

Downtown Albany Wayfinding Program

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Due Monday, February 27, 2023

The Downtown Albany Business Improvement District (BID), with the assistance of its project partners, the Albany Parking Authority (APA) and the City of Albany, is seeking an innovative consultant to finalize design, location, and develop fabrication and installation bid packages for the Downtown Albany NY Vehicular and Pedestrian Wayfinding Signage Master Plan for Albany's Central Business District.

Introduction

Albany, the capital of the Empire State and the heart of New York's Capital Region, is much more than a star on a map. As one of the oldest cities in the country, Albany has a unique and extensive inventory of cultural and heritage assets, diverse neighborhoods, landmarks, parks, and other amenities. In recent years Downtown has become a vibrant neighborhood with a deep-rooted history and an exciting future with roughly 1,000 residential units creating a dramatic increase in vibrancy and foot traffic. As the City's Central Social District, Downtown is home to 60+ eateries, five hotels, an 80,000 square feet convention center, and three large entertainment venues.

Moreover, along with being the seat of state and local government, Albany, and particularly Downtown, is home to numerous world-class businesses, including regional headquarters of financial institutions, law firms, and Fortune 500 companies. It is also the anchor of New York's Tech Valley and a global center of nanotechnology.

But current wayfinding in downtown Albany is insufficient—the layered result of decades of different signage projects executed by numerous entities at the state, county, city, neighborhood, and organizational levels. The goal of this initiative is to make it easier for residents, commuters, and tourists to find downtown Albany destinations and attractions all within a cohesive, appealing look.

In spring 2018 the Downtown Albany Business Improvement District (BID) undertook a design and planning process for a comprehensive wayfinding program in the Central Business District of the City of Albany. The Downtown Albany NY Vehicular and Pedestrian Wayfinding Signage Master Plan was created, presenting a clear vision for downtown Albany's directional signage for multiple modes of transportation, including concepts for parking trailblazers, vehicular signs, and pedestrian kiosks featuring interpretive/placemaking elements for the historical and cultural assets in downtown Albany.

In fall of 2022 the Downtown Albany BID received American Rescue Plan Act funds from the City of Albany to implement the Downtown Albany NY Vehicular and Pedestrian Wayfinding Signage Master Plan. The funding allows for the parking trailblazer, vehicular guides, and pedestrian kiosks signage to move from concept to final design, completion of the vehicular circulation plan and total number of signs, develop implementation budget, develop sign fabrication specs and bid package, develop installation bid package, and oversight of implementation.

General Information

A. Instructions and Notifications to Consultants

1. **TERMS:** All proposals must be in accordance with the terms of this Request for Proposals.

2. ASSOCIATED PROPOSAL COSTS: All costs associated with developing or submitting documents in response to this request and/or providing oral or written clarification of its content shall be borne by the respondent. The BID assumes no responsibility for these costs.
3. PRICING: All pricing submitted will be considered firm and fixed unless otherwise indicated herein.
4. MISDIRECTED REPONSES: Responses misdirected to other locations or otherwise not received by the BID by the established due date and at the established location for any cause will be determined to be late and may not be considered.
5. INCOMPLETE SUBMISSIONS: Respondents are advised to review all sections of the RFP carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejections of the proposal.
6. OWNERSHIP AND USE OF SUBMISSIONS: The BID shall be entitled to retain and use for the project without compensation to any party responding to the RFP any additional information submitted, including but not limited to any concept, element, or idea disclosed in, or evident from, the submissions or which may be revealed during any meetings or interviews with respondents.
7. ALTERNATE APPROACHES: Alternate approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this project are encouraged. Proposals which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by the RFP may be rejected as being non-responsive.
8. CLARIFICATIONS:
 - a. All inquires with respect to this RFP shall be directed to Georgette Steffens via e-mail at gsteffens@downtownalbany.org.
 - b. Replies to inquiries or clarifications will be posted on the BID's website at www.downtownalbany.org. Questions must be submitted by Noon on Wednesday, February 22, 2023. Only questions answered in writing with be binding. Oral or other interpretations or clarifications will be without legal effect.
9. REJECTIONS: The BID reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

Note: This is a Request for Proposals (RFP), not an invitation for bid. Responses will be evaluated on the basis of the relative merits of the proposal, in addition to price. All respondents are advised to review all sections of the RFP and to follow instructions carefully, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the proposal.

B. Type of Contract

Any resulting contract for Professional Services will be a lump sum contract between the firm furnishing the professional services and the BID.

C. Project Area

The area of study includes Albany's Central Business District, a large portion of which is within the boundaries of the Downtown Albany Business Improvement District.

Within these boundaries lies new commercial office buildings; significant historic architecture; centers of state, county, and local government; the headquarters for The State University of New York, diverse arts and entertainment destinations; high-rated dining establishments; newly developed residential offerings; five hotels, with a sixth under construction; a convention center; three public parking structures; parks and recreation facilities; and two access points to the Hudson River.

The Downtown Albany Map (included in packet – area within in the black outline) illustrates the study area and key nodes and corridors within the District.

D. Commencement and Prosecution of the Work

The work to be accomplished under any resulting contract for Professional Services shall commence upon a notice to proceed which should take place on March 24, 2023. Substantial work shall be completed by June 30, 2023.

Scope of Work

A wayfinding firm, through its own expert analysis and with information provided by local Stakeholders and partners, will bring the Downtown Albany NY Vehicular and Pedestrian Wayfinding Signage Master Plan to fruition, including:

- Finalize the concept designs for the following:
 - Directional signage for parking by car to and exiting on foot from three public parking facilities
 - Vehicular guides to commercial, cultural, historic, governmental, and educational sites
 - Pedestrian kiosks that include interpretive/placemaking elements for the city’s historical and cultural assets
 - Recommend wayfinding and travel/tourism best practices that may be included in signage
- Create specs and bid package for fabrication of all wayfinding signage, provide names of potential fabricators; review, in collaboration with BID, all responses
- Finalize vehicular circulation plan and identify number of and location for each vehicular guide, parking trailblazer and pedestrian kiosk
- Provide a budget for fabrication and installation of the entire signage package
- Develop installation specs and bid package for vehicular guides, parking trailblazers and pedestrian kiosks, provide names of potential installers; review, in collaboration with BID, all responses
- Manage contractors, and act as main contact, for duration of fabrication and installation
- Provide a timeline for the completion of the various phases of the project

The final design will incorporate best practices in wayfinding, will be an inspiring document that, through its implementation, will position Downtown’s future as the ideal, sustainable urban center—a strong economic hub; a vibrant living neighborhood; and a modern, dynamic destination. Serving to attract a new generation of talent and organizations in addition to its focus on strengthening and revitalizing the built environment, the plan will sensitively capitalize on the city’s 400-year history and its inherent assets, while appealing to modern, urban sensibilities.

The installation of the Downtown Albany Wayfinding Program is expected to be completed by September 29, 2023.

Qualifications

The firm of choice must have portfolio projects of similar scope demonstrating innovative approaches.

It is expected that the breadth and depth desired for this plan will require a dynamic, innovative team capable of providing bold, creative, and actionable recommendations that honor downtown Albany's rich history, capitalize on current momentum, and maximize its future potential based on the many existing assets described above.

Submission Requirements

All responses to the RFP shall include the following information:

- Cover letter expressing interest, signed by the owner, officer, or authorized agent of the firm or organization, acknowledging and accepting the terms and conditions of the RFP, and tendering an offer to the BID. The letter must contain a commitment to provide both the services described and delivery within the allotted time.
- Description of the firm's qualifications for the implementation of a Downtown Albany Wayfinding Program, including relevant experience and a required minimum of three (3) similar projects.
- Résumés and profiles for the firm's principals and brief history of firm, including year of establishment.
- Brief biographical profiles and contact information for specific staff members who are anticipated to be assigned to the project by the firm, their role in the project, and a detailed résumé listing each individual's relevant work experience in this role on similar projects.
- General description of recommended approaches, and processes to implement the Master Plan based on the premises described above.
- A proposal of deliverables, including an itemized budget and timeline for finalizing design concepts and vehicular circulation plan, develop bid specs and packages, oversee implementation, and other elements or phases recommended by the firm.
- A minimum of three (3) professional references for the firm from other entities that enlisted the firm to complete similar projects completed within the last five (5) years.

All information submitted becomes property of the Downtown Albany BID. The BID reserves the right to issue supplemental information or guidelines relating to the RFP, as well as make modifications to the RFP during the proposal preparation period. Once submitted, the consultant team (including specific staff assigned to the project) may not be changed without written notice to and consent of the BID. All costs incurred in the preparation of the submittal and participation in the selection process are the sole responsibility of the consultant team.

To the fullest extent permitted by law, the consultant, its agents and assigns shall defend, indemnify, and save harmless the Downtown Albany BID, its officers, employees and agents, and strategic partners from and against all claims, actions, causes of action, injuries, damages, losses, liabilities, and expenses (including, without limitation, reasonable attorney's fees and court costs) or other liabilities of any kind and character which arise out of or result from work under this engagement, other than claims for the BID's own negligence. This indemnification shall survive the expiration or earlier termination of this engagement.

Respondents should submit one (1) digital copy (PDF) of the submittal by **4:00 p.m., Monday, February 27, 2023** to:

Georgette Steffens
Executive Director

gsteffens@downtownalbany.org

Questions must be submitted via email to gsteffens@downtownalbany.org by Noon on Wednesday, February 22, 2023. Only questions answered in writing will be binding. Oral or other interpretations or clarifications will be without legal effect.

Criteria for Submittal and Selection

Respondents are responsible for reviewing and certifying compliance with the Downtown Albany BID's conditions of submittal.

Evaluation and Selection Process Respondents to the RFP will be evaluated based upon:

- Firm's experience and capacity – 10%
- Similar project experience – 20%
- The qualifications and experience of the specific staff assigned to the project – 10%
- Project approach and methodology, creative and innovative, and demonstrated strategic and effective approaches that result in the implementation of the plan – 20%
- Demonstrated capacity to creatively, efficiently, and effectively involve and communicate with diverse stakeholders – 10%
- Demonstrated understanding of the project and awareness of the project area – 10%
- Contract cost – 20%

Timeline

Project Overview Conference Call

There will be a conference call held on Thursday, February 9, 2023 at 2:00 PM EST to discuss an overview of the project with the BID and partners. The Zoom instructions are as follows:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82965148252?pwd=WWewK0ZacmJDd3l2VUFYTWpmeUc3Zz09>

Meeting ID: 829 6514 8252

Passcode: 899151

One tap mobile

+16469313860,,82965148252#,,,,*899151# US

+19292056099,,82965148252#,,,,*899151# US (New York)

Dial by your location

+1 646 931 3860 US

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

+1 305 224 1968 US

+1 309 205 3325 US

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 360 209 5623 US

+1 386 347 5053 US

+1 507 473 4847 US

+1 564 217 2000 US

+1 669 444 9171 US

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 689 278 1000 US

+1 719 359 4580 US

+1 253 205 0468 US
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 829 6514 8252

Passcode: 899151

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/keYOFEWfp>

RFPs Due

Respondents should submit one (1) digital copy (PDF) of the submittal by 4:00 PM (EST), Monday, February 27, 2023, to Downtown Albany BID Executive Director Georgette Steffens at gsteffens@downtownalbany.org.

Interviews

The top-rated respondents to the Request for Proposals will be invited for interviews. Notification for these respondents is tentatively scheduled for Monday, March 6, 2023. The interviews are scheduled for March 14 & 15, 2023. The interviews will be conducted virtually by a selection team comprised of representatives from the project partners.

Award

Following the interviews, one team will be selected to negotiate a final contract for services. The final scope of work with specified deliverables may be modified through negotiation of the final contract. Contract award by the Downtown Albany BID Board is tentatively scheduled for March 24, 2023.