

# **REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

## **Downtown Atlanta Master Plan**

**August 8, 2016**



Central Atlanta Progress  
Atlanta Downtown Improvement District

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## **PROJECT SUMMARY**

### **A. Introduction**

Central Atlanta Progress, Inc. (CAP) and the Atlanta Downtown Improvement District (ADID) are seeking statements of qualifications from interested firms or teams of firms with the appropriate expertise and experience to serve as a consultant to coordinate the development of a Downtown Atlanta Master Plan (“the Plan”). The Plan will be the primary vision-setting and policy-directing strategy to lead the on-going revitalization and evolution of Downtown Atlanta for the next fifteen years. In addition to establishing priorities for the center city’s future land use, transportation network, park and open spaces and major development projects, the Plan is expected to guide real estate and infrastructure investments and planning and economic development activities.

The Plan should build on existing plans and recent development activity. Further, it must engage both the local and broader community in meaningful ways such that the Plan reflects the needs and desires of the populace and will engender their support for the resulting vision and recommendations. The plan effort should encompass guiding principles that will ensure the Plan serves as a roadmap towards making Downtown Atlanta a livable, walkable community and desirable destination in the metro Atlanta region.

The Plan process will consist of several components: a real estate market study (currently in progress); a comprehensive transportation analysis (currently in progress); public engagement activities; and research, analysis and plan formulation. This Request for Qualifications is specifically focused on identifying a firm to conduct master planning activities and to compile all of the components of the process into one unified Plan. It is expected that the Plan will be adopted by the City of Atlanta as a component of the Comprehensive Development Plan, as well as the Atlanta Regional Commission as an update to the existing Downtown Atlanta Livable Communities Initiative (LCI) plan.

### **B. About Central Atlanta Progress, Inc. and Atlanta Downtown Improvement District**

CAP is a private, not-for-profit, 501(c)(4) corporation representing the interests of Atlanta businesses and institutions that share the vision of a thriving, secure and vibrant Downtown Atlanta. With a Board of Directors comprised of the city’s top business leaders, CAP is funded through the investment of businesses, foundations and institutions. CAP and its affiliate organizations are a driving force in shaping Downtown development and public policy. Through its focus on economic development, the physical environment and marketing, CAP has been improving central Atlanta through innovative programs and public-private partnerships since 1941.

The Atlanta Downtown Improvement District (ADID), founded in 1995 by CAP, with the support of commercial property owners and the City of Atlanta, is a public-private partnership that strives to create a livable environment for Downtown Atlanta. With a Board of Directors of nine private-and public-sector leaders, ADID is funded through a community improvement district within which private commercial property owners pay special assessments. Together, CAP/ADID is committed to a Downtown that is a central place for the diverse Atlanta community and all of Downtown's property owners, employees, residents, students and visitors. More about CAP/ADID can be found at [www.atlantadowntown.com](http://www.atlantadowntown.com).

## C. Project Overview

### ***The Downtown Master Plan***

The existing Downtown master plan - “Imagine Downtown: Encore” - was adopted in 2009, as an update to the Imagine Downtown plan of 2005. Since that time, macro market conditions (the end of the national recession) and local market activity (significant development investment in catalytic projects and sites) have resulted in significant change in the Downtown area. Many of the projects that were prioritized in the 2009 plan have either been accomplished or are underway. Moreover, there are fewer opportunities for new or “greenfield” real estate development in Downtown Atlanta. Development and growth opportunities in Downtown now focus more on redevelopment, placemaking, adaptive reuse, and ensuring connections among the established plans and projects of large property owners including the Georgia World Congress Center; Underground Atlanta; and Georgia State University.

CAP/ADID desires to engage a broad range of constituents in a conversation about the future of Downtown – not only about the physical development of Downtown, but also in regards to opportunities that will drive the economy and the shaping of Downtown’s “brand”. Urban centers are revitalizing nationwide due to favorable local and global trends; how can we help shape Downtown Atlanta into the urban core that truly competes with our peer cities?

CAP/ADID seeks a consultant to craft a feasible master plan for the next 15 years of growth and revitalization in Downtown Atlanta. The consultant will also facilitate community engagement that creates a conversation about the future of Downtown. While the plan update will provide a roadmap for development, transportation, urban design, and other key elements of Downtown, it will also provide an opportunity to draw the region’s attention to what Downtown is and what it could be.

### ***Scope of Work***

CAP/ADID will collaborate with the consultant to develop a final scope of services; however, the anticipated services are expected to include the following tasks and deliverables:

- **Project Management:** Developing a work plan, schedule, and project management approach in collaboration with CAP/ADID
- **Documenting and Analyzing Existing Conditions:** Assessment and inventory of applicable physical, social and environmental existing conditions and generating descriptive maps of existing land uses, transportation networks, parks/open spaces, , and development patterns within the study area
- **Public Engagement:** With CAP/ADID and other creative partners, develop and execute an engagement strategy to facilitate broad public input into the Master Plan. See the detailed Public Engagement section below for more detail.
- **Identification of Goals and Principles:** Synthesizing all inputs and leveraging expertise and experience to craft suitable overarching goals and principles that will guide the plan to ensure desired outcomes
- **Development of Recommendations:** Identifying, evaluating and prioritizing development and infrastructure projects, urban design improvements and area programming recommendations and developing land use concepts, policies, and implementation strategies consistent with the identified plan goals and principles that are feasible
- **Plan Documentation:** Developing the final plan report, including implementation recommendations and supporting maps and graphics. The Downtown Atlanta Master Plan must

meet the minimum deliverable requirements of the Atlanta Regional Commission Livable Communities Initiative (LCI) program.

As noted in the Introduction, two key components of the Master Plan are currently underway: 1) the real estate market study lead by the consultant, Bleakly Advisory Group; and 2) the transportation analysis lead by the consultant, Kimley-Horn & Associates. The findings from these studies will be key inputs into the update of the Master Plan. The Master Plan consultant is expected to collaborate with these existing efforts to gain insights and content that will inform the final Plan document. Specifically, elements of the public engagement component of the transportation analysis will occur in concert with public engagement for the Master Plan update.

### ***Public Engagement***

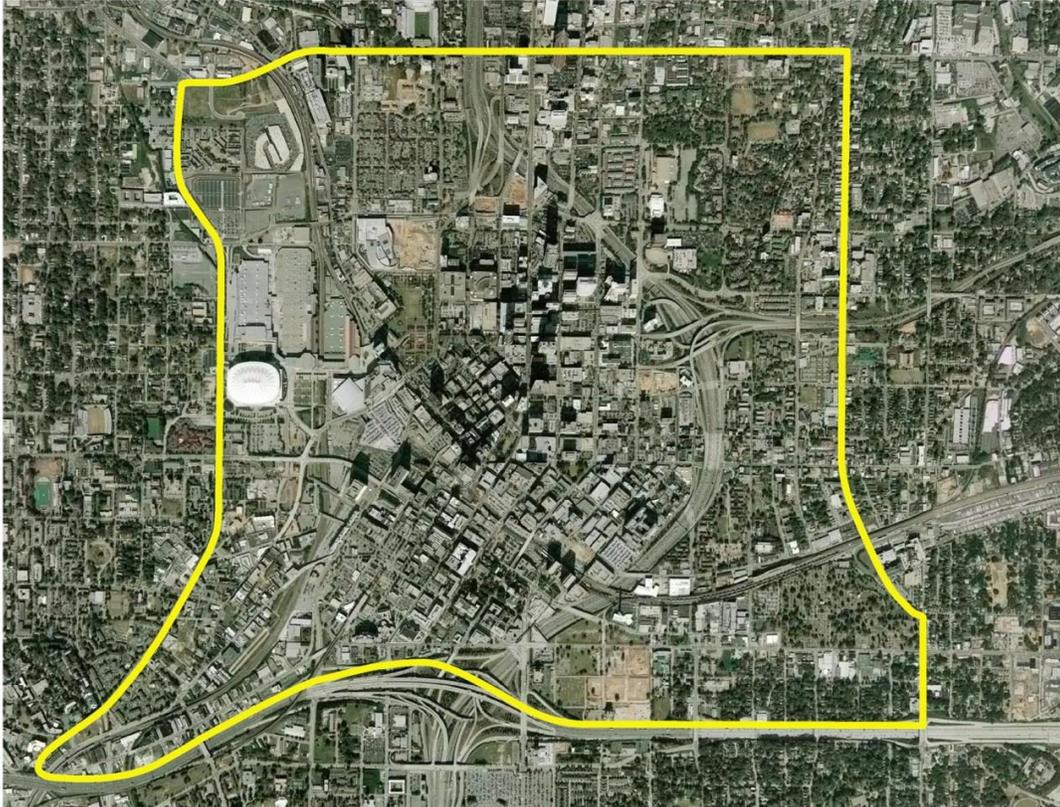
Of paramount importance to the Master Plan process is public engagement that involves non-traditional means of ensuring that the Downtown community, City of Atlanta residents and other audiences that touch Downtown Atlanta provide input into the Plan. CAP/ADID will collaborate with the selected consultant to develop a detailed public outreach strategy. CAP/ADID has committed to creating a Steering Committee to oversee the entire process, as well as Advisory Groups that focus on particular topic areas. Topic areas may include: technology and innovation, urban design, public safety, health, marketing and hospitality, sustainability, and arts. The consultant is expected to engage with the committee and the group to facilitate their input into the Plan.

Additionally, CAP/ADID intends to engage Creative Partner(s), so that the public engagement meets the goal of involving a diverse set of audiences in interesting, creative ways that fosters dialogue and meaningful input regarding the future of Downtown Atlanta. The Creative Partners may be contracted and managed directly by CAP/ADID or be retained as sub-consultants of the consultant, pending the development a final scope of services with the selected consultant,

CAP/ADID has identified a number of potential public engagement strategies: arts-based civic dialogue; pecha kucha; speed geeking; panel discussions; and an “unconference”. CAP/ADID has not selected the specific strategies which will be utilized, but encourages consultants within their qualifications to highlight their specific experiences with engaging audiences in interesting and creative ways.

### ***Study Area***

The study area geography for the Downtown Atlanta Master Plan is the 4-square mile area of the Imagine Downtown plan illustrated below. However, the Plan process should take into consideration plans, activities and development activity that are immediately adjacent to this boundary including, but not limited to the revitalization of the Westside Neighborhoods and the redevelopment of Turner Field. The Plan must also be coordinated with the existing adopted Plans whose boundaries intersect with the Downtown Atlanta study area. This includes Atlanta Regional Commission Livable Communities Initiatives plans, City of Atlanta redevelopment plans and public and private property owner master plans.



*Downtown Atlanta Master Plan Study Area*

**Schedule**

CAP/ADID will develop a Plan process schedule with the selected consultant. At this point in time, it is CAP/ADID's intention to complete the final Plan report by July 30, 2017.

## **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

The following items must be submitted in response to this request.

### **A. Letter of Intent**

State the full name(s) and address(es) of the organization(s) and the branch office(s) or other subordinate element(s) that will perform or assist in performing the services described herein. Identify the firm contact name, phone and fax numbers, and email addresses. Indicate type of firm ownership (individual, partnership or corporation) and explain any proposed team or joint venture or partnership relationships. Include the state in which the firm is incorporated or licensed.

### **B. Statement of Experience**

Submittals should provide a straightforward, complete and concise description of the consultant's capabilities to satisfy the requirements of this RFQ. Describe the experience, detailing a minimum of three recent, relevant projects in similar conditions and with similar size and/or scope. Summaries should include a narrative on the projects, the associated fees, and references.

### **C. Team Qualifications**

Provide the names and résumés (including email addresses) of a principal and key staff members who will work on the project and a team organization statement defining their anticipated roles on the team. Indicate the percent of involvement of each team member and identify who will be the daily point of contact.

### **D. Statement of Project Understanding / Approach**

Demonstrate project understanding, including details of the team's familiarity and experience with providing comprehensive planning services in dense urban, mixed-use city centers. Provide any additional information that demonstrates the firm's understanding and insights related to the project. A detailed scope of services and project schedule are not needed, as CAP/ADID will develop the final scope of services with the consultant upon selection.

### **E. Budget**

Provide standard 2015 hourly rates for the team Members listed in Team Qualifications.

## **SUBMISSION PROCESS**

### **A. Questions**

Direct any questions in writing to Audrey Leous via email at [aleous@atlantadowntown.com](mailto:aleous@atlantadowntown.com) by Tuesday, August 16, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. EDT using the Subject line "Downtown Atlanta Master Plan Questions." Answers to questions will be made available to all respondents via email and the CAP/ADID website by Friday, August 19, 2016.

## **B. Submittal Due Date**

All statements of qualifications must be submitted to CAP/ADID, Attention Audrey Leous by 5:00 p.m. EDT, Friday, August 26, 2016 at

Audrey Leous  
Central Atlanta Progress, Inc.  
84 Walton Street NW  
Suite 500  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
[aleous@atlantadowntown.com](mailto:aleous@atlantadowntown.com)

Submittals received after this time and date will not be considered. Respondents should submit a digital submittal via email to the address above, and deliver six (6) hard copies to the physical address above prior to the submittal deadline.

## **SELECTION AND EVALUATION CRITERIA**

### **A. Selection Criteria**

CAP reserves the right to reject any or all submittals, make modifications to the work after submission and waive any informalities in submissions if deemed in CAP/ADID's best interest to do so, without any liability on the part of CAP/ADID. The following criteria will be used in evaluating qualifications. The list is not shown in any prioritized order:

- Stability of Firm

Stability and resources of the submitting firm, including the firm's history, status, growth, overall resources of the firm, form of ownership, litigation history, financial information, and other evidence of stability.

- Experience and Qualifications

Consultant's relevant experience and qualifications, including the demonstrated ability of the firm in effective complex urban mixed-use district planning projects comparable in complexity, size, and function, for customers similar in scope to CAP/ADID and or the City of Atlanta. This includes relevant experience and qualifications of the principal and lead staff and level of experience in all aspects of the project and evidence of broad knowledge of best practices in urban district master planning and public engagement.

- Suitability

Consultant's apparent suitability to provide services for the Downtown Master Plan, including the firm's apparent fit to the project including any special or unique qualifications for the project, current and projected workloads (available resources), proximity of office(s) and/or lead staff to project location and/or proven ability to gather resources in Downtown Atlanta, special or

enhanced capabilities, firm's non-discrimination and equal employment opportunities policies and evidence of efforts or success in W/MBE-DBE inclusion.

- Past Performance

Evidence of the consultant's past performance, including level of quality of the services to previous customers, customer's statements of that quality, the firm's ability to meet established time requirements, the firm's response to project needs during the project and the the firm's control of quality and budget.

## **B. Selection Schedule**

RFP Release Date	Monday, August 8, 2016
Questions Due	Tuesday, August 16, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. (EDT)
Responses to Questions Posted	Friday, August 19, 2016
Submittals Due	Friday, August 26, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. (EDT)
Interviews (if necessary)	Week of September 12, 2016 (anticipated)
Consultant Selection	Week of September 19, 2016 (anticipated)
Contract Negotiation & Finalization	Late September 2016
Notice to Proceed	October 7, 2016 (estimated)

## **C. Equal Opportunity Statement**

CAP/ADID is an equal opportunity employer and will select a consultant without regard to age, disability, religion, creed or belief, political affiliation, race, sex or ethnicity.

## **D. Contract Negotiations**

CAP/ADID will negotiate the terms of a contract with the consultant(s) submitting the top-ranked response(s) or another ranked choice, should negotiations with the top-ranked firm fail. CAP/ADID will not reimburse any costs incurred prior to a formal notice to proceed should a contract award result from this solicitation. Submittal costs in conjunction with this RFP shall be borne by the submitting firm.