Re: Request for Proposals
Downtown Master Plan

To Prospective Firms:

The Jackson Anchor Initiative, Jackson, Michigan’s private sector effort focused on transforming its downtown; and, in doing so, making the entire community a more vibrant place to live, learn and work, is seeking a qualified consulting firm to provide professional planning, urban design, and public meeting facilitation services in preparation of a Downtown Master Plan.

The successful candidate(s) will be expected to respond to downtown Jackson’s current and future planning and development needs. The candidate must provide evidence of a proven track record identifying public and private investment opportunities, demonstrating quality urban design practices, creating master plans, facilitating effective forums for public participation, and developing innovative land use plans. It is estimated this effort will take five (5) to six (6) months for completion and adoption.

Please review this RFP document and supporting materials that are enclosed and/or posted. Once responses have been submitted and reviewed, the Jackson Anchor Initiative will schedule interviews with selected firms that provide the strongest proposals. A final selection will be made once the interviews are complete. The Jackson Anchor Initiative reserves the right to select a consultant without an interview process.

We invite your serious consideration.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Jacob Hurt
Chief Operating Officer
Jackson Anchor Initiative

Downtown Master Plan RFP
DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

INTRODUCTION:

The Jackson Anchor Initiative is seeking a qualified professional planning firm or consultant to facilitate a community planning process that culminates in the development of a master plan for downtown Jackson, Michigan. The selected consultant will facilitate the public outreach efforts, develop conceptual elements based on the input received through the public and key stakeholder participation efforts, and prepare recommendations for the downtown master plan.

PROCESS:

The acquisition of professional services for this project will be a two-part process. The first will be an evaluation of qualifications. Review of the qualifications will be conducted by a technical team made up of representatives from key downtown stakeholder entities. Evaluation of the required submittal materials will be the basis for selection.

Upon initial selection of the most qualified offeror(s), the selected firms will be interviewed by the technical team, where fee schedules will be a final determinant of whether a contract is awarded. The Jackson Anchor Initiative may elect to reject any and all bids for any reason whatsoever. The offeror is at risk for all costs associated with the bidding process.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY:

Jackson is located 30 miles west of Ann Arbor along I-94, and 30 miles south of Lansing along US-127. The city serves as the county seat of Jackson County and is the core city of the Jackson Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

ABOUT THE JACKSON ANCHOR INITIATIVE:

The Jackson Anchor Initiative is Jackson, Michigan’s private sector effort focused on transforming its downtown; and, in doing so, making the entire community a more vibrant place to live, learn and work.
Eighteen of Jackson’s largest employers, including its three institutions of higher education, provide monetary support and serve as the Anchor Initiative’s board of directors.

The anchor concept was inspired by Harvard economist Michael Porter challenging a community’s “anchors” (the established and imbedded businesses and universities) to collectively take more responsibility for the plight of their urban downtown. Our Anchor Initiative’s objective is to take on this challenge to make downtown Jackson a more desirable place to live, learn and work by creating and sustaining a more vibrant core -- downtown Jackson, the physical, social and economic hub of the community.

PROJECT AREA:

Downtown Jackson is centrally located within the City of Jackson and the Jackson MSA. The project area is composed of the downtown core, bounded by Louis Glick Highway on the north, Washington Avenue on the south and Cooper Street on the east; and the downtown medical district area adjacent to the downtown core running east along East Michigan Avenue to Elm Street.

The downtown core is anchored by the corporate headquarters of Consumers Energy, a Fortune 500 electric utility; Henry Ford Allegiance Health’s back office operations at One Jackson Square; the Jackson County Tower; and City Hall. The downtown medical district is anchored by Henry Ford Allegiance Health’s main hospital and many ancillary medical offices and uses.

Downtown Jackson has experienced significant investment in the last five years. During that time over $110,000,000 of investment has occurred downtown with an additional $150,000,000 of potential investment in the development pipeline.

Significant recent projects include the Michigan Avenue Streetscape, CP Federal City Square, The Lofts on Louis mixed use development, the Lean Rocket Lab and the Consumers Energy Innovation Center. Several additional projects are currently underway including The 200 mixed use development, the Jackson Culinary Incubator Kitchen, the Jackson School of Arts, and the Francis Street Senior Lofts.

Several residential projects that will augment the existing downtown inventory are on the drawing board or have recently broken ground. The Francis Street Senior Lofts, a 45-unit age and income restricted mixed use project just broke ground and will add to the existing inventory of 195 age and/or income restricted residential units within the downtown core. An additional 126 age and/or income restricted units are currently in the development pipeline.

The 200, an 86-unit market rate mixed use project broke ground in May and will add to the existing inventory of 66 market rate residential units in the downtown core.
PLAN ELEMENTS:

Although several plans and studies addressing individual components of downtown have been undertaken in recent years an overall downtown master plan has not been one of them and does not exist for downtown Jackson. The Jackson Anchor Initiative is interested in a downtown master plan that will focus on downtown’s future with a strong emphasis on street level activation through placemaking and retail development, outdoor recreation specifically activating the Grand River, leveraging arts and cultural assets, single family and multi-family market rate residential development opportunities, and integrating through perception and physical means the downtown medical district into the downtown core.

Key issues facing downtown Jackson:

- Need for a unified vision for downtown
- Physical and perceived disconnect between the downtown core and the downtown medical district
- Potential $31.9 million in new retail sales not being realized
- Safety / Panhandling
- Parking system management
  - Availability of short-, medium-, and long-term parking options
  - Current and future parking inventory
- Wayfinding
- Event management
Previous downtown Jackson studies and plans:

- City of Jackson Anchor Opportunity Analysis, 2013 – U3 Ventures
- Downtown Jackson Alleyway, September 2014 – Michigan Municipal League PlacePlan
- Downtown Jackson Target Market Analysis, October 2014 – LandUse USA
- Jackson Next Community Master Pan, City of Jackson, April 2016 – Beckett & Raeder
- Downtown Retail Market Study, January 2018 – Gibbs Planning Group
- Shopability Analysis, May 2018 – Gibbs Planning Group

GENERAL SCOPE OF WORK:

General Scope of Work / Project Deliverables:

- Downtown Master Plan with these Key Components
  - Street Level Activation through Placemaking and Retail Development
    - High Impact / Lower Cost Ideas
    - Example: Alley Activation
  - Outdoor Recreation Specifically Activating the Grand River
  - Leveraging Arts and Culture Assets
  - Integrating Downtown Medical District into Downtown Core
  - Market Rate Residential Development Opportunities
    - Single Family
    - Multi-Family
  - Identify Infill and Redevelopment Opportunities
  - Address Impact of City Codes and Standards on Downtown’s Revitalization and Make Recommendations for Necessary Adjustments to Further Revitalization
    - Zoning
    - Design Standards
    - Historic Preservation

Meetings and Public Engagement:

The following are general expectations for the meetings and a public engagement process. The selected consultant shall also provide recommendations for this process. The final framework and process will be finalized pending negotiations of the final contract:

- General expectations for meetings and public engagement process are outlined below with additional recommendations provided by the selected consultant:
- Initial kickoff meeting with Jackson Anchor Initiative staff to review the project schedule, tour the downtown, schedule meetings, both internal and public meetings, and finalize plans for data compilation, process for creation of stakeholder committee, focus groups, town hall meetings and other community engagement opportunities.
- Community workshop with downtown master plan technical team comprised of key downtown stakeholders.
• Develop website for information and community engagement including online survey and other engagement tools such as visual preference surveys, interactive GIS, and other virtual engagement tools for citizen participation.
• Community outreach / town hall meetings.

Schedule / Process:
• July 11 – RFP released
• August 8, 5 p.m. – RFP responses due to Jackson Anchor Initiative
• August 19 – Interviews begin
• September 3 – RFP awarded
• September 16 – Kickoff Meeting
• January 31, 2020 – Final completion date
• February 11, 2020 – Final presentation to Jackson Anchor Initiative and technical team

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

Specific Requirements – At a minimum, each submission must be arranged according to the following outline:

1. Title Sheet: The title sheet must provide the name(s) of the team submitting with the name of the primary contact clearly identified.

2. Cover Letter: The cover letter must indicate the composition of the entire team including the Principal in Charge, Project Manager and support team.

3. Table of Contents

4. Provide a list of current active projects, including the name, type of project, location, firm’s role in the project and status of the project.

5. Summary of firm’s background and focus.

6. Provide a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of five (5) representative completed projects. Each past performance project should also contain:
   a. Location
   b. Client
   c. Date of project involvement
   d. Project description including illustrative materials and a written description of why this example is relevant to this downtown master plan project
e. Probable cost and scope of the project

f. Specific services performed by the firm

7. Public engagement approach. List at least three innovative public engagement activities utilized in past projects.

8. Team Composition: provide names, titles and qualifications of individuals who will be assigned to the project. This section of the responses should include descriptions of the respective roles that will be played by team members. Discuss the experiences of team members on the example projects referred to above. A resume (no more than one-page in length) should be included for key team members in an addendum to the response.

9. Professional References: List a minimum of three (3) references for each firm. List references for the example projects. For each reference list the contact’s name, address, phone number and relationship to the firm.

10. Statement of Philosophy and Project Understanding: Provide a concise statement (one page) outlining the philosophy of the team in approaching projects of this nature and the team’s grasp of issues and goals to address in the study.

11. Draft of typical professional services agreement terms and conditions (exclusive of pricing information).

12. In a separate sealed envelope, please provide a copy of your detailed proposed fee structure for the downtown master plan. Please clearly label envelope: PROPOSED FEE with your company’s name in the return address of the envelope.

Request for Proposals packages shall not exceed 50 pages. Resumes of professionals and draft agreement are excluded from the page count.

CRITERIA FOR CONSIDERATION OF QUALIFICATIONS:

The following factors will be used to evaluate consultant’s qualifications:

- Technical Approach / Understanding of downtown master planning for an economically challenged Rust Belt city;
- Experience and knowledge in developing similar plans with multiple plan elements by consultant personnel who will be directly involved with the project;
- Ability to complete the plan within the given timeframe;
- Ability to maintain communication on plan development;
- Ability to involve partners and stakeholders in the planning process;
- The ability of the firm to perform the proposed work;
- References.
CONDITIONS AND LIMITATIONS:

The Jackson Anchor Initiative expects to select a consulting firm from the RFP’s submitted, but reserves the right to request substitutions of firms. The Anchor Initiative also reserves the right to reject any or all responses to the RFP, to advertise for new responses, or to accept any response deemed to be in the best interest of downtown Jackson. A response to this RFP should not be construed as a contract or an indication of a commitment of any kind on the part of the Jackson Anchor Initiative, nor does it commit either to pay for costs incurred in the submission of a response to this request or for any cost incurred prior to the execution of a final contract.

Upon selection a contract shall be prepared, negotiated and fully executed before work is initiated. The Jackson Anchor Initiative reserves the right to dismiss any part or all the contracted team when, in the Anchor Initiative’s opinion, the project is not moving as scheduled or is hindered in any way by the actions or personalities of team members.

DEADLINE FOR RESPONSES:

All Requests for Proposals, and associated submittal materials, must be submitted no later than August 8th, 2019 at 5 p.m. to be considered. Teams of two or more consulting firms are acceptable. Teams composed of two or more firms should combine their statements into one package. Any firm wishing to be considered for providing services described in this RFP shall submit five (5) printed copies and one (1) digital copy to:

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