

Request for Proposals

Palm District Scenario Planning Services

Date Issued: May 5, 2022

Responses Due: May 25, 2022

INTRODUCTION & INFORMATION	1
ABOUT THE DOWNTOWN AUSTIN ALLIANCE.....	1
STUDY AREA AND AREA OF INFLUENCE.....	1
PROJECT BACKGROUND	1
SCOPE OF SERVICES.....	2
ANTICIPATED BUDGET.....	2
ANTICIPATED DELIVERABLES	3
ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE	4
DATA AVAILABILITY AND OTHER ASSUMPTIONS	4
SELECTION & AWARD	6
EVALUATION OF RESPONSES	6
DEADLINE TO SUBMIT	6
CONTACT / SUBMIT TO.....	6
DISCLAIMERS	7
ANTIDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT	7
MINORITY OWNED, WOMEN OWNED AND DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES	7
RESERVATION OF RIGHTS.....	7
ATTACHMENT.....	8

INTRODUCTION & INFORMATION

The Austin DMO, Inc. d/b/a Downtown Austin Alliance in Austin, Travis County, Texas requests the submission of responses to the following Request for Proposals (RFP) from qualified firms or firm teams for key stakeholder outreach, workshop facilitation, scenario planning, urban design, and planning-level economic analysis to support its Palm District Planning Initiative project in Austin, TX (the “Project”).

The selected firm(s) would help the Downtown Austin Alliance and the City of Austin Housing & Planning Department (“Project Partners”) to visualize spatial scenarios for the Palm District in central Austin. Downtown Austin Alliance is serving as the point of contact for this RFP. Project will be cooperatively co-managed by both Project Partners.

ABOUT THE DOWNTOWN AUSTIN ALLIANCE

The Downtown Austin Alliance is a partnership of downtown property owners, individuals, and businesses in Austin, Texas devoted to creating, preserving and enhancing the value and vitality of downtown Austin. The Austin Downtown Public Improvement District was formed in 1993, and the Downtown Austin Alliance was created as the managing entity. The Downtown Austin Alliance leads and participates in a broad range of programs and initiatives that advance our collective vision for downtown Austin. More information on the Downtown Austin Alliance can be found at downtownaustin.com.

STUDY AREA AND AREA OF INFLUENCE

The study area encompasses the eastern portion of downtown Austin. It is bound by 15th Street to the north, Lady Bird Lake to the south, I-35 to the east and Trinity Street to the west. The study area is approximately 260 acres and is illustrated in Attachment A.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

During 2021, the City of Austin engaged a broad range of community stakeholders in the development of a Draft Vision Framework for the District. The scenario planning workshop should build upon the goals already established by the community during the visioning phase. After the initial scenarios are drafted, City staff will share them broadly to gather broad public input on a preferred option. The overall planning process will culminate in the presentation of a draft plan to Austin City Council during Summer/Fall 2022.

[Historic Timeline](#)

[Goals and Equity Framework \(November 2020\)](#)

[Existing Conditions Report \(April 2021\)](#)

[AIA Communities by Design Report \(July 2021\)](#)

[Listening Report for Visioning Phase \(December 2021\)](#)

[Draft Vision Framework \(February 2022\)](#)

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The Project Partners are seeking a consultant, or consultant team, to create spatial scenarios for the Palm District to help citizens and key stakeholders make collective decisions about the future for the district together.

The anticipated deliverables from Palm District Scenario Planning will guide future development in the Eastern portion of downtown Austin and should link together broad goals and strategies for:

- land use / inclusive growth,
- urban design / placemaking,
- transportation for all modes (including walk/ bike/ roll),
- regenerative economic opportunities,
- creative solutions for affordable housing,
- innovative public spaces,
- natural environment and green infrastructure,
- historic preservation/ placekeeping, cultural arts, and
- social equity / restorative engagement / cultural competency.

ANTICIPATED BUDGET

The budget for this project is \$20,000.

ANTICIPATED DELIVERABLES

Once a consultant is selected, the Downtown Austin Alliance with its partners will work collaboratively with the consultant to develop a detailed scope of work and define deliverables. Below is a preliminary list of the anticipated project needs.

1. Analyze Baseline Conditions

- a. Analyze the [Existing Conditions Report](#) and additional, relevant resources
- b. Determine any missing information that will be critical for scenario planning
- c. Document the district's current conditions via visual communication tools
- d. Analyze and document forces and factors (catalysts) that will influence the district's future via visual communication tools

2. Prepare for Scenario Planning Workshop

- a. Determine how to build the scenarios; identify visual communication tools
- b. Identify key stakeholders
- c. Develop a co-creation process that will involve key stakeholders
- d. Develop a shared understanding of baseline assumptions
- e. Facilitate meetings with all partners, coordinated by Downtown Austin Alliance
- f. Create presentations and customized outreach materials for workshop

3. Involve Stakeholders and Co-Create Scenarios

- a. Facilitate workshop, live or hybrid with key stakeholders
- b. Generate easy-to-read metrics so that people can consider future options in the context of one another
- c. Identify any implementation constraints, phasing recommendations
- d. Co-create web-compatible visual scenarios

4. Synthesize the Scenario Planning Process

- a. Write up meeting notes and summarize input gathered at workshop
- b. Summarize each scenario option for the Draft Plan (approx. 10 pages)
- c. Create slides and supporting imagery describing potential futures
- d. Package all visuals and provide final transmittal to project team

Following the Scenario Planning Workshop, City of Austin staff will lead efforts to gather broad input and citizen comments on a preferred scenario for the draft Palm District Plan.

ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE

We would like to have scenario planning completed by July 2022.

DATA AVAILABILITY AND OTHER ASSUMPTIONS

Selected consultant will be expected to facilitate all meetings with key stakeholders. Downtown Austin Alliance can assist with scheduling, meeting logistics, sending invites, etc.

Selected consultant should anticipate a kickoff meeting with Project Partners.

Regular coordination calls will be required to ensure deliverables align with expectations.

Selected consultant will be provided access to the most current 3-D model of Downtown Austin and all relevant GIS data / shapefiles.

Style guides and branding standards will be provided at project kickoff.

SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

Please include the following components in the RFP Submittal.

- Letter of interest. Include basic background of firm(s), such as name, address, phone number and URL. Letter of interest should state any intent to perform as a WBE/MBE/DBE firm and/or describe commitment to inclusive practices.
- Summary of team qualifications. Include similar projects and clients and highlight successful implementation results, where applicable. Feature maps and graphics where relevant. We are interested high-quality graphic communication skills.
- Brief biographies of key personnel that will be assigned to the project. Indicate roles and identify the project manager. Team submittals should identify the prime contractor, the specific role of each firm in delivering the work, and how the project would be managed and coordinated amongst participating firms.
- Proposed process. Include a schedule that identifies proposed meetings, time frames for major work elements, target dates for key milestones, and overall date for completion of the project.
- Proposed budget for the scope of work. Budget should include an estimated number of hours for each activity, billing rate per person assigned, estimated out-of-pocket expenses, and method of billing.
- References. Include contact information for up to four (4) references for clients for which the prime contractor has recently provided similar services.
- If applicable, provide a statement concerning conflict of interest, including those interests of the firm that would impede with or interfere in the carrying out project in the best interest of the Project Partners.

SELECTION & AWARD

EVALUATION OF RESPONSES

Firms/teams will be evaluated based on the following parameters:

- A. Knowledge of Austin and familiarity with Palm District project issues/ opportunities.
- B. Experience with similar projects: proven experience in scenario planning for cultural districts in major cities.
- C. Qualifications of the firm(s): ability to create spatial scenarios, facilitate hands-on workshops in-person (or online if needed during COVID 19), and engage multidisciplinary stakeholders in civic dialogue.
- D. Project approach: clear understanding of schedule constraints and creative solutions for delivering the scope of work. Preference will be given to firm(s) that demonstrate a commitment to diversity and equitable and inclusive practices.
- E. Professional qualifications of the staff assigned to the project: based on expertise and experience working on projects of similar size/ scope, including experience of identified project manager and team members.
- F. Firm references: References including the names and contact information for four (4) references for clients for which you have recently provided similar services.

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT

Please submit responses electronically by Wednesday, **May 25, 5:00 p.m. CST.**

Short listed firms/teams may be requested to participate in a virtual interview.

CONTACT / SUBMIT TO

Applicants may submit a completed proposal and letter of interest in PDF format to:

Michele Van Hyfte, Vice President, Urban Design
Downtown Austin Alliance
512-381-6272
mvanhyfte@downtownaustin.com

DISCLAIMERS

ANTIDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The Downtown Austin Alliance does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), sexual orientation, military status, or disability.

MINORITY OWNED, WOMEN OWNED AND DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

MBEs/WBEs/DBEs are encouraged to participate as prime contractors, subcontractors, or joint ventures. A list of currently certified MBEs, WBEs, and DBEs in various professional fields is available on the City of Austin [Finance Online website](#). The Downtown Austin Alliance does not maintain a separate list of certified firms.

Vendors are NOT required to be a certified MBE/WBE/DBE with the City of Austin to be considered for this project opportunity.

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

The Downtown Austin Alliance with its partners reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received in response to this RFP and reserves the right to short list respondents and base final selection rankings on personal interviews.

Fees provided for in contracts or agreements shall be reasonable. Downtown Austin Alliance with its partners shall consider fees to be reasonable if they are not in excess of those ordinarily charged by the profession as a whole for similar work. Downtown Austin Alliance with its partners will negotiate for procurement of professional services, whereby competitors' qualifications are evaluated, and the most qualified competitor is selected, subject to negotiations of fair and reasonable compensation.

Downtown Austin Alliance with its partners is not obligated to award a contract solely based on this request or to otherwise pay for information solicited.

ATTACHMENT

Exhibit A: Study Area and Area of Influence

