



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:
Transit Station Enhancement Plans for
Arts Center MARTA Station, Midtown MARTA Station
and North Avenue MARTA Station**

**Release Date: April 19, 2013
Reponses Due: by 3:00 PM Eastern Time on Thursday, May 9, 2013**

Any questions regarding this request for proposals should be submitted via e-mail or in writing to:

Ms. Ginny Kennedy
Director, Urban Design
Midtown Alliance
999 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 730
Atlanta, Georgia 30309
ginny@midtownATL.com

Parties interested in submitting a response must submit an e-mail stating their intent to Ginny Kennedy (ginny@midtownATL.com) on or before **April 26, 2013**. The e-mail must contain contact information to communicate any clarifications regarding the RFP as well as a list of all team members.

Section 1 – Introduction

Midtown Alliance seeks a professional multi-disciplinary design firm or team of firms to create innovative and implementable enhancement plans for three MARTA Transit Stations: Arts Center (1255 West Peachtree Street), Midtown (41 Tenth Street) and North Avenue (713 West Peachtree Street).

The purpose of the planning effort is to develop implementable solutions at each transit station to maximize the existing transit infrastructure; increase the number of people taking transit; reduce congestion and improve air quality; and sustain economic development in one of the region's most densely developed activity centers.

The goal of the planning effort is to significantly improve the visual appearance and user experience of pedestrians and commuters utilizing each of the three transit stations in Midtown. The enhancement plans will focus on the external aspects of each station to address a range of issues including access, safety, maintenance, wayfinding, lighting, landscaping and public art. The enhancement plans should also identify solutions to increase pedestrian connectivity between the stations and the surrounding area as illustrated on the "Station Impact Area Map."

Section 2 – Background

In order for Midtown to support existing development, foster continued growth and remain one of the most significant economic generators in the region, we must make the most efficient use of our transportation system. This is particularly relevant given the lack of funds for new major infrastructure. MARTA is an underutilized asset and has the potential, even under existing circumstances, to attract significantly more users.

MARTA transit stations are a major gateway into Midtown and they have a significant impact on a first-time visitor's initial impression of our district and of our city. Each day, over 18,000 people access Midtown's three main transit stations (Arts Center, Midtown, and North Ave) to ride MARTA rail, MARTA buses, or regional express buses. Transit offers one of the most convenient modes of transportation in Midtown with a transit station a block off Peachtree Street at each quarter mile interval between North Avenue and 15th Street.

Yet the convenience of transit in Midtown is undermined by lackluster conditions at the stations themselves. A plan is needed to enhance the functional, operational and aesthetic aspects on the exterior of each station and thereby increase the appeal of transit to a broad range of users (young, old, residents, commuters, visitors, natives, newcomers, etc.).

Section 3 – Scope of Work

Firms and/or teams (the consultant) should use the scope of work as a guide for their proposed approach. Additional scope items may be recommended, but proposers should be mindful that the schedule and budget for this effort is 5-6 months and \$90,000.

The work to be accomplished is outlined in the following tasks:

1. Task 1 – Transit Station Assessment
2. Task 2 – Public Involvement
3. Task 3 – Concept Development
4. Task 4 – Implementation Plan
5. Task 5 – Final Report

Task 1 – Transit Station Assessment

For this task, Midtown Alliance and MARTA will provide an inventory and assessment of existing exterior conditions at each station and surrounding station area and that assessment will serve as the basis for the planning effort. The assessments will provide an overview of the existing physical conditions at each station including: urban design character, access and circulation, amenities, signage, wayfinding and maintenance needs.

The anticipated scope of work for the selected consultant will be to tour the station areas, review the inventory and assessment, recommend and produce any additional data, information or illustrations necessary to summarize and communicate key issues, challenges and opportunities.

As part of this first phase, the consultant will also be expected to facilitate a visioning/brainstorming session with the client team, which will include representatives from Midtown Alliance, MARTA, ARC and other stakeholders to identify project goals, objectives, and potential concepts (and critical success factors) for the enhancement efforts.

Deliverables: Assessment Report identifying key issues, challenges and opportunities in both narrative and graphic format, as well as summarizing the outcomes of the visioning session with the client team.

Task 2 – Public Involvement

The focus of this task is to develop a local planning outreach process that promotes the involvement of all stakeholders in the study area. Midtown Alliance will identify a targeted list of stakeholders and help facilitate their involvement. In addition to representatives from Midtown Alliance, MARTA and ARC, key stakeholders will include local residents, businesses and property owners. Midtown Alliance will schedule and host a mini-charrette where community members can provide input on potential interventions and propose solutions for consideration. The selected consultant will be expected to staff and facilitate the charrette as well as produce and provide all content necessary to ensure a productive dialogue. The consultant will summarize outcomes and present them to the client team for comment and validation.

Additionally, the selected consultant will be expected to utilize social media channels and other web-based tools throughout the process to further encourage public engagement and creative solutions.

A second public meeting is expected at the conclusion of the planning process to present a prioritized project list and implementation plan to interested stakeholders. The consultant will be expected to participate in the meeting and provide presentation graphics and materials to effectively illustrate enhancement concepts to a diverse audience. The consultant will summarize outcomes to be incorporated into the final plan document.

Deliverables: All materials needed to successfully facilitate the public meeting as well as a final report summarizing the outcomes of the meetings in both narrative and graphic format.

Task 3 – Concept Development

The consultant will be expected to develop a series of preliminary enhancement concepts (no less than 2 significant alternatives for each station). Transit station enhancement concepts and strategies should be illustrated and provided for review and input by the client team. Concepts should address everything from basic maintenance needs (peeling paint, cracked or missing tiles, and dirty concrete) to high-impact aesthetic enhancements such as public art, wayfinding (incorporating real-time scheduling) and on-site vending.

While it is anticipated that there will be consistent themes and needs identified for each station, the end products should deliver site-specific strategies to achieve unique outcomes that contribute to creative place-making and result in a distinct identity for

each station. Further, the consultant should explore alternatives that address multiple issues concurrently – connectivity, mobility and sustainability.

Public art will be a key element in enhancing the user experience at each station. The consultant is expected to think creatively about ways to incorporate artful elements in everything from signage to wayfinding to landscape and hardscape improvements. The goal is to add a layer of creative expression to activate the station area and ignite conversation and social interaction among residents, workers and visitors. Potential projects should embrace a range of mediums such as sculpture, murals, projections and performance art.

Based on feedback from the client team, the consultant will determine next steps for modifying or refining concepts and identify more detailed improvement projects. Additional meetings with significant Midtown property owners and community leaders may be necessary during this task to gather input, refine ideas, and begin prioritizing preferred station enhancement concepts.

Deliverables: Two enhancement concept plans for each of the three stations. Concepts should be presented graphically to illustrate overall impact and to reflect the unique conditions at each station.

Task 4 – Implementation Plan

The focus of this task will be to prepare a detailed implementation plan that outlines the strategies necessary to develop proposed enhancement concepts into real projects. For each station, the consultant should prepare a prioritized list of improvements ranging from basic maintenance upgrades to high-impact enhancements at various price points. The goal is to have clearly defined options arrayed across a spectrum from “low to high” in relationship to cost and impact.

We anticipate that the preferred solutions at each station will include a combination of landscape, graphic, infrastructure and architectural improvements as well as a public art component. The consultant should be prepared to illustrate all recommended enhancement concepts at a schematic design level in order to communicate key projects and determine funding needs to design and construct those projects.

Deliverables: An Implementation Plan for each station including, at a minimum:

- A detailed list of actions necessary to implement the enhancement concepts. The actions should include a start date, completion date, cost estimate and responsible party.
- An implementation strategy that describes the organizational structure and process that will be used to insure that enhancement concepts and supporting tasks are implemented.
- A description of the changes necessary within the comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance, development regulations or other locally adopted plans to support the enhancement concepts, including a committed schedule for adopting such changes. Specific coordination with MARTA design guidelines and recommendations from the original LCI should be addressed. Suggested changes to MARTA property, operations, or regulations will be coordinated through MARTA.

Task 5 – Final Report

A summary document and presentation should be prepared to conclude this final phase of work. The final report should compile key information about the process, relevant findings, recommendations, illustrated enhancement concepts and a prioritized implementation plan.

All work should be completed by November 15, 2013.

Section 4 – Sponsoring Organizations

About Midtown Alliance

Midtown Alliance is a coalition of business and civic leaders focused on promoting economic development and enriching the quality of life in Midtown, Atlanta. Established in 1978 as a private, non-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, its mission has been to sustain and enhance Midtown's vibrant live-work-play community through a comprehensive approach to planning and development that includes initiatives to enhance public safety, improve the physical environment, and strengthen the urban amenities which give Midtown its unique character. A dedicated team of members, volunteers, staff, and professional consultants has helped transform this once deteriorated, under-valued community into a model of urban revitalization.

Midtown is home to many of Atlanta's finest assets – the Woodruff Art Center, Piedmont Park, Atlanta Botanical Garden, Emory University Hospital, the Center for Puppetry Arts, the Savannah College of Art and Design-Atlanta and Georgia Tech. Midtown also boasts exquisite office buildings, upscale condominiums, a host of fine restaurants, high-quality retail establishments and superb arts and entertainment venues located along walkable, tree-lined streets. Blueprint Midtown, a working master plan for Midtown's growth, has effectively guided this dramatic progress and with the commitment and support of its members, Midtown Alliance continues to lead the way – providing vision, delivering results and shaping the future. More recently, Midtown Alliance began implementing Greenprint Midtown, a sustainability action plan completed in 2012 that focuses a green lens on the important areas of energy, transportation, open space, water, and waste.

In 2000, the Midtown Improvement District (MID) was established as a self-taxing district created by Midtown commercial property owners to fund local public improvement projects. The MID addresses issues of importance to stakeholders, including security, environmental maintenance, streetscapes, traffic and transit, and aggressively pursues ways to leverage tax dollars. The day-to-day operation of the MID and its initiatives is planned and managed by Midtown Alliance.

About Atlanta Regional Commission

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is the regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency for the 10-county area including Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale counties, as well as the City of Atlanta. For over 65 years, ARC and its predecessor agencies have helped to focus the region's leadership, attention and resources on key issues of regional consequence.

ARC is dedicated to unifying the region's collective resources to prepare the metropolitan area for a prosperous future. It does so through professional planning initiatives, the provision of objective information and the involvement of the community in collaborative partnerships.

Section 5 – Qualifications

While Midtown Alliance reserves the right to choose the firm or team that is best suited to perform the requested scope of services, we anticipate that the ideal firm or team will meet the following qualifications:

- National and international urban design experience that will bring a broader perspective to Midtown's challenges and opportunities
- Significant experience and proficiency with successful transit-oriented development and urban design projects involving diverse stakeholders
- Firm-wide and/or individual team member experience leading visioning and consensus building efforts that have translated into implemented projects
- Strong urban architecture, landscape architecture, transportation planning and environmental graphic design experience within the public realm
- Strong public art experience resulting in creative installations that activate public spaces, engage people in their daily lives, instill a sense of wonder and ignite conversation and social interaction
- Familiarity with Atlanta and the southeast region
- Demonstrated commitment and relevant experience with sustainable design principles and practices
- General understanding of MARTA guidelines, regulations and operations as they impact the feasibility of potential design approaches

All qualified firms or teams will receive consideration for award of contract without regard to age, handicap, religion, creed or belief, political affiliation, race, color, sex or national origin. Midtown Alliance will not discriminate against any qualified firm or team on the basis of age, handicap, religion, creed or belief, political affiliation, race, color, sex or national origin.

The consultant to whom the contract is awarded must agree to provide a drug-free workplace for their employees and provide any required notifications to Midtown Alliance in accordance with the Georgia Drug-Free Workplace code.

Section 6 – Submissions

All proposals must be submitted by no later than **3:00 PM (Eastern Time) on Thursday, May 9, 2013**, to:

Ms. Ginny Kennedy
Midtown Alliance
999 Peachtree Street, Suite 730
Atlanta, Georgia 30309

Submittals received after this time and date will not be considered. Seven (7) copies of the proposal and one electronic version in pdf format on CD are required. The proposal should be divided into sections as described below.

- 1) Cover Letter. Include the full name and address of the organization and any branch office or other subordinate element that will perform or assist in performing the scope of services. Identify one individual to serve as the primary point of contact and include their name, phone number, and e-mail address.
- 2) Company Profile/Description. Provide a description of the company in as much detail as necessary to demonstrate the company's ability to carry out the scope of services as requested in this RFP. Include a company profile/description for any sub-consultants that may be used for this effort.
- 3) Project Approach. Provide a concise summary of the firm or team's approach to the project. If your proposal is based upon any variation to the scope of work (reduced or additional services), please outline any clarifications or modifications.
- 4) Project Personnel. Please provide an organization chart of proposed team members and brief resumes for project leaders and managers.
- 5) Experience on similar projects. Provide information regarding no less than four large scale planning and urban design efforts that are comparable to or include elements related to this effort. Include a contact name and telephone number for each project described.
- 6) Cost proposal. Submittals should include a total cost for each of the five tasks outlined in Section 3. Proposals should also include a listing of standard hourly rates for any services that may be considered above and beyond the base scope of services requested in this RFP and a clear indication of how many on-site visits and days are included in the proposal. Reimbursable expenses including travel and lodging are to be part of the fee; however, they may be listed separately (a separate line item) from the phases of work listed in Section 3.

Printed submissions should be concise and limited to no more than 20 printed pages (20 one-sided pages or 10 double-sided pages not including the cover). PDF submissions on the CD are not limited.

Section 7 – Project Schedule

April 19, 2013 - Release RFP
April 26, 2013 - Last day to submit an e-mail stating intent respond to the RFP
May 3, 2013 - Last day to submit questions for clarifications
May 9, 2013 - Proposals Due
May 13-17, 2013 - Proposal Evaluation
May 20-22, 2013 - Interviews, if necessary
May 24, 2013 - Award of Contract
June 3, 2013 - Begin Work
November 15, 2013 - Project Completion

Section 8 – Terms and Conditions

Midtown Alliance reserves the right to:

- Reject any and/or all submittals or portions of submittals,
- Reject a sub-consultant if necessary,
- Approve, disapprove, modify or cancel any of the scope of work to be undertaken,

Midtown Alliance may select a consultant based upon the proposals or short-list up to four firms and conduct interviews if appropriate.

The project sponsors will not reimburse any costs associated with the preparation or delivery of proposals or those incurred prior to a formal notice to proceed.

Attachments available on the web (www.midtownATL.com)

Station Profiles

Accessibility Reports

Station Impact Area Map