

# **Downtown KC 2030 Strategic Plan**

## **Request for Qualifications (RFQ)**

**RFQ Published: Friday, August 2, 2019**  
**Responses Due: Friday August 30, 2019**

### **I. BACKGROUND**

#### **A. Introduction:**

The Downtown Council of Kansas City, Missouri, (DTC), in partnership with other civic organizations and the City of Kansas City, is seeking statements of qualifications from interested firms or teams of firms with the appropriate expertise and experience to serve as a consultant to facilitate the development of the Downtown KC 2030 Strategic Plan.

The planning process will set strategy and action steps to serve as a 10-year roadmap towards making Downtown Kansas City a stronger and more resilient community through sustainable development and economic opportunity. The plan is intended to be the primary vision-setting and policy directing strategy to lead the ongoing revitalization of Downtown Kansas City for the next 10 years.

While the DTC follows an annual organizational strategic plan to pursue its multi-disciplinary approach to Downtown revitalization. It also wants to do that in context with a longer-term vision. Such a vision would rely upon an approach which acknowledges the importance of repopulating the urban center, through focused, specific and comprehensive strategies with the goal of promoting sustainable investment. Strategies which embrace infrastructure, open space, arts and culture, housing diversity, and management of the development process are critical to Downtown's continued growth.

A new comprehensive strategic plan for Downtown is needed to accommodate the vastly changed character of Downtown over the last 15 years. In addition, to developing detailed priorities for Downtown's future land use based upon the recently updated Greater Downtown Area Plan. The Downtown KC 2030 plan should address development trends, transportation networks, art-based programming strategies for parks and open spaces, and catalytic development projects. The Downtown KC 2030 Strategic Plan is expected to guide both public and private real estate and infrastructure investments, planning and economic development activities, affordability and economic inclusion initiatives. Downtown KC 2030 will place special emphasis on the importance of good urban design and the role it plays in creating healthy places and lasting value.

## **B. About the DTC:**

The DTC is committed to creating a vibrant, diverse and economically sustainable Downtown Kansas City. Downtown is the arts and cultural center of our metropolitan area, a model of sustainable development, a residential neighborhood, an energetic workplace and a setting for entrepreneurial creativity. Downtown Kansas City is interesting, vibrant, diverse, synergistic, accessible, walkable, affordable and livable. Downtown serves as a vital economic engine that ultimately helps all communities throughout the Midwest region prosper and grow strong.

The DTC is the Downtown advocacy organization that develops partnerships between local, state and federal government and a wide range of Downtown stakeholders engaged in Downtown's redevelopment. As such, the DTC spurs new investment by leveraging its resources through strategic investment and key partnerships.

DTC's primary metrics for success are 1) an increase in the number of people living, working and engaging in Downtown 2) affordability 3) accessibility to all citizens 4) connectivity through investment 5) an increase in Downtown commercial and residential property values and 6) growth in the public tax base. To do this, DTC implements a variety of programs to foster development and investment and to make downtown walkable, clean, safe, active and interesting.

## **C. About the Greater Downtown Area Plan:**

The City of Kansas City is completing an update of its Greater Downtown Area Plan (GDAP). This planning initiative, led by the Director of City Planning and known locally as the GDAP, includes broader boundaries and additional neighborhoods to Downtown's core study area and is expected to be completed by the 3rd quarter of 2019. The GDAP sets a broad framework for land use and the regulatory environment for the City of Kansas City.

### **Greater Downtown Area Plan Goals**

1. Walkability is the most important mode of transportation and the pedestrian scale will guide urban design decisions
2. Double Downtown Population and Focus Density
3. Double Downtown Jobs and Increase Visitors
4. Retain and Promote Safe, Unique and Authentic Downtown Neighborhoods
5. Sustainability is the guiding framework for policy recommendations and development decisions

As highlighted in a recent Urban Land Institute study the DTC has long maintained that a strategic plan is needed to guide Downtown's growth in a manner consistent with best practices and our shared community vision. With the GDAP being updated the time is right to move forward on developing a new strategic plan for Downtown.

## II. PROJECT OVERVIEW

### A. The Downtown KC 2030 Strategic Plan:

The DTC, along with other civic partners and the City of Kansas City, will work to develop a strategic plan for Downtown beginning in Fall 2019. The planning process entitled, "Downtown KC 2030" will build upon and be consistent with the updated GDAP, as well as, build on the data and process foundation laid by the GDAP planning process. Downtown KC 2030 will provide a common understanding of both where Downtown Kansas City is today and what it wants to be tomorrow. The study needs to be conducted through the lens of economic inclusion. Kansas City has a long and historic struggle with segregation. The plan should explore strategies that promote economic mobility, community wealth building, and affordable, high-quality housing connected by effective transit options to employment generators.

The DTC along with its civic partners will assemble a Steering Committee representative of key stakeholders to participate in the planning process and to interact with the consulting team. Content expert workgroups or sub-committees will likely be formed as needed to focus on particular topic areas. Identified workgroup areas include but are not limited to: innovation and technology, infrastructure and built environment, investment strategies, transportation, mobility and accessibility, economic inclusion and affordability, catalytic projects, open space, and green infrastructure and the promotion of the arts and cultural ecosystem. The consultant is expected to engage with the Steering Committee and the content expert teams to facilitate their input into the plan.

### B. Study Area:

The study area for the Downtown KC 2030 Strategic Plan will focus on areas within the GDAP, recognizing that all areas of study are unique and flexibility with boundaries is necessary.

### C. Goals:

In a time when urban centers are revitalizing nationwide due to favorable trends, how can we help shape Downtown Kansas City into a more successful urban place, maintaining its **authenticity and affordability** while promoting strategies of **economic inclusion**?

Our goal is to bring together a broad and inclusive assembly of Downtown stakeholders to work together and create a shared vision of the future via the *Downtown KC 2030* strategic planning process. The goal is to create confidence and certainty for future investment by setting the direction and priorities for the next decade.

The Plan will provide a robust roadmap for a multi-disciplinary strategic focus - there are no silver bullets. For Downtown to be a thriving mixed-use environment it must

implement strategies to achieve density, it must be clean, green and safe, attractive and well designed, it must work to build a stronger, more resilient community through sustainable development and economic opportunity. The plan must build a consensus for what kind of place our community wants Downtown Kansas City to be in 10 years:

1. Identify, prioritize and sequence **major catalytic public and private infrastructure, and amenity projects** that will drive additional investment, encourage appropriate development, enhance the quality of life, minimize displacement of existing residents, activate civic assets to their highest and best use, promote economic mobility, improve underutilized public spaces and promote connectivity between neighborhoods.
2. Identify potential actions of **economic success and inclusion**, related to better-connecting Downtown adjacent neighborhoods by promoting linkages. The study should address the historical racial and socio-economic divides in a culturally sensitive manner.
3. Identify best practices for addressing **transportation, mobility and parking** challenges and evaluate the impact of these options on improving quality of life, making Downtown more resilient, sustainable, affordable, with enhanced development potential.
4. The study should address **housing development strategies** that add new housing to the ecosystem, from rent-restricted to luxury units.
5. Build upon the **open space and parks** framework provided through the GDAP with a specific focus on developing active programmed public spaces through **public art** and performance, as well as identifying sustainable funding strategies.
6. Adopt a high-impact plan with broad public support and clear implementation steps that will **grow jobs** and **build new businesses** while elevating Kansas City's brand as an innovative, "smart city" and serve as an engine for **regional and national talent recruitment**.

A **robust and comprehensive set of metrics** will be developed to ensure measurable progress is being made in all strategic areas. An on-going **implementation committee** will be established to monitor progress and champion the study's recommendations moving forward.

#### **D. Scope of Work:**

The DTC seeks a consultant to assist in developing a strategic plan to guide the next 10-years of growth and revitalization in Downtown Kansas City. The consultant will also facilitate authentic community engagement that creates a conversation about the

future of Downtown Kansas City. A high priority for the DTC through this planning process is to engage a broad and diverse range of stakeholders in a conversation about the future of Downtown.

The DTC is especially interested in developing a strategic plan that is cognizant of changes in technology and the potential impacts on real estate and urban redevelopment best practices. Moreover, understanding and accounting for potential technological disruptions and market shifts, such as autonomous vehicles and the changing landscape for brick-and-mortar retail, are important considerations as well.

Ultimately, the DTC will collaborate with the consultant to develop a final scope of services; however, the anticipated services are expected to include the following deliverables:

- Project Management: Develop a work plan, schedule, and project management approach
- Review Existing Plans and Studies: Complete a review of previously completed plans and studies pertaining to Downtown Kansas City.
- Document & Analyze Existing Conditions: Complete an assessment and inventory of applicable physical, social and environmental existing conditions and generate descriptive maps of existing land uses, parking and transportation networks, parks/open spaces, assets, and opportunities, and development patterns within Downtown.
- Public Engagement: Develop and execute a robust and effective public engagement strategy to facilitate broad public input into the Plan. Please refer to the detailed Public Engagement section below for more information.
- Identify Vision, Goals, & Guideline Principles: Synthesize all inputs and leverage professional expertise and best practices to craft suitable overarching goals and principles that will guide the plan to ensure desired outcomes.
- Development Recommendations: Identify, evaluate and prioritize development and infrastructure projects, urban design improvements, area programming recommendations, development, and land use concepts, policies, and other implementation strategies consistent with the identified plan goals and principles.
- Plan Documentation: Develop the final plan report, including implementation recommendations and supporting maps and graphics. Special emphasis should be placed on creating a final plan that is web-compatible, clear, concise, graphics-driven, and easily relatable by a diverse audience.

#### **E. Public Engagement:**

A critical component of the plan is an effective public engagement strategy that incorporates non-traditional means of ensuring all stakeholders have an opportunity to provide input and contribute to the process. DTC will collaborate with the selected consultant to develop a detailed public participation and outreach strategy.

Additionally, DTC recommends engaging a local partner to ensure that the public engagement meets the goals of involving a diverse set of audiences in interesting, creative ways to foster dialogue and meaningful input regarding the future of Downtown Kansas City. The local partner may be contracted and managed directly by the DTC or be retained as sub-consultants of the consultant, pending the development of a final scope of services with the selected consultant.

A key priority for the DTC is to find effective ways to engage Downtown stakeholders and get their input into the planning process. DTC suggests that in addition to presentation-style public meetings, the consultant incorporate non-traditional public engagement and outreach strategies to ensure full community participation. DTC encourages consultants within their qualifications to highlight their specific experiences with engaging a diverse range of audiences in interesting and creative ways. Examples of outreach strategies could include but are not limited to, walking tours and mobile workshops, arts-based civic dialogue, panel discussions, and urban plan workshops in partnership with the Kansas City chapter of the Urban Land Institute (ULI). Utilization of web-based public input applications like "Mentimeter" should also be considered as a method to increase opportunities for outreach and participation.

**F. Project Timeline:**

It is anticipated that the Downtown KC 2030 Strategic Plan process will begin in the 3rd quarter of 2019 and should be completed by the end of 2020. The final project timeline and schedule will be developed in collaboration with the selected consultant and in consultation with the City of Kansas City Planning Department.

**III. RFQ AND RFP SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS -  
A TWO ROUND SELECTION PROCESS**

Please follow the outline below and include the following information when submitting a response to the RFQ and the subsequent RFP. The process will consist of two rounds of proposals. The first round will be the opportunity for proposers to demonstrate their team's qualifications for the study and overall strategic approach to it, explaining in some detail how and why your qualifications and approach make you a qualified firm to conduct the study. A selection committee will review and select group of finalists who will be asked to compete through an RFP by putting their best ideas for their proposal forward that are generally consistent with the objectives described in the RFP thus submitting their best and final proposals of which cost will be a factor.

**A. Letter of Intent:**

State the full name(s) and address(es) of the organization(s) and the branch office(s) or other subordinate element(s) that will perform or assist in performing the services described herein.

Identify the firm contact name, phone numbers, and email addresses. Indicate the type of firm ownership (individual, partnership or corporation) and explain any proposed team or joint venture or partnership relationships. Include the state in which the firm is incorporated or licensed.

**B. Statement of Experience:**

Provide a straightforward complete and concise description of the consultant's capabilities to satisfy the requirements outlined in this RFQ. Describe the experience, detailing a minimum of three recent, relevant projects in similar conditions and with similar size and/or scope. Summaries should include a narrative on the projects, work product examples, experience working with diverse and multicultural stakeholders and audiences, associated fees, and client references.

**C. Team Qualifications:**

Provide the names and resumes of the project manager and key staff members who will work on the project. Include a team organization statement defining their anticipated roles on the team. Provide examples of their proven ability to sensitively and successfully work with an ethnically diverse population. Indicate the percentage of involvement of each team member and identify who will be the daily point of contact for the DTC staff member assigned to manage the consultant.

**D. Statement of Project Understanding & Approach:**

Demonstrate project understanding, including details of the team's familiarity and experience with providing strategic master planning services in urban Downtown contexts. Provide additional information that demonstrates the firm's understanding and insights related to the project. A detailed scope of services and project schedule are not required at this time, as the DTC will develop the final scope of services with the selected consultant.

**IV. ROUND I - RFQ SUBMISSION PROCESS**

**A. Questions:**

Please direct any questions in writing via the form at this link <https://form.jotform.com/DowntownKC/downtownkc-2030-rfq> by Friday, August 9, 2019, by 4:00 PM using the subject line "Downtown KC 2030 Questions." Answers to all submitted questions will be posted on the DTC website the week of August 16, 2019.

**B. Submission Due Date:**

All statements of qualifications must be submitted to DTC by 4:00 PM on Friday, August 30, 2019. Submittals received after this time and date will not be considered. Please deliver seven (7) hard copies to the physical address below prior to the deadline.

Mr. William Dietrich  
Downtown Council of Kansas City, Missouri  
1000 Walnut Street, Suite 200  
Kansas City, Missouri 64106

Respondents must also submit a digital PDF of the entire submittal via email to [bill@downtownkc.org](mailto:bill@downtownkc.org) prior to the deadline described above.

## **V. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The DTC reserves the right to reject any or all submittals or to make modifications to the RFQ if needed. The following criteria will be used in evaluating qualifications.

### **A. Firm Experience:**

A key consideration will be the demonstrated experience of the firm in similar work and a record of successful completion of similar projects. Also to be considered is the firm's ability to take on additional work, demonstrated understanding of the DTC's goals and purposes for this project, specific management approach, and the firm's ability to offer the breadth and quality of services required for this project. The selected consultant should demonstrate evidence of broad knowledge of best practices in Downtown strategic planning and public engagement.

### **B. Project Team:**

The DTC will give weight to the individual qualifications of the project team members who will be assigned to this project. Consideration will include qualifications of key personnel, project manager's experience, and sub-consultant (if any) experience and qualifications. If a team approach is proposed, please note if the team has worked together to improve the planning process.

### **C. Ability to Understand, Innovate Upon, and Complete the Scope of Work:**

The consultant should communicate their ability to understand and innovate upon the scope of work. Special emphasis will be placed on creative public engagement and the innovative use of technology to improve the planning process.

### **D. WMBE Participation:**

The DTC's requires that a best-faith effort be made to avail any potential contracting or subcontracting opportunities to qualified minority and women-owned businesses. Please describe your firm's approach to diversity and inclusion and indicate if you plan to subcontract any portion of the project.

### **E. References:**

References will be contacted for all finalist candidates.

### **F. Responsiveness to the RFQ and Compliance with Instructions:**

## VI. PROJECT SCHEDULE

RFQ Release Date	Friday, August 2, 2019
Questions Due	Friday, August 9, 2019
Responses to Questions Posted	Friday, August 16, 2019
RFQ Submittals Due	Friday, August 30, 2019
RFP Release Date	Friday, September 27
Questions Due	Friday, September 27, 2019
Responses to Questions Posted	Friday, October 4, 2019
RFP Submittals Due	Friday, October 18, 2019
Interviews	Week of November 4, 2019
Consultant Selection	Week of November 11, 2019
Contract Negotiation & Finalization	November 22, 2019
Notice to Proceed	Early December, 2019

## VII. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

### A. Equal Opportunity Statement:

The DTC is an equal opportunity employer and will select a consultant without regard to age, disability, religion, creed or belief, political affiliation, race, sex, or ethnicity.

### B. WMBE Participation:

The DTC's requires that a best-faith effort is made to avail any potential contracting or subcontracting opportunities to qualified minority and women-owned businesses.

### C. Contract Negotiations:

The DTC will negotiate the terms of a contract with the consultant(s) submitting the top-ranked response(s) or another ranked-choice, should negotiations with the top-ranked firm fail. DTC will not reimburse any costs incurred prior to a formal notice to proceed should a contract award resulting from this solicitation. All submittal costs in conjunction with the RFQ shall be borne by the submitting firm.