

## **Reconnecting Sweet Auburn RFP Questions & Answers**

***Are there previous community outreach or master plan materials that can be shared with the proposing teams?***

Yes. In 2023, a framework called the “Sweet Auburn Green and Equitable District” (SAGE) was developed in partnership with the client team and the Historic District Development Corporation. The framework was purposefully built on past planning efforts, leveraging and integrating historic and current input from community partners and diverse stakeholders to move from intention, planning to action. An overview of the framework can be found [here](#). The aforementioned planning efforts can be [found here](#), along with the source documents.

***What is the next step after the Reconnecting Sweet Auburn project is completed, and will firms proposing at this current stage be precluded from bidding on built project work thereafter?***

The intent of the Reconnecting Sweet Auburn project is to develop a concept and action plan that will pave the way for future implementation. The project team is considering a variety of funding sources for implementation, including the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant Program (RCN). No RCN application for work in Sweet Auburn has been submitted to date. Work on this scope will not preclude firms from bidding on future work. Future funding plans are dependent upon the scale and scope of the solutions recommended through the Reconnecting Sweet Auburn work.

***Please share if any design visioning conversations or preliminary sketches have been created by the community in the past.***

Beyond the existing Auburn Avenue History and Culture Project on Auburn Avenue beneath the Connector, no specific visioning or preliminary sketches have been created with the distinct intent of helping to heal the divide caused by the interstate’s construction.

***How detailed do the civil engineering / environmental review tasks need to be?***

The client team does not anticipate that significant detail will be needed on civil engineering or environmental review. This intention is for the work to consider existing conditions, but the scope will not include a full environmental scan for NEPA purposes. Sketch-level design is appropriate for this exercise.

***How do you expect this project to interface with the Stitch?***

The Stitch ([thestitchatl.com](http://thestitchatl.com)) is an Interstate capping project over the Downtown Connector north of the Sweet Auburn neighborhood in Downtown Atlanta. The Stitch is needed to remediate the lasting damage that the Interstate has had on north Downtown and the Old Fourth Ward neighborhoods (formerly Bedford Pine and Buttermilk Bottoms

neighborhoods). Because this project serves the Sweet Auburn neighborhood, and its interstate and neighborhood conditions differ from the area served by the Stitch, the client team does not anticipate significant coordination on the design of the two projects. However, given that both projects focus on remediating the divide of the interstate, there may be the opportunity to share information or combine efforts with the Stitch project team to highlight the impacts that the Interstate and urban renewal projects have had on Atlanta communities.

***On page 4 under Existing Conditions Assessment, it says that the team should "use data to evaluate the impact of the interstate on the existing community." It seems to be clear that the connector caused significant harm for connectivity and the neighborhood's social and economic health. What kinds of specific data and impacts are you looking to analyze?***

The client team is looking to the consultant team to recommend specific measures, but they should broadly include both economic and mobility indicators.

***On page 7 under Suitability, it mentions providing services for the SAGE Framework. Is this a typo, or are there specific items we need to provide to HDDC and the SAGE Advisory Board?***

This is a typo.

***What is the client team's willingness to work with a consulting team consisting of multiple firms - a prime and subcontracting firm?***

The client team is willing to work with a consulting team consisting of multiple firms.

***Other than the community charette and broad public engagement, how do you envision getting project input and assistance from the Atlanta Downtown Improvement District and other neighborhood partners (for example: attending all or some of the ongoing project management meetings, establishing a project advisory committee, etc.)?***

The client team is looking to the consultant team to propose approaches to neighborhood partner engagement. Sweet Auburn Works (SAW) and Atlanta Downtown Improvement District (ADID) staff will plan to attend all ongoing project management meetings.

***Does the client team have any existing online public platforms or social media accounts they wish to use for broad, ongoing public engagement? How, if at all, will the consultant team be responsible for decisions related to selecting and populating an online public engagement platform or social media channels?***

Both SAW and Central Atlanta Progress (CAP)/ADID have existing social media accounts that can be utilized. Other community partners may also have social media accounts that

can be utilized. The consultant team will be responsible for generating the content to be distributed via the social media channels. If an online public engagement platform is chosen, the consultant team will be responsible for developing the content for the platform.

***Will the recommendations from this strategy try to prioritize/down select from a set of existing infrastructure, public art, policies, and programmatic solutions; generate new solutions; or both?***

Existing solutions should be considered; however, given the lack of prior focus on specifically mitigating the impacts of the Connector, the primary charge is to generate new solutions.

***Can you define the exact boundaries of the study area?***

Broadly, the SAW focus area is bounded by Courtland Street, Freedom Parkway, Bell Street, and the Atlanta Beltline. The study area boundary should be centered on the I-75/85 alignment and the cross streets of Irwin Street, Auburn Avenue, Edgewood Avenue, and Bell Street.

***Is the Streetcar east extension funded?***

MARTA has shared that the Streetcar East Extension is funded.

***What is the timeline/lifecycle of the highway and age of the facility?***

The Downtown Connector was originally constructed in 1962, but most of the infrastructure along the interstate was replaced during widening in the late 1980's as part of the "Freeing the Freeways" program. This includes the bridge over Auburn and Edgewood Avenues. GDOT's bridge inventory lists the bridge in good condition. Teams should assume that the bridge & highway will remain in place for the foreseeable future. However, access and operations improvements, including entrance/exit ramp reconfiguration may be possible with buy-in from GDOT and other stakeholders.