

- I. PURPOSE: The purpose of this proposal is to solicit consulting services through competitive negotiation to create a transformative process that will lead the redevelopment of existing housing sites, provide the vision for private development and investment, and improve the connections without and within the study area.

- II. BACKGROUND: The Strategic Investment Area of Downtown Extended (herein referred to as the SIA) is an area in transition. It also includes three very different Charlottesville neighborhoods; Downtown, Ridge Street and Belmont. Downtown is second only to the University of Virginia as an attractor and economic driver for Charlottesville. It is also the location of a beloved City Farmer's Market on Water Street, which is in the process of finding a permanent home. The Ridge Street Neighborhood includes three public housing sites and a large Section 8 apartment complex. Consequently it has one of the lowest median incomes in the city. An additional vacant parcel owned by the Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority (CRHA) has been identified for redevelopment. That parcel is located at the intersection of Levy Street and Avon Street which is an entrance corridor shared by the Belmont Neighborhood. Belmont has seen considerable reinvestment and growth in median income over the past ten years. This area also serves as the "gateway" to downtown, situated at the base of a bridge that will be undergoing major repair and redesign in the next two years.

The SIA has also seen recent redevelopment, especially with regards to the adaptive reuse of the Ix Textile factory into a commercial, service and retail destination. However considerable land throughout the SIA (see the attached SIA Boundary and Developable Area Map, Attachment A) is still available for development and redevelopment. As the Downtown has grown into a regional entertainment and employment center, pressure has increased on the SIA to redevelop even further, especially with regards to relatively higher density, mixed income residential. The SIA is also bounded by and includes several other corridors in addition to Avon Street; Water Street, Monticello Avenue, Elliot Street and Ridge Street. Most of these corridors were also the subject of a previous study completed in 2000 by Torti Gallas and Partners and Charles Lesser and Associates. This study identified "growth" areas in the city and informed the City's 2001 Comprehensive Plan which in turn gave rise to the comprehensive rezoning of the city's corridors in 2003. Links to the comprehensive plan are available on the Neighborhood Development and Services website, <http://www.charlottesville.org/Index.aspx?page=845>. The Torti Gallas Study can be obtained by contacting the City's Office of Economic Development at 610 East Market Street, Room B230, Charlottesville, Virginia 22902 telephone (434) 970-3110 or fax (434) 970-3299.

A CRHA Master Plan (by Wallace Roberts and Todd) was adopted by the CRHA Board in August, 2010 and is available on the CRHA website, <http://cvillehousing.org>. Resolution #1279 (adopted by the CRHA at the same time as the Master Plan) and a copy of the Resolution/Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and CHRA for implementation is attached to this RFP, Attachment B. A large portion of the area was also the subject of "Choice and Challenge Neighborhood" applications last year. The applications (available on line) are filled with demographic, socio-economic and academic data associated with the neighborhood itself and the area's elementary school, Clark. The goals of these Federal programs remain important to the City and are embedded in the SIA Project Goals. In many ways, these three CRHA documents (WRT Master Plan, Resolution #1279 and the MOU) in conjunction with the Choice and Challenge Neighborhood grant applications set the stage for this SIA planning, economic development and urban design effort.

Core Goals of the SIA

1. To rebuild and preserve public and assisted housing as part of an integrated plan for revitalizing neighborhoods hallmarked by concentrated poverty.
2. To catalyze coordinated investments in neighborhood revitalization, including improvements in infrastructure, education and community assets that attracts businesses and industries.
3. To build the foundations for economically viable neighborhoods of opportunity and choice within one of the city's most distressed communities by promoting mixed income residential development without displacement and employment growth.
4. To address interconnected challenges: housing decay, crime, disinvestment, health disparities, adult educational opportunities, transportation and economic opportunities for youth and adults.
5. To create a healthy, viable neighborhood with urban amenities such as public parks, institutions like libraries and excellent food sources and safe, interconnected streets that promote walking, biking and efficient public transit.

In sum, the purpose of this proposal is to initiate a transformative process that will result in a clear road map to guide private development and investment, expand employment opportunities (for the low skilled and professional alike) and increase the city's real estate tax base. The SIA Plan will ultimately build upon the good work of the 2000 Torti Gallas Corridor Study (among others) and facilitate connections (inclusive of bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicular interconnectivity both public and private) outside and within the study area so as to promote a high quality of life for all residents and a great place to live, work and play.

III. STATEMENT OF NEEDS:

A. General Overview of Requirements: At a minimum the project approach shall consist of four phases; I. Analysis of Existing Conditions, II. Alternative Futures Investigation, III. Final Vision Plan and IV. Implementation Strategy.

1. Phase I. The consultant will become familiar with the specific study area existing conditions through background review of all appropriate studies, such as the Torti Gallas Corridor Study, the Thomas Jefferson Partnership for Economic Development (TJPED) Target Industry Study, ongoing transportation studies, the Belmont Bridge Design Project, the City Market Task Force recommendations, and other relevant resources affecting the project area.
2. Phase II. The consultant will work with the city to develop an appropriate work plan for public and stakeholder outreach, and investigate up to three alternative scenarios for this SIA. Each alternative shall broadly address urban design characteristics (with schematic massing diagrams,) density and land use, transportation, open space and recreation, economic development opportunities and depict and tabulate a low (status quo) to medium to maximum build out.
3. Phase III. Based on public feedback, the consultant will distill a final, composite "vision" plan, inclusive of two-dimensional street sections and elevations of each corridor and key secondary streets (new and existing) and three-dimensional visualizations of key aspects of the plan. (Anticipate either one per corridor and one area circumscribed by the corridors if street-level perspectives or an overall aerial perspective provided distinctions are clear. Some combination of both is acceptable.)
4. Phase IV. The consultant shall develop an implementation strategy that will facilitate development without compromising the quality and character of the built environment and establish strategic priorities for the city council. The strategy should include urban design guidelines and regulating plans (that could evolve into standards) as well as the identification of catalytic projects and phasing. Note: the scope of this SIA Plan does not include crafting transition strategies for public and assisted housing residents, however the identification of employment opportunities and workforce skills associated with the economic development plan and various housing typologies that could serve an economic or transitional function (i.e. livework and accessory units, congregate housing, multiplex "carriage houses" in addition to townhouses, condominiums and multifamily apartment buildings) should be part of the implementation strategy as well as the final "conceptual" plan.

B. Specific Requirements

1. Analysis of Existing Conditions. The City will provide the consultant with materials to prepare base plans that reflect current information (including but not limited to a land use survey, aerial and ground level photography, City GIS information and other computerized mapping.) The consultant will analyze:
 - a) Existing land uses inclusive of civic and open space.
 - b) Existing built form and settlement patterns including but not limited to building types, building placement relative to the public street, building massing, scale, height and primary façade transparency (i.e. "eyes on the street,") density and intensity land use including vertical and horizontal mixing.
 - c) Existing streetscape characteristics along corridors and secondary streets, including but not limited sidewalks, plantings, lighting, signage, setbacks, spatial enclosure, active or inactive street life.
 - d) Existing zoning and planned land uses.
 - e) Engineering utilities maps.
 - f) Property boundary and ownership map.
 - g) Topographic and R.O.W. maps.
 - h) Assessed valuations and market potential.

- i) Economic development potential and workforce readiness based on regional industry target studies and other documents.
 - j) Available square footage (and space needs) for commercial uses including retail and office as well as residential, mixed use, bio-tech, medical and light industrial.
 - k) Buildings available for adaptive re-use.
 - l) Existing vacant, and/or underdeveloped and potential for redevelopment
 - m) Environmental conditions such as streams and floodplains.
 - n) Local, citywide, and regional transportation plans (past and ongoing) inclusive of roadway, transit, bike-ped and new thoroughfares of all types that improve interconnectivity.)
2. Meetings. The consultants, assisted by staff, shall conduct public workshops, interviews and/or small focus groups with key stakeholders to obtain, evaluate and record relevant facts, issue assessments and desired outcomes for consideration during the development of plans. Other meetings shall include;
- a) Public Meetings and Stakeholder Groups –as required and determined by the mutually agreed upon Work Plan in Phase II. Meetings with City Staff – The consultants will meet regularly with City staff to review the objectives, development program, redevelopment criteria, process, products and schedule.
 - b) Project Steering Committee –consisting of neighborhood association members, community stakeholders, merchants groups, Housing Authority, Planning Commission and PLACE Design Task Force Committee representatives and others.
3. Interim Reports and Final Draft. The Consultant will provide summary documents (i.e. interim reports) from Phase I, II and III. A final draft of the Final Document, Phase IV shall be required. All reports shall be of the same format although with varying content as dictated by each phase such as; maps that depict new and existing streets, infill and redevelopment opportunities, public amenities, three dimensional illustrations, building massing and tables depicting existing conditions or approximate build out scenarios.
4. Essential Components of the Final SIA Planning Document (a Vision Plan):
- a) Composite “Conceptual Plan” of the study area that illustrates the vision for this SIA in a two dimensional map format as well as key aspects in three dimension (aerial or street perspective, axonometric.)
 - b) Transportation Plan, including existing and proposed interconnecting streets (be they pedestrian, bicycle and/or vehicular) and coordinates with the ongoing Transportation Study.
 - c) Character Zone Plan with graduated ranges of intensity of land use mixing and density of development that vary based on location relative to the Downtown Mall, focal points along the corridors and destinations within the area bounded by corridors (as appropriate) and existing low density residential areas. Character Zones should also be linked to specific Urban Design Guidelines. Note: Form-oriented spatial strategies that address mixed use, building placement and form, building and street types and mixed residential types that foster mixed income which are then keyed to urban design characteristics (as opposed to Euclidean-based strategies that focus almost exclusively on regulating and segregating land uses and density) should be explored.
 - d) Parks, Trails, Civic and Open Space Plan.
 - e) Urban Design and other plan elements, such as catalyst projects as determined necessary during project development.
 - f) Before and After Build-out Tables of performance measures including but not limited to; # residential units and gross density, SF’s of various uses, especially employment centers, # of intersections, bus stops, parks and civic spaces, grocery stores, LF of sidewalk, etc.
 - g) Land Use and Urban Design Regulation recommendations, including those pertaining to best practices in storm water and parking management.
 - h) Economic, fiscal impact, and financing analysis including ratios of income mixing for residential uses and potential job creation and employment to population ratio targets.

- i) Strategic Priority Phasing Plans.
- j) Built Form and Site Design Guidelines and other Implementation Tools. These guidelines (and vision plan) should reflect best practices in urban form and have the capacity to evolve into a more precise regulating tools, inclusive of a plan tied to character zones that have standards that govern building form and placement, land use, density and intensity of mixing, and public spaces. Implementation tools should also include overlay districts, rezoning processes and proffers and expedited review for desirable projects.

FINAL DELIVERABLES

- A. The City will receive within reasonable timeframes in electronic and/or paper versions as agreed to meet the specific plan requirements. The electronic versions of all plan components for copying purposes should be submitted, via software program(s) compatible with those currently in use by the City. The submittals will include a separate, single page (poster format), fold-up plan that summarizes, through text and high quality illustrations, the key elements of the strategic plan for use as a public information and marketing tool. The content of the draft and final plans will consist of background information, technical data, a written description of goals and objectives, detailed illustrations, plans and graphics of elements described and an explanation of how this strategic action plan helps to achieve stated goals and objectives.
- B. All hard copies and electronic versions of the draft and final plan will include a statement recognizing that the City of Charlottesville possesses unrestricted rights to access, use, copy and distribute this document. In addition, the consultant will adhere to the intellectual property right requirements, as established by law.

STEERING COMMITTEE/PLAN APPROVAL

- A. Steering Committee. The work process will be overseen by a Steering Committee that will consist of members of the new PLACE Design Task Force supplemented by three neighborhood residents and two area business owners. The PLACE Design Task Force will be involved in the consultant selection process
- B. Plan Approval. City Council will have the ultimate approval of the work product acting with the recommendation of the Planning Commission, Board of Architectural Review, and Steering Committee as appropriate.