Vision for the Public Realm*, in our recently designated Downtown Commercial Historic District.

Designated as a historic landmark district, under the local Unified Development Code in 2024, the area includes thirty-one properties, all but four being contributing to the district. Historically significant due to its representation as part of Rochester’s original central business district and for its association with trading goods, services and commodities within Rochester and the larger geographic region, the period of significance is 1870-1962. While architectural styles of the buildings vary greatly, their zero lot line placement on rectangular platted lots and blocks and an orientation of street-facing facades with primary entries from the street and first floor commercial use is what links them thematically.

The district extends approximately three blocks in length, shifting from Broadway Avenue South to First Avenue Southwest, it covers an over 2-block (8 acre) area. Its south and eastern most properties (300 & 400 block of Broadway Ave S) back up to the “Riverfront Redevelopment” area, which provides access to the Zumbro River and was recently subject of a small area plan.

The local historic district is also located within the boundary of the Destination Medical Center (DMC) economic development district. The DMC initiative is one of the largest and most innovative economic development strategies ever undertaken in Minnesota. Its purpose is to secure Rochester’s and Minnesota’s status as a global medical destination now and in the future.

#### **Project Goals**

Engagement with property owners and other district stakeholders will bring a variety of individuals together along with local organizations to create **a common vision** for the newly designated historic district. While this process will likely identify opportunities for new programs, the resulting report will focus on physical design of the public realm within and leading into the historic district. Particular goals of this project include:

- A process that welcomes property and business owners, residents, and other stakeholders of the historic district to participate in developing a common vision.

- Identification of existing cultural & natural features within and adjacent to the historic district, determining appropriate designs for nodes and pathways to provide ways both to preserve and to utilize these as resources for the community.
- Development of a unique identity for the district, which celebrates the history of the community, within the district period of significance (1870-1962) but also relates to other unique downtown sub districts such as Discovery Square, Heart of the City, and the river and to a broader Rochester “brand” of a forward looking, technical and scientific inquisitive culture.
- A report that considers and includes:
  - Best practice designs to improve the public realm within the district, to both preserve contributing historic features and to recognize the need for modern improvements within a changing community.
  - Design concepts for multi-modal transit corridors, including pedestrian and bicycle connectivity (paths/routes) into, through, and from the district to the Riverfront, BRT stations, Discovery Square, Heart of the City, and other nearby destinations.
  - Design concepts of public amenity and infrastructure features, including streetscape elements, to increase the sustainable use of the district and adjacent environment.
  - Design concepts for open space, natural, and cultural amenities including public greenspace, the potential reuse of historic structures, historic objects, public art, and story-telling/interpretation of the history of the area.

## **II. COMMUNITY AND PLANNING AREA BACKGROUND**

The City of Rochester is a unique city that enjoys a growing and diverse population, a high employment rate, and international connectivity, unlike other Midwestern communities of a similar size. Home to the Mayo Clinic, Rochester welcomes more than 3 million visitors annually, competing with cities across the nation and around the world for the best and the brightest minds in health and technology.

Since its incorporation, Rochester has grown to become the third-largest city in Minnesota and the largest city in the state outside of the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. We expect this trend to continue through 2040, resulting in a more diverse community with a greater variety of economic housing, transportation, and social needs. These changes will provide our city with major opportunities for a prosperous and sustainable pattern of growth and development.

Rochester serves as the economic, transportation, and cultural hub for southeastern Minnesota and is a convenient destination not only for regional commuters, but also for national and global patients, business travelers, and other visitors. In 2022, Rochester had an employment base of approximately 129,000 jobs. The 2020 US Census reported a population of 121,395 people. These figures are projected to increase with the continued effort of the \$6 billion Destination Medical Center economic development initiative and Mayo Clinic’s announcement of Bold. Forward. Unbound., an unprecedented \$5 billion investment into downtown Rochester.

For additional information on Rochester and recent initiatives, please visit the following web sites:

- [Downtown Commercial Historic District Designation Study](#)
- [Rochester Riverfront Small Area Plan](#)
- [DMC Destination Medical Center](#)
- [Rochester Active Transportation Plan](#)

### **III. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

The proposal shall include the following information and be organized in the manner specified below.

#### **Letter of Transmittal**

A cover letter signed by an authorized representative of the firm briefly outlining the firm's understanding of the work. The cover letter must contain a commitment to provide the services described and the name, address, telephone number, and fax number and email of the consultant's primary contact person. Please also include a summary of the firm's understanding of the project.

#### **Qualifications of firm(s)**

- List the names of the anticipated project manager and other key personnel associated with the project. A resume of their qualifications and experience should be attached along with the percentage of time each person is anticipated to devote to the project.
- Describe the name and location of any subconsulting firms that will be used by the firm and the approximate percentage of work that would be performed by each of these firms. Include the experience and qualifications of the subconsultant firm and their key personnel in working on similar projects.
- Describe the experience of the firm in conducting projects of a size and nature similar to this project. Include previous projects with similar budgets and deadlines and whether the firm met the established criteria.
- Include a project list with contacts for all similar projects that have been completed in the past 3 years. Identify the key personnel who worked on the referenced projects and who are expected to work on this project.
- Discuss the firm's ability to integrate this project into the firm's present workload.

#### **Scope of Services**

Please provide a proposed scope of services that addresses the following deliverables, including but not limited to:

- Public Engagement that includes historic district property owners, business owners, residents, and other stakeholders of the Downtown Commercial Historic District. The proposal should include an engagement plan that identifies the spectrum of outreach activities to incorporate district stakeholders including under-represented communities.
- A project report that provides a synopsis of the community engagement process and its outcomes along with:
  - Maps:

- 2-dimensional plan views showing properties of significance, district boundaries and areas of opportunity;
- Identification of existing features and resources to preserve and highlight as well as areas of vulnerability;
- Pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular routes into and through the district, showing strategies for improving connectivity between district and adjacent areas;
- Design Best Practices with illustrations (including but not limited to):
  - Streetscape elements, including lighting, pavement, landscape, furnishings, & landmark features;
  - Public & private plazas and gathering areas;
  - Signage identifying historic & cultural recognition (interpretive information) and wayfinding;
  - Building façade design (including for variety of styles present but not for specific properties)
- Public Realm Improvement Plan, identifying priority projects, estimated costs, and phasing for upcoming public projects within the district.
- Programmatic ideas and opportunities identified through the process should be documented in the report for future additional consideration.

**Assumptions:**

- Plans, proposals and best practices will be consistent with existing ordinance & adopted design guideline, including secretary of interior standards for the treatment of historic properties **OR** indicate a recommendation to reconsider existing policy.
- This project will articulate a character for the public realm that will imbue the district with a stronger cohesion and sense of place as documented in the eligibility study.

**Proposed Project Schedule**

Provide a project schedule outlining the time-line and estimated completion date of the proposed scope of work for design services. This should include a schedule for and description of all deliverable products throughout the project period, including phases and milestones.

**Fees and Compensation**

Provide a proposed cost plus expenses budget for completion of the scope of services with cost breakdowns by scope element. Quotation of fees and compensation shall remain firm for a period of at least 90 days from the proposal submission deadline.

**IV. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

- Format: A pdf submitted digitally
- Deadline: Monday, December 16th, 5 p.m. central time.
- All proposals become the property of the City of Rochester and will not be returned.
- The City of Rochester reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or portions of proposals and to negotiate changes with any consultant.
- The City of Rochester is not liable for any cost incurred by any consultant prior to the execution of an agreement or contract, nor shall the City be liable for any costs incurred by the consultant that are not specified in any contract.

## V. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be screened to ensure that they meet the minimum requirements of the proposal format. A selection committee will evaluate qualifying proposals. Factors to be considered by the committee include the following:

- Qualifications and experience of firm and any subconsultants;
- Qualifications and experience of the principal consulting staff and of subconsulting staff who will work on the project;
- Understanding of project scope and level of interest;
- A public engagement plan including methods and strategies;
- Approach to completing scope of services including creativity and problem solving;
- Responsiveness and compatibility between consultants and the City;
- Ability to communicate;
- Proposed schedule required to complete project;
- Proposed cost to complete project; and
- Ability to design projects that are bid within proposed budget.

Consultants may be invited to an interview with the selection committee prior to committee selection.

**Questions regarding this RFP should be directed to Molly to Molly Patterson-Lundgren at 507-328-2956, or [mplundgren@rochestermn.gov](mailto:mplundgren@rochestermn.gov)**