

# HIGH POINT, NORTH CAROLINA



## REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A  
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC  
ACTION PLAN & MANAGEMENT PLAN  
FOR

**HIGH POINT, NC**

**Released by: Forward High Point, Inc.**

In Partnership with: The City of High Point

RELEASE DATE: March 23, 2022

SUBMISSION DUE DATE: May 2, 2022

**INTRODUCTION:**

Forward High Point, Inc. (FHP), in partnership with the City of High Point, North Carolina (City), invites firms to submit qualifications demonstrating competent professional services skills required to guide the organization and City into its next phase in the downtown revitalization process. This should be an inclusive, community-owned, Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for Forward High Point and the downtown. Proposers should have broad experience in Downtown Management Organizations, multi-source organizational funding, initiation and implementation of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), downtown visioning, urban design and planning, parking and transportation, market analysis, retail, housing and hospitality economic analysis, citizen outreach, and implementation.

Forward High Point, Inc., was formed six years ago, by the City of High Point to spearhead the City Council's Goals of bringing new investment, businesses, employees and residents into a quadrant of downtown that had been seeing a decline in business, activity and value. FHP took the lead in the development of a Catalyst Project (Multi-Use Stadium -Truist Point Stadium)) and their goal of bring \$100 Million in new investment into the area. FHP during these past six years has operated primarily as a very pro-active Economic Development Organization. The Stadium is open and is in full time operation and the initial development goals have been surpassed. This downtown area is seeing the steady influx of new investment, restaurants and offices, with substantial size residential and hospitality projects planned. During this period of time the FHP was a very small operation funded almost exclusively by the City of High Point.

Forward High Point and the City of High Point, agree that it is crucial that the organization take time to assess its goals and objectives, while looking to transform FHP into a more "typical" Downtown Development Organization, with greater focus on urban environmental management, branding and marketing. It is also vital that the organization is able to grow its operational budget and look to increased sources of funding, including the formation of a Business Improvement District (or Municipal Service District under NC Statues).

A selection committee will evaluate and rank the firms/teams' qualifications based on the criteria below. It is anticipated that the two top ranked firms will be shortlisted. At the conclusion of the evaluation period, the highest ranked firm/team will be engaged in contract negotiations and, if successful, will be offered a contract for the project. If contract negotiations fail, the next highest ranked firm will be engaged as above. If FHP cannot reach an agreement with either firm, it may re-evaluate the previous submissions or to make modifications to the RFQ and readvertise. The engaged firm will use a multi-disciplinary approach that combines local knowledge and leadership with best-practice expertise and perspective. The proposer may be a single firm or a team of firms or entities to provide the necessary breadth and depth of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

The Strategic Action Plan (SAP) is intended to be a roadmap for FHP and the City to restructure its downtown revitalization process. The SAP should also address how both FHP and the City can better

work in coordination with its community partners as to plan, to advocate for, and to promote a more robust, thriving, and productive downtown. This document will act to inform both FHP and the City on work plans, public policy, priority development, and budgeting decisions. The SAP should clarify a vision and provide strategic guidance for all of the plan partners on these core areas of focus:

- Downtown Management
- Organization Management & Funding
- Organizational Responsibilities
- Business Development
- Image, Branding & Marketing
- Hospitality
- Education
- Housing
- Retail, Arts, and Entertainment
- Urban Design, Open Space, and Public Art.

The selected firm will work closely with the Board of Forward High Point, as well as City Managers, City Staff and partner organizations, to establish the framework, timeline, public outreach, and deliverables. FHP anticipates that the planning process will take 4 to 6 months to complete and will begin in (July 2022). The consultant will interact with FHP Board, City Staff and community partner staffs, a steering committee, subcommittees and, the general public.

FHP through its current operational budget will be funding this SAP. All costs, fees and reimbursements should be within the \$ 40,000 - \$60,000 range.

**OBJECTIVE:**

The resulting SAP will reflect the community's vision for an inclusive, livable, healthy, family-friendly, economically vibrant, and exciting downtown for the next ten years. The plan will build on Downtown High Point current economic development plans, community excitement, physical and social assets. It will examine and recommend the proper role for FHP within the context of these plans. It will provide a list of strategic actions and provide recommendations for champions and managers of the action plans, which will shape downtown's future development, enhance connections to surrounding neighborhoods and strengthen its role as the heart of the city.

While focusing on FHP's in the revitalization process this SAP plan will carefully look at the current organizations that have had a role or should have a role in the downtown revitalization and propose how best these organization can work with FHP and the City to successfully implement the goals of the SAP. The plan will serve as a benchmark for public and private decisions that affect downtown and be used as a tool to help make policy decisions and promote downtown investment.

**BACKGROUND:**

The City of High Point is one of the three major cities that make up the Piedmont Triad Region (Region Population of 1,711,755+), with a City population of 116,065 (current estimate). It is located primarily in Guilford County (537,000+), and adjoins the larger city of Greensboro. High Point is located approximately half-way between Raleigh & Charlotte, along Interstate 85, one of four Interstate Highways that dissect High Point. High Point was founded in 1859 along the former Plank Road, that became the NC Railroad. Both passenger (with a Passenger Depot located on Main Street) and freight rail traffic pass regularly through downtown. High Point has a City Manager form of government with a Mayor (Voting) and eight City Council Members (Two At-Large, Six by Wards)

The City of High Point is known as the “Furniture Capital of the World”, as it hosts, twice yearly, the world’s largest manufactures furniture show, drawing approximately 75,000 people from around the world in both the spring and fall (Pre-COVID estimates). Downtown High Point is home to over 12-Million Square Feet of Manufacture’s Showrooms, which provide a significant part of the community’s tax base. Unfortunately, these major (lucrative) structures are primarily dark 48-weeks out of the year. This has provided with downtown with having to overcome the perception that downtown is “closed” most of the year.

City leaders have recognized that a strong city needs a strong downtown and that is open to the public a full 52-weeks per year. It was for that purpose that the City started FHP in 2016 and proceeded with its “catalyst project”, a multi-use stadium that is now home to the Minor League (American League of Professional Baseball) High Point Rockers and is now negotiating to be home to professional Soccer as well, along with amateur sports and concerts. Land around the stadium was assembled and sold to a national “Master Developer”. Currently, in addition to the stadium approximately \$150 million in new investment has been made in downtown. This development has been led by the City and FHP, along with the Master Developer, a local foundation and several local investors. The SAP is an effort to bring all of these entities to the same table, working toward a consensus vision for the future of downtown.

**DOWNTOWN HIGH POINT:**

Downtown High Point, is a local, national and inter-national destination. It is best known as the host of the International Home Furnishing Market, held in April and October of each year. With over 12-million square feet of manufacturers showrooms located within downtown, this 6-day market draws approximately 75,000 (pre-COVID) furniture buyers and interior designers from around the world.

The Furniture Market is managed by a stand-alone non-profit organization, High Point Market Authority. Learn more: [www.highpointmarket.org](http://www.highpointmarket.org)

Once a very vibrant, traditional downtown with movie theatres, department stores, restaurants, hotels, many shops and stores, downtown High Point saw the similar downward spiral caused by suburban shopping centers and then malls. But unlike most cities, downtown High Point did continue to have a

prosperous economic life due to the growth of the international furniture market. Existing buildings were repurposed as showrooms, and new showrooms were constructed. That new construction has continued to today, with many high design new buildings. Additional Showrooms are currently under construction.

Main Street is also a major cross-town artery linking several of the region's interstate highways and several cities. With 5 lanes and high traffic volumes, Main Street continues to attract Auto oriented development; fast food, shopping centers and big box stores. What downtown High Point had lost, was a sense of local focus and users. Only a few local businesses remained. Prominent professional offices moved closer to the interstates. Manufacturing that remained move to new locations. To most of the Citizens of High Point, "Downtown" was gone.

In 2016, City Council set out to change that dynamic. While still strongly supporting the significance of the Furniture Market, the Council set a series of goals to bring local businesses and citizens back to downtown, if only within a portion of the large downtown area. A section of downtown was re-zoned to prohibit new showrooms and the city agreed to sponsor a "Catalyst Project". That was to be "Truist Point" Stadium, a 5,000 seat multi-use stadium built in downtown with a 7-acre master developer zone surrounding the stadium.

Learn more: [www.highpointrockers.com](http://www.highpointrockers.com)

### **Forward High Point, Inc.**

Forward High Point, Inc. is a 501(c)6 nonprofit organization, incorporated in 2016. It also has a supporting foundation, Forward High Point Foundation, a 501(c)3, charitable foundation. FHP has a 25-member Board of Directors, with a 9-Member Executive Committee. Eleven of the 25 Board Members are representatives of selected organizations or public bodies or city staff. The additional members are selected as At-Large or as Business/Property Owners (within City). These members are elected for 3-year terms. FHP hired its first (and only) Executive Director who started in September 2016 in a one-person office. A part-time Office Manager was hired in 2017. Both had significant experience in these roles.

The Executive Director/President of FHP recently retired (January 31, 2022) and is now assisting on a limited basis as a consultant. The Office Manager has also retired, but is also assisting on a limited basis until their replacements are found.

FHP was set up following the adoption of the Catalyst Goals of City Council and was primarily tasked with completing the Market Analysis for a Baseball Team and Stadium, Site Selection and Site Acquisition. FHP was also involved with the public relations on the financing and development of the stadium. As the stadium was constructed using a Design/Build method, the President was part of the City Design/Construction Team. During the construction of the Stadium, FHP was also tasked with advertising for and recommendation of a Master Developer to purchase and develop the 7 acres adjacent to the stadium. FHP has been provided technical and coordination assistance to the Master Developer ever since. The process for this project was greatly accelerated. High Point had no stadium

or team prior to the start of this effort and there was no potential team owner or financing plan. The effort began in the summer of 2016 ended with the Opening Day of May 2, 2019. In that time the site was secured, a team was purchased and financing was set up and the stadium was constructed.

### **Business Development**

The downtown office market is attempting to make some comebacks. In the previous 20 years, many of the traditional long-established bank and legal offices moved to new locations in suburban office parks or along commercial roads. Changes in the newspaper world hit High Point with the vast downsizing and move of the local newspaper from downtown. The local telephone company moved its primary office from downtown and has since been merged with other companies. Other office buildings, that once housed smaller professional offices were readapted as furniture showrooms. The last major office group that has remained in downtown, due to the presence of the regional hospital, medical has also started to shift with the consolidation in the hospital medical field, as well as movements to multiple suburban locations.

We have started to see some encouraging growth in the downtown office market with the construction of the Stadium. The opening of Plant 7, at Congdon Yards, has added about 100,000 sf of new office space in a former showroom, adjacent to the stadium. Elliott Sidewalk Communities is about to open their first building that will bring a regional office of a Fortune 500 company to downtown overlooking the stadium. This was assisted with some economic incentives by the City of High Point (This program continues). Other smaller offices have also moved to or have recently opened downtown. This year should see about 300 new professional office employees working in downtown.

### **Hospitality**

While High Point does host the largest visitor event in North Carolina twice a year, it does not (presently) have any major hotels in downtown. The only major hotel, most recently Red Lion, a 200+ room convention style hotel opened in the late 80's closed about two years ago, following bankruptcy. This was the last of several bankruptcies in the hotel's history. That has left just one small Luxury Inn in the downtown and a couple of very old motels. This property now has a complicated legal structure, with the land and building lease held separately. The company that has the building lease, is trying to secure the land from the Bankruptcy Court.

The Congdon Family Foundation has been looking closely at building a new Conference Center, on land it owns adjacent to the stadium. They have conducted feasibility studies for the facility, but at this time there is no definitive plan or date for construction.

There were also plans, initially by Elliott Sidewalk Communities to building a 120-room hotel as part of their Master Development around the stadium. Those plan have change following discussions with the Congdon Foundation concerning their Conference Center and them proactively pursuing a hotel and acquired land for a developer to build a new mid-range hotel across the street from Congdon Yards. This hotel should start construction in Spring of 2022. The local CVB (Visit High Point) continues to lobby for at least one additional hotel.

### **Education**

High Point is home to High Point University, a private university founded as High Point College in 1924, it became High Point University in October 1991. HPU offers 61 undergraduate majors, 65 undergraduate minors, and 14 graduate majors. HPU has seen incredible growth since 2005, when the university hired Nido Qubein as president. Since 2005, the enrollment has grown from 1,450 to almost 6,000 students. The university has seen over \$1 billion dollars in new construction, added multiple new schools of study and greatly expanded its campus footprint. Its main gates are less than a half mile from downtown and Main Street.

HPU is ranked #1 by U.S. News & World Report for Best Regional College in the South and #1 for Most Innovative Regional College in the South. Its student population includes students from all 50 states and multiple foreign countries.

### **Housing**

High Point has some significant historic neighborhoods adjacent to downtown. The traditional core area is compact and diversifies in size and style of housing. Most of the current residential growth is to the North and West of the central core. This is the area of new industrial and commercial growth. The North boundary of High Point adjoins the boundary of Greensboro. The current housing market is very strong with the major industrial growth present and proposed for the Triad area.

### **PARTNERS:**

Since our founding in 2016, Forward High Point has worked with our community partners to bring about new investment and development in downtown. In addition to the City of High Point, FHP has attempted to work closely with Visit High Point (CVB), Chamber of Commerce, High Point Market Authority, along with the major private downtown investors, including the Congdon Family Foundation, Elliott Sidewalk Communities and Peter's Development (Dr. Lenny Peters).

While all of these entities are strongly committed to downtown, making significant investment of time and resources, they have not always worked well together, communicated well or worked toward uniform goals or messages. Defining a clear, common vision and work strategy among these entities is a significant mission of this Strategic Plan.

### **Forward High Point Foundation & LLCs**

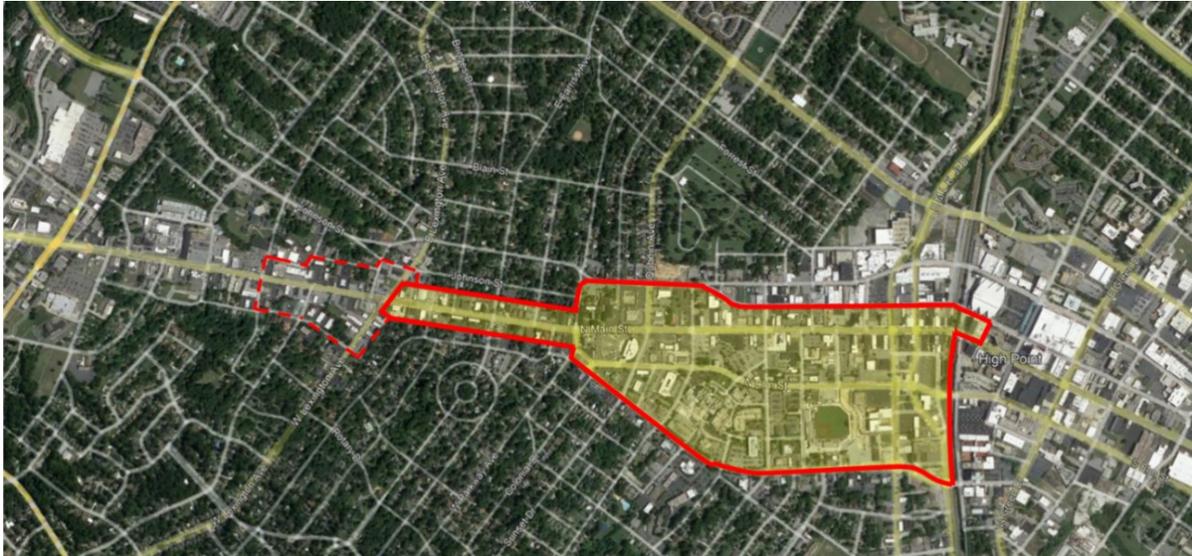
Forward High Point Foundation (FHPF) is the charitable, 501c3 non-profit arm of Forward High Point Inc. (FHPI). It functions as a fund raising, supporting aspect of the overall organization. FHPF also houses, through two Limited Liability Corporations, as the holding company for Forward High Point real estate acquisitions and revolving fund. This was the side of the organization that acquired property contracts or ownership on behalf of the stadium and master development project, for transfer to the City of High Point. FHPF has also been actively working to assemble properties for future development within the downtown and has been donated distressed properties. The goal in all of its acquisitions is to prepare the sites, as much as feasible, for development, market the property and eventually sell the property to private developers for new development that will be beneficial to the downtown as a whole.

- **FHP Properties, L.L.C.** is a single member LLC wholly owned by FHPF. It has been the primary LLC used for the purchase of properties in downtown. It currently owns four properties on 700 block of Main Street. It has been working to assemble ownership of a large contiguous parcel that would allow for the development of a large mixed-use development, with 20,000 to 30,000 sf of commercial fronting Main Street on the ground floor and a total of about 200 rental apartments on upper floors, with parking either behind or under the buildings. This project has been a work in progress for FHP, due to multiple ownerships, death of land owners, unwillingness to sell for fair price or sell at all and in the handling of environmental clean-up of several of the properties.
- **FHP Front Street, L.L.C.** is also a single member LLC owned by FHPF. It is the legal entity that took ownership to 101 S. Main Street (Showplace West) building that was donated to the organization by IMC (International Market Centers). This building built in the early 1970s was once the premiere new office building in High Point. It is eight stories above the street, with one lower level accessed by an outdoor courtyard. The 130,000-sf building has been vacant for about 15 years. FHP distributed an RFP for the building and currently has the building under contract to a New York development company for the appraised value of \$1.3 million.

**PROJECT AREA:**

There is no one definition of Downtown High Point. For many, it is the area currently controlled by the furniture showrooms – mostly the historic downtown area. But Main Street in High Point is a major artery through the community and runs from one Interstate Highway to another. Therefore, there are shopping centers, big box stores, fast food stores, convenient stores, and many other businesses along the entirety of Main Street. What has more lately been defined as downtown, is the area north and west of the furniture market district from the Railroad north to around Lexington Avenue, while others that would consider it going as far north as Eastchester/Westchester, with the western edge of the area being Linsey Street, although there is some interest in trying to extend an arm for the inclusion of arts of West English Street (specifically a historic commercial area about 1 mile from Main Street).

We anticipate the boundaries for this project to be in the large scope the area from the Railroad north to Lexington Avenue or several blocks further north. With an eastern edge of Hamilton Avenue and a western edge of Lindsey. This would therefore include the most the North Main Area, Stadium Area, Hospital Area, Library Area and Uptown. While the Furniture District will not be included, its interwoven economic and social infrastructure need to be understood. The transitions between these areas or district should also be considered. Some analysis of linking the west English Street expansion area should also be addressed. When appropriate, the SAP will reference adjacent areas and pending developments that have material strategic relevance to downtown and recommend tactics to address the opportunities they represent and the challenges they face.



**PROJECT APPROACH:**

FHP will assist the consultant in inviting business and property owners, employees, residents, elected officials, community leaders, staff from partner organizations, and surrounding neighborhoods to participate in the planning process. The process will include open and meaningful engagement with the Steering Committee and subcommittees.

**Note:** A critical consultant task will be to engage diverse groups and constituents who may not typically participate in public processes but are interested in the area and can provide helpful input and perspectives. The consultant team should implement creative strategies to obtain public input from diverse views and host traditional meetings, forums, and online surveys.

Proposed ideas for community outreach should be itemized in the RFP. Special Considerations:

- Ensure the SAP is inclusive and community-driven, achievable yet aspirational, futuristic yet respectful of existing assets while mindful of the sustainability of downtown.
- Provide recommendations on capital project needs that will inspire and support future development, proposed funding sources, and maintenance issues.

**SCOPE OF WORK:**

The consultant will work under the direction of FHP in preparing the SAP. The consultant is expected to inform and solicit advice and guidance from:

- Forward High Point Board
- A Steering Committee (and subcommittees)
- City Management
- The General Public
- Downtown Investors
- Related Organizations

This scope of work may be modified during contract negotiations with the consultant. At a minimum, the consultant will undertake the following tasks:

1. In collaboration with FHP, develop a detailed project work plan and planning process, a timeline and schedule of meetings, public outreach, engagement and involvement strategy, stakeholder and Task Force input, and key milestones and deliverables. Develop specific details of the planning process, including the timeline, logistics, and deliverables.
2. Review, understand, and present findings and proposals of earlier plans and studies to staff and committees related to the future.
  - Review existing plans, research, data, for downtown.
  - Review City plans for greenway and streetscape enhancement in downtown.
  - Discuss long term plans of downtown partners organizations and developers
3. Conduct strategic planning sessions with the Steering Committee to review overall plan recommendations. This should include a review of the mission, creation of vision and value statements, and strategic goals, strategies, and key performance indicators reflective of the mission statement.
4. Review FHP current organizational and financial structure, function, responsibilities and local awareness and support.
5. **Vision:** Articulate a vision for the downtown that can be accepted and shared by the various organizations involved in downtown, the property owners and general public, including its relationship to adjacent areas.
6. **Action Plan:** Solicit input, develop and receive feedback on a plan that includes, but is not limited to, the following components.
  - Identify and outline an action plan for each core area of focus (see below) that leverages existing plans and identifies strategies for short-term (next 1-2 years), mid-term (3-5 years) and long term (5-10 years) opportunities for downtown and how downtown interacts with the surrounding neighborhoods.
  - Develop action steps within these strategies and recommend best management practices and potential leadership within them.
    - a) Business Development: Establish goals, policies, objectives, provisions, and guidelines for economic growth and vitality including, but not limited to:
      - Provide an overview of the office market, including trends, current context, and recommended direction in future years.
        - Identify enhancement opportunities and economic development potential for areas adjacent to downtown.
      - Review existing quality of life amenities and offerings, large and small, and recommend what other amenities are desired or needed for future talent and business attraction and retention strategies.
      - Identify the economic development tactics required, correlated to the area's
      - Make recommendations for how downtown can proactively build upon the area

- momentum to best position downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods for growth, success, and enhanced connectivity.
- Use existing plans, projects, and initiatives to identify gaps and opportunities for cohesion.
- b) **Education:** Identify opportunities on how downtown High Point can best capitalize upon both the student and faculty of a growing HPU.
- c) **Hospitality:** Review the downtown needs that would likely arise with by the proposed convention center and new hotel(s).
- d) **Housing:** Set goals, plans, and programs to meet the potential demand for downtown housing, goals for diverse housing and the needs of current and future residents; including, but not limited to:
- Identify a 3-year, 5-year and 10-year new unit goal.
  - Identify land-use strategies and tactics to meet that goal.
- e) **Retail:** Provide an overview of the downtown retail market, including trends, current context, and recommended directions. Identify market gaps and recommended strategies to fill those gaps.
- f) **Arts, Entertainment and Sports:**
- Review the strengths, weaknesses, and potential opportunities for arts, culture, sports and entertainment as a driver of the downtown economy.
  - Identify potential gap that most likely can be filled and recommend strategies for filling those gaps.
  - Discuss how these elements can and should work with the remainder of downtown for the benefit of both.
- g) **Transportation:** Identify the type, location, programs, goals, and plans needed to meet the multi-modal transportation needs of the downtown; including, but not limited to:
- Assess public infrastructure needs and priorities, including transit, mobility/accessibility, connectivity, pedestrian comfort, cars, bikes, and other micro-mobility options.
  - Recommend future parking solutions or improvements.
  - Review current transportation related plans and discussions, including the urban greenway, Elm Street streetscape, road dieting, and one-way conversions, making recommendations on priorities and potential impacts.
  - Recommend strategies for efficient use of private and public parking resources for existing and future development and commerce. Provide recommendations on best practices to reduce future parking demand and to reduce negative impacts of parking on placemaking.
- h) **Urban Design, Open Space & Public Art:** Identify potential projects and opportunities for improving and enhancing public and private spaces to promote recreation, tourism, and a sense of community, character, and identity.
- Recommend strategies for implementing projects.
  - Determine ways to connect planned and existing projects and amenities further to make downtown more connected.

- i) **Image & Marketing:** Review the current Image & Marketing efforts within the downtown area and make recommendation on steps that can be taken on when and how to improve, including;
  - Discussion of differences and advantages/disadvantages of having a single downtown focus vs district focuses.
  - How best downtown High Point should develop Image/Marketing Plans
  - Recommend management and implementation management/leadership of Image/Marketing Plans.
- j) **Special Events and Promotions:** Review current special events and promotions that have taken place in the downtown over the past several years, their sponsorship, organization, management, financing and success. Discuss and make recommendation on the following;
  - How important are special events and promotions to the future success of downtown.
  - How many special events are optimal for downtown High Point?
  - What types of events are optimal for downtown High Point?
  - Who and how should downtown events be initiate and manage?
- k) **Clean & Safe Programs:** Is initiating Clean & Safe (& Green) programs in downtown High Point currently needed? If not, what would be a good way to determine when to start? Make recommendation on such programs;
  - Discuss which programs should be the higher priority to start with.
  - Discuss how should such programs are typically operated and managed, as well as what would be the best recommendation for High Point.
  - Discuss how should programs are typically financed and make recommendations for High Point.
  - What would be a typical cost for such program?

*\*FHP and its partners are interested in the consultant's ideas for each of these categories and may consider expanding, rearranging or adding categories during the course of the contract.*

7. **Downtown Program Management:** Given the Strategic Plan and its goals, strategies and action steps, how best should High Point structure and manage the programs and projects so as best assist the community's efforts to achieve this set of goal? Provide examples of how similar communities structure their downtown revitalization programs. Provide recommendations for High Point and Forward High Point on potential restructuring or reorganizing it downtown management. Provide specific discussion and recommendations should be provided on the following;
- Should the downtown program be Publicly Managed (City Department, similar to EDC) or separated Non-Profit (as FHP is currently)?
  - Should downtown High Point be managed via a BID?
  - What should be the focus areas for FHP?

## **CONTRACT ADDITION (PART II)**

**Business Improvement District (MSD):** If a Business Improvement District (BID) is recommended for downtown High Point the selected consultant will be asked to provide additional information, recommendations implementation and management plans. This additional report should take into consideration all of the goals of the Strategic Plan and which implementation strategies and long-term programs should be best undertaken by the BID. Included within this section of the report discussion, examples and recommendation on, but not limited to, the following subjects;

1. **Formation of a BID:** Provide a summary or outline of the steps required to initiate a BID, or Municipal Service District (NC Term), under the NC Statues.
  - Who and How does a community determine the boundaries?
  - Can there be more than one BID district within a downtown and how may they differ?
  - Are there properties that are exempt from being included (Taxed) within a BID?
  - May individuals petition the City Council to be removed or exempted by the BID?
  - Can the boundaries of the BID be changed over time?
  - Discussions on if there should be a Petition Drive or Not.
  - City Council requirements, responsibilities and leadership.
  - What is potential Time Schedule for implementing a BID?
2. **BID SERVICES:** Discuss what types of services that can or can not be provided by a BID
  - What services are typically provided by BIDs in cities around the country, especially cities of the size and scale of High Point.
  - What type and scale of services make the most sense for High Point to offer through a BID structure? What type and scale of services makes the most sense to be offered by the City or through other organizations?
  - Where does City Services End and Where does BID Services Begin? Who is financially responsible for various services?
  - How do various BIDs typically provide these services?
  - What are the typical cost for providing various services types and levels?
3. **MANAGEMENT OF BID:** Discuss the ways in which downtown BIDs can and are managed.
  - Discuss the North Carolina process for cities to have RFQs for BID management.
  - Should FHP be the likely organization to manage a downtown BID, or would another existing on new organization be more preferable?
  - If a non-profit organization is preferred for management, what should a Board of Directors look like.
  - If FHP is to be the managing organization, what potential changes should be made to the Board of Directors.
  - What does a typical BID Staff look like? Discuss potential size and specialty area for staffing.
4. **BUDGET:** Provide guidance and recommendations on the style and scale of budget that a High Point BID likely would need to get started and then strive to expand to.

- Provide some examples of budgets of similar organizational budgets
  - Provide a “Vision Budget” that would likely be necessary to achieve the majority of the communities goals.
  - Work with the City to assess the Total Tax Value of potential BID districts and what would be the revenues from various tax rates.
  - Discuss what other revenue sources the BID could look for.
  - Prepare a Draft “Start up Budget” for a downtown High Point BID, looking at both services and staff, along with associated overhead. Provide a recommendation on a proposed Tax Rate and any other funding sources necessary to balance the above cost.
5. **BID Implementation Strategy:** With input from both FHP, community partners and citizens, along with City leadership, develop a detailed strategy for implementing a downtown High Point BID, including:
- Steering Committee recommendations
  - Implementation Steps
  - Responsibilities
  - Public Awareness
  - Public Buy-in
  - Council Approval
  - Time Line

**BASELINE RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Conduct stakeholder and public outreach to develop a set of detailed recommendations for next steps and action items in each of the categories listed above for task force review.
2. Prepare interim reports, PowerPoint presentations, working papers, maps, photographs, and plans to convey existing conditions, opportunities, alternative solutions, etc. The consultant will provide all documents to FHP in advance of public presentations.
3. Prepare the minutes for all meetings, including taking contact information from attendees.
4. Submit all original documents to the Client prepared as part of this planning effort.
5. Facilitate all meetings at the direction of the Chairman of the FHP or Steering Committee.
6. Prepare the presentations and draft and final reports that convey all findings, recommendations and implementation strategies discovered from the process. Deliverables shall include:
  - a. A digital-PDF copy of the plan in booklet form for printing as needed. The PDF consists of text, graphics, tables, charts, maps, renderings, original and sourced graphic imagery, and visions for recommendations, streetscapes, and landscapes.
  - b. One set of presentation images, tables, charts renderings, photos, graphics, and additional material provided in electronic format. All images are to be at 300 dpi.

**SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:**

Firms desiring to be considered for this project must submit one (1) unbound, 8.5x11-inch paper copies and one (1) digital copy (Adobe Acrobat (PDF) of the proposal submittal, not to exceed 20 pages total.

Pages can be double-sided.

Proposals should contain at a minimum the following information:

- Name & Biography of the owner/principal of the firm.
- Name & Biography of proposed Project Manager, if different from the owner/principal.
- Details on the firm or consultant's background in non-profit management, downtown revitalization programs, formation of Strategic Plans and Business Improvement Districts.
- Names of Biography of other staff members that will be participating in this study.
- References from other cities or downtown development organizations that the consultant/firm has completed similar work; including the name of the city or organization, and contact (person) information.
- Digital Copies or Web Access to completed reports for work similar to that proposed here.
- Discussion of Consultant's proposed approach to this project with details of specific steps along the way
- Proposed Time Line for completion of project.
- Discussion of firm's/consultant's current work load and availability to complete this project. Start Time and commitment of staff.
- Discussion on "Why you feel your firm would be the best "fit" for downtown High Point."
- Estimate/Potential Fee (Final Fees will be negotiated upon selection)

The formal, written proposal must be submitted to FHP's offices no later than May 2, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.

Each proposal submitted within the deadline will be reviewed to ensure all required materials have been submitted according to the guidelines set forth in this RFP. The submissions will be reviewed and evaluated by FHP and City of High Point staff, and a selection committee.

**Proposals should be sent to:**

Attn: Raymond Gibbs

**Forward High Point, Inc**

164 South Main Street, Suite 606

High Point, NC 27260

Ray.gibbs@forwardhighpoint.com

**Proposals received after the deadline may not be considered.**

**SELECTION CRITERIA FOR INTERVIEWS:**

The response should demonstrate a commitment to providing a high level of service, experience, passion, and enthusiasm for the project and provide sufficient detail to enable the Selection Committee to evaluate and compare it with other responses thoroughly. The following should be included, and forms the basis of the Selection Committee's review and ranking:

1. **Letter of interest (5%):** Cover letter reflecting the understanding of the scope of work, the firms

experience and qualifications, and a brief history of the firm. Include the firm's background, capacity and ability to begin work on the project and complete the tasks identified in the "timeframe" section of this RFP. This letter should not exceed one (1) page.

2. **Relevant Firm Experience (10%):** Statement of qualifications of the Firm and Project Team, including an executive summary of at least three other similar plans the firm has worked on in the past five (5) years, including key elements each plan included key staff that played a role in those projects.
3. **Client deliverables and references (10%):** Include links to the final vision and action plans the firm completed prior. Provide references for each example, including contact name, organization, title, email, and phone number. Include a description of innovative methods you have used to refine and improve the quality and performance of your work.
4. **Project Organization Chart and Individual Staff Experience (20%):** Provide a chart reflecting the name of the project manager, the key personnel and their area of expertise, professional registrations, years of service in their respective area. Include an estimate of each individual's time commitment to the project and how each team member interfaces with the committee and staff. Any proposed sub-consultants should be clearly identified on the chart. Resumes of the key staff members can be included.
5. **Project Understanding and Approach (15%):** The submittal should briefly state the approaches and methodologies, including social and interactive media technology, as part of the citizen input process and planning update process that the firm proposes to meet the stated scope of work. Information that demonstrates the firm's understanding of the project and downtown needs and addresses how the project team proposes to meet those needs, including project approach and methodology.
6. **Preliminary work plan and schedule (10%):** Provide a basic work plan and schedule with as much detail as needed to describe how the required services and scope of the work will be performed. Include estimated start date, with a detailed phasing timeline and essential task list, the estimated completion time of each task with the target completion date.
7. **Cost/fee proposal (20%):** Provide a quotation of rates, fees, charges, and other detailed cost-proposal or cost-breakdown for each task. Provide an itemized, not-to-exceed cost breakdown of the process, including travel and material expenses as separate line items and breakouts by consultants for both Part 1 (Strategic Plan) and Phase 2 (BID Organization) of this project. FHP and the Steering Committee will work with the selected firm to minimize time and expense related to data collection, scheduling meetings, public engagement opportunities, etc. Consultants are encouraged to provide as much detail and breakdown of hours and costs as possible for the various scope items.
8. **Capacity Statement (5%):** Include a list of currently active projects, including the name, type of project, location, firm's role in the project, and status of the project.

9. **FIT FOR HIGH POINT (5%):** Discussion of why you feel your firm is the best fit for FHP and the City of High Point for this project. Areas of discussion may include; Firm’s experience with downtown strategic plans, BID organization experience, experience in North Carolina, experience in cities with unique economic drivers (i.e. HP Furniture Market), experience in young programs, experience with sports stadiums, specific experience of firm team members, working with towns with downtown adjacent universities, etc. Generally, a “Feel” for downtown High Point.

## **FINAL INTERVIEW & SELECTION**

After the Selection Committee evaluates the submitted proposals, the top two finalists may be selected to take part in an interview process. This interview process may include a brief presentation (*either in-person or virtual depending on any meeting or travel restrictions*) by the consultant and a question-and-answer session led by the Selection Committee.

Interviews will be scored as follows:

1. Past record of professional accomplishments and familiarity with projects of similar scope and of working with nonprofit and public agencies.
2. Competence, experience in the kind of project to be undertaken, and availability of adequate personnel, equipment, and facilities.
3. Overall fit and approach as a partner and demonstrated understanding of local context. Consultant’s ability to timely serve the planning process.
4. Proposed approach and scope of work, proposed work plan (including engagement strategies and timeframe, and capacity to successfully execute the project as outlined) and understanding of project and goals for downtown.
5. Other questions as provided in advance by the selection committee.

Each category will have a value of 20%. Interview scores will be combined with original ranking scores to create a final ranking.

**The Steering Committee will consider applicants based on qualifications and without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, veteran status, disability, and any other legally protected status.**

**PROJECT PROJECTED TIME LINE**

Issue RFP	March 23, 2022
Questions	April 5, 2022
Issue Addendums	April 8, 2022
Submittals Due	May 2, 2022
Presentation/Interview	May 16, 2022
Selection	June 19, 2022
Contract Negotiations	June-July 2022
FHP Board Authorization	July 2022
Project Kickoff	(Late) July 2022
Planning Process	August - November 2022
Plan Completion	December 2022

***FHP and the partners reserve the right modify the ESTIMATED TIMELINE:***

**RESERVATION OF RIGHTS:**

Issuance of the Request for Qualifications does not obligate Forward High Point, Inc. to enter into an agreement.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

**Ray Gibbs, PLA, ASLA**  
RFQ Consultant for FHP  
1023 Country Club Drive  
Martinsville, VA 24112  
336-420-2677

[rgibbs.asla@gmail.com](mailto:rgibbs.asla@gmail.com)