



# Re-imagining Court

## Master Plan and Comprehensive Strategy

### Request for Proposal

#### Consulting Team/Firm(s)

Final  
July, 2021



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# Request for Proposal

## Re-imagining Court Avenue

Master Plan and Comprehensive Strategy

A Cultural Artway, Pedestrian Mall and Tactical Urbanism Connector



Prepared For

**Consulting Firm(s)**

with Strong Urban Design, Landscape Architectural and Planning Expertise

by

**The City of Canton**

**Mayor's Office | Department of Planning**

**Zoning, Urban Design, Annexation and Historic Preservation**

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# Request for Proposal

## Mutual Non-disclosure Agreement

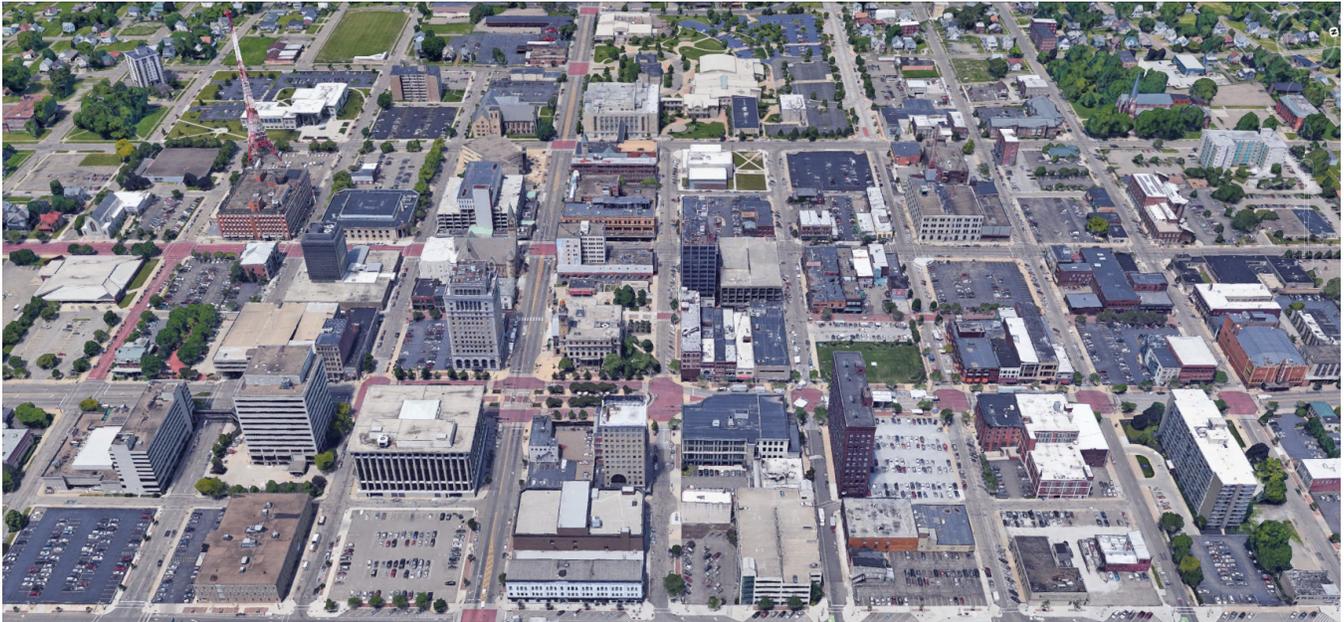
Responses to the Request for Proposal (RFP) shall become the sole exclusive property of the City of Canton. The City of Canton reserves the right to notify, reject or use without limitation any or all of the ideas from the response to the RFP. The City of Canton will not disclose respondent's confidential information to any party other than the representatives in connection with the evaluation of the responses to the RFP, except as may otherwise be required by law or regulation.

# Background

The City of Canton is committed to improving the quality of life for its residents by strengthening our neighborhoods, managing the public realm and making Canton a desirable safe city in which to live, work and plan; raise a family and grow old in.

1.0

## 1.0 Background



Downtown Canton

### 1.1 Introduction

The City of Canton is seeking “Request for Proposal (RFP)” from an experienced Consultant Team/Firm(s) with strong urban design, landscape architectural and visual arts expertise to provide planning and design services for the Re-imagining of Court Avenue. The primary goal is to provide a stakeholder supported master plan and comprehensive strategy for the corridor. One that defines the vision and the design vocabulary, and serves as a guide for investment: first, by providing standards toward branding; and second, by making recommendations for public realm improvements designed to make the area more pedestrian friendly.

The selected consulting team will actively work with City and stakeholders to script a master plan and comprehensive strategy that will provide an actionable “road map” for the City that develops a 1) cultural artway; 2) pedestrian mall; and, 3) tactical urbanism connector for Court Avenue.

### 1.2 Administration

The Mayor’s Office, Department of Planning provides leadership towards Canton’s future and is responsible for the Implementation of the city’s Comprehensive Plan.

The Director of Planning will administer the development of the Re-imagining Court – master plan and comprehensive strategy; and act as the point of contact for the Consulting Team.

#### Vision

The Department of Planning envisions a thriving Canton, resilient in the face of adversity; Competitive, Right-sized, and Diverse – embracing the posture as the Hall of Fame City; one that is vibrant, safe, and sustainable for current and future generations to come.

#### Core Values

The goal is to ensure that the Mayor’s Agenda, the Director’s Vision, and the city planning/urban design principles that define Canton’s unique character are widely promoted and embedded in initiatives and redevelopment projects.

City Planning embraces the guiding supposition that the cities form and civic capacity must be appropriate to market and demographic constraints. Interventions aimed at stabilizing and revitalizing Canton require City Planning to employ a proposition that advances a Competitive, Right-sized, and Diverse city approach; through a structured framework, one that is: Authentic, Healthy, Equitable, Vibrant, Safe and Sustainable.

## 1.3 Partnership

Within the City administration, the Department of Planning (Project Manager) will coordinate with key City departments that will have a role in the plan's development. These include the Mayor's Office, departments of Planning and Engineering; as well as collaboration with specific members of City Council and other local stakeholder entities outside of the City government integral to the plan. Including the Downtown Canton Special Improvement District, Arts in Stark, the National First Ladies' Library and National Historic Site; as well as others.

### Downtown Canton Special Improvement District

The Downtown Canton Special Improvement District (SID) is a non-profit corporation that provides programming to preserve the economic well being of downtown Canton. The SID is dedicated to preserving the aesthetic, architectural and historic character of the downtown area. The organization is funded by special assessments on downtown property owners.

### Arts in Stark

ArtsinStark is a 50-year-old private, non-profit organization that manages the Cultural Center for the Arts, runs the annual Arts Campaign - and uses the arts to create smarter kids, new jobs, and healthier communities.

### National First Ladies' Library and National Historic Site

The National First Ladies' Library is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that operates at First Ladies National Historic Site in a partnership agreement with the National Park Service. In October, 2000 President Bill Clinton signed a bill establishing the First Ladies National Site as the 380th unit of the National Park Service. The site consists of the Ida Saxton McKinley House, the family home of First Lady Ida Saxton McKinley and the longtime residence of William and Ida McKinley, and the Education and Research Center.

## 1.4 Overview

Founded in 1805, the City of Canton, is located in northeast Ohio, and is the county seat of Stark County. The city operates as a statutory government with a mayor and council form of government with a Park Commission; and is the largest city in the state to operate without a charter. With a population of approximately 72,000 and an area of 25.5 square miles Canton is the 8th largest city in the state.

Canton is most notable for two reasons; the first is football, especially the Pro Football Hall of Fame and the formation in 1920 of what eventually became the National Football League. The second is William McKinley, who conducted from his home in Canton the famed front porch campaign which won him the presidency of the United States in the 1896 election.

Like many rust belt cities, Canton has experienced significant change to its local economy and population but is in the midst of an urban revival.

## 1.5 Purpose

This plan builds upon the success of the Canton Hall of Fame Ice Rink, the development of Centennial Plaza and the programming of Illumination — Canton Light festival by proposing to devise an executable short and long-term vision and detailed design improvements for the Court Avenue Corridor. To 'Re-imagine Court;' to reinvigorate and rejuvenate the corridor with more activity than ever before. Where activity, opportunity and development meet.

The plan will identify those redevelopment strategies and treatments that have the potential to promote economic development, improve the public realm and eliminate safety hazards for city residents and visitors along the corridor. Furthermore, it will provide consistency through an integrated series of recommendations which present in graphic and narrative form the present composition of the corridor and a plan for its comprehensive long-term redevelopment and programmatic function.

## 1.6 Goals and Objectives

In March of 2016, Canton City Council unanimously adopted its Comprehensive Plan which is a general, long-range "blue print" for the city. It illustrates a definition of civic vision and a general guide for public and private decision-making through the implementation of a targeted core investment area strategy.

Downtown and the Court Avenue corridor have been identified as a top priority by the City of Canton office of the Mayor and the Department of Planning. The plan includes an evaluation of existing infrastructure, utilities, art installations, the built and natural environment, that identify the quality, quantity, condition and overall function of the corridor. This plan proposes a short and long-term vision for the corridor through future development projects and programming.

The goals and objectives for the plan will focus on improving the corridor through both public realm improvements and by a systematic and comprehensive evaluation of the branding and programming opportunities that it can provide.

The plan will focus on improving the corridor by enhancing the assets connected to it through an integrated strategy of priority improvement projects in the effort to:

- Create vibrancy and activity representing the history and future of Canton so visitors return again and again;
- Provide connectivity between the Arts district and the National First Ladies' Library and National Historic Site;
- Complement the authentic character of downtown, promoting it as the Hall of Fame City — a "Can't miss destination" for residents and visitors alike; and,
- Foster economic investment in the surrounding Downtown Canton Special Improvement District.

While simultaneously striving to advance the Department of Planning's core values and the Mayor's vision of a revitalized, thriving Canton.

## 1.7 Principles

The Plan should emphasize people-based solutions while incorporating a holistic plan for placemaking. A multi-faceted approach to planning, design and branding of the public realm; that capitalize on local assets, inspiration and potential. With the intent of improving Canton's aesthetics and image.

Furthermore, the City of Canton has embraced a policy making "Complete and Green Streets" the standard for City transportation related initiatives. This model will be applied to the corridor to potentially establish a green spine within downtown; creating a more sustainable district through Best Management Practices (BMP) and Low Impact Development (LID), as well as other opportunities to enhance environmental sustainability.

The Department of Planning strongly encourages the Consultant Team/Firm(s) interested in providing this master plan and comprehensive strategy adhere to the following design principles and key elements as outlined below:

- **Iconic, Memorable, and Vibrant Place.**  
Designed to give the corridor a recognizable image and provide a means of orientation and understanding; as well as maintaining authenticity while cultivating a unique sense of place to attract people to live, work, and play.
- **Support Public.**  
Designed to provide opportunities for diverse experiences and encourage people to spend time engaging in social and recreational activities that will expand usable public space by reallocating underutilized roadway areas.
- **Convenient Connections.**  
Designed to facilitate safe, accessible, and convenient connections among major destinations such as local assets. Improve non-motorized linkages by creating a connected network of public walking routes.
- **Mixed-Use Development.**  
Designed to promote mix-use residential neighborhoods that improve the business climate, and enliven streets and public spaces by carefully blending a variety of uses that support the identity of the neighborhood.
- **Vibrant Places for Commerce.**  
Designed to reintegrate the 'street-wall' and strengthen the identity of the area as a district by enhancing the operations and functionality; and managed as an attractive destination that encourages residents and visitors to walk and use local commercial areas, rather than travel to regional counterparts.
- **Transit Oriented-Development.**  
Designed to access multi-modal options along the corridor while identifying opportunities for the implementation of Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) hubs of connectivity to major employment centers within the neighborhood and the greater city.
- **Modal Choice and Accessibility**  
Designed for ease of use and access to destinations for all population groups, particularly those with impairments. Improve options and providing increased access for surrounding neighborhood residents to strategic destinations.
- **Attractive, Contextual, and Placemaking.**  
Designed to create an engaging visual impression that appeals to the senses, and fosters a sense of ownership and civic pride that is reflected by the inviting physical appearance and level of activity.
- **Cost Effectiveness.**  
Designed to reintegrate the 'street-wall' and strengthen the identity of the area as a district by enhancing the operations and functionality; and managed as an attractive destination that encourages residents and visitors to walk and use local commercial areas, rather than travel to regional counterparts.

## 1.8 Study Area

The primary study area is Court Avenue from 6th Street NW to the North and 4th Street SW to the South; located in the downtown central business district; within the Center City Planning Area of the 2nd and 4th Ward.

## 1.9 Site Conditions

Downtown Canton has experienced trans-formative urban revitalization in the past few years, and a bold new public venue located along the Court Avenue corridor, within Downtown Cantons Special Improvement optimizes this change. Unveiled to a national television audience on September 17, 2020 — the 100th anniversary of the NFL’s founding — the state-of-the-art Centennial Plaza celebrates Canton’s football heritage while projecting a bold vision for the city’s future. Its most striking features are the:

- Rotunda Spires, a stainless-steel sculpture comprising four gracefully curving, 65-foot-tall spires that suggest a four-seamed football, inspired by the rotunda in the original building at the Pro Football Hall of Fame;
- Centennial Pavilion, a sweeping steel structure that covers an event lawn capable of holding large gatherings. A performance stage and huge LED video-board overlook the expanse of artificial turf; and,
- Jerzee’s Cafe offers indoor and outdoor seating; just adjacent stands the NFL 100 Year Player Recognition Pylons, two-sided, internally illuminated glass panels that list more than 25,000 players from the league’s first 100 years.

The plaza’s best photo-op is the “CANTON” sign, whose capital letters incorporate the domed McKinley Memorial (in the “A”) and a football (in the “O”). This is just one of the many art installations throughout the corridor and downtown. One of the pieces, a mural that celebrates the introduction of TV’s Monday Night Football is part of the football heritage-themed art series that make up ‘The Eleven;’ which was a \$2.2 million, multi-year project of ArtsinStark and the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

The Court Avenue corridor commands a prime position within the downtown as a principal pedestrian alley, that lies within the heart of the Arts District. A lively collection of shops and galleries. Each first Friday of the month, the district comes alive when ArtsinStark stages its First Friday event. Guests can take in the musical entertainment and other festivities while enjoying a cocktail from a participating bar/restaurant such as Bender’s Tavern, the Arcadia Grill, Samantha’s Downtown, Napolis, the Canton Brewing Company and the Imperial Room. All located along the corridor and within the Downtown Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA) District.

The corridor in general exudes a vintage feel with its gas-light-style street lights, a stately courthouse, ice rink and portions of streets and sidewalks paved with bricks; bookend by the grand marquee of the historic Canton Palace Theatre, and the Saxton-McKinley House.

### Figure 1: Study Area

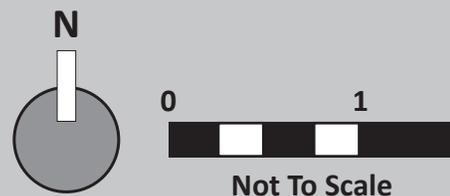
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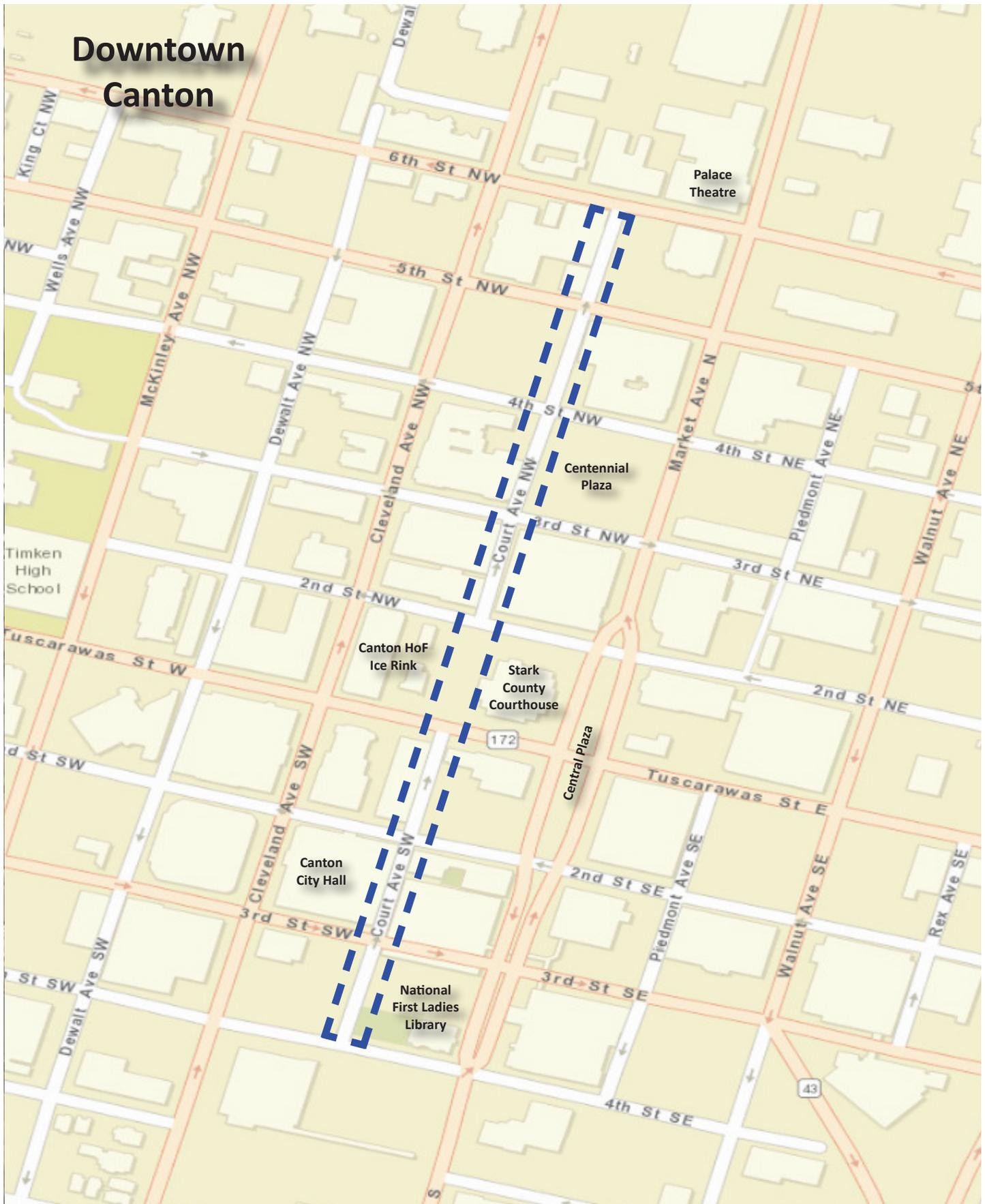
Image 1 - Court Avenue & Canton Hall of Fame City Ice Rink



Image 2 - Centennial Plaza



# Downtown Canton



Study Area

# Description

The Re-imagining Court Avenue Master Plan and Comprehensive Strategy will focus on improving the alley into a cultural artway, pedestrian mall and tactical urbanism connector within the City of Canton.

2.0

## 2.0 Description

The Department of Planning is soliciting proposals from qualified consultant team/firm(s) or organizations interested in providing this Re-imagining Court Avenue Master Plan comprehensive Strategy.

### 2.1 Scope of Services

The Plan is supported by Mayor Thomas Bernabei, Jennifer Highfield, President & CEO National First Ladies' Library and the Board of the Downtown Canton Special Improvement District; tasked by the Director of Planning through the coordination and execution by the following:

- **Project Management Team**  
The Project Management Team is comprised of professional staff members from the Department of Planning led by Donn Angus, Director of Planning. This team will maintain a consistent dialogue with the Technical Advisory Committee and the coordination with the Consulting Team; as well as the facilitation of meetings.
- **Technical Advisory Committee.**  
The Technical Advisory Committee consists of members from City Council, the Administration, and representatives from the Downtown Canton Special Improvement District, ArtsinStark and the National First Ladies' Library and National Historic Site. This committee will provide review of the Plan and act as advisors to the Project Management Team and as a resource to the Consulting Team.
- **Stakeholders.**  
The stakeholders consist of senior level individuals representing key organizations such as but not limited to The Pro Football Hall of Fame, Village and Visit Canton and the City Engineer.
- **Consulting Team.**  
The selected qualified contracting organization responsible for the facilitation of meetings, responsible for data collection, and the preparation of the Plan.

The scope of services will include, but not be limited to, the tasks outlined below:

#### Task 1

##### Project Coordination/Kick-off Meeting

The purpose of the meeting is to introduce the Project Management Team and Technical Advisory Committee with the selected Consulting Team to discuss the Plan, the projects purpose, goals, and objectives.

#### Task 2

##### Site Investigation and Data Collection

The Consulting Team will conduct stakeholder interviews and review source documents/data. As well as making windshield observations which are intended as an inventory gathering effort, condition assessment of existing facilities and infrastructure, and as "fact finding" tours of the study area.

At the end of this task an out brief will be prepared and presented to the Project Management Team - including a summary document which will be distributed to the Technical Advisory Committee. The presentation and document is intended as a overview of "what we heard" and "what we learned." Based upon the interviews and information gathered, initial elements and overarching themes will be identified and used to understand current conditions and to formulate the Plan.

##### Facilitate Engagement

The Consulting Team in coordination with the Project Management Team will conduct Interviews with representatives from the Technical Advisory Committee and key stakeholders. Citizen engagement is not anticipated but will be supplemented by a public (on-line) survey.

#### Task 3

##### Design Charrette Workshop

The Consulting Team in coordination with the Project Management Team will facilitate a workshop with the Technical Advisory Committee as well as key stakeholders.

The workshop will begin with a presentation that builds upon the out brief from the previous task. This presentation will include the purpose, goals and objectives, and the "vision" of the Plan. Following this presentation, The Consulting Team will facilitate the workshop; which is intended to be a collaborative, interactive process and dialogue. The workshop will conclude with a summary presentation and discussion where commonalities can be identified, and consensus generated.

After the completion and summarization of the results from the Workshop the Consulting Team will prepare a brief, combining all items of consensus from the workshop into a presentation which will be formulated into programmatic scenarios and translated into visual images for the Project Management Team who intern will review the programmatic scenarios for alignment with the Technical Advisory Committee.

## **Task 4**

### **The Plan Preparation**

The Plan will be prepared in accordance with the most current requirements, codes, and regulatory considerations impacting the study area.

The Plan will begin with the preparation of a base map of the study area, incorporate existing transportation, infrastructure, utilities, art installations, the built and natural environment, that identify the quantity, quality, condition, and overall function of the corridor; as well as the regulatory requirements, the visual environment, historical characteristics, geometry/configuration condition assessment of existing public realm amenities.

The plan will identify the priority improvement plans for the corridor and opportunities immediately adjacent to the study area; as well as strategies and treatments that have the potential to promote economic development and improve programmatic functionality. As well as, providing the vision, principles, and the overall design guidelines for the corridor, along with probable costs, funding opportunities and next step short and long-term recommendations.

#### **Task 4.1 Draft Plan**

The Consulting Team will prepare a Draft Plan. Using graphic representation and text, the Draft Plan will incorporate the findings of the interviews, site investigation and data collection, interviews, data collection, and design charrette workshop.

A Draft Plan meeting with the Project Management Team, and Technical Advisory Committee will be facilitated by the Consulting Team. The purpose of this meetings is to provide an executive summary and orientation of the Plan, and to distribute the Draft Plan for review.

#### **Task 4.2 Pre-Final Plan**

Feedback, comments, and responses from the Draft Plan review will be compiled in a matrix and utilized to produce a Pre-Final Plan, which will be distributed to the Project Management Team for review and comment.

The Consulting Team will incorporate all comments received and prepare the Final Plan.

#### **Task 4.3 Final Plan**

Representatives from the Consulting Team accompanied by the Project Management Team will present the Plan before the City Planning Commission and City Council to have the plan approved and/or adopted.

The Consulting Team will produced the Plan in hard copy, digital copy, and as a ready-to-print PDF format that will be:

- Developed as an attractive, meaningful, and easy-to-understand document;
- Developed to be printed in black/white, and color; and,
- Developed as an optimized version publishable on-line

Additionally, the Consulting Team will:

- Provide (15) bound hard copies and a printable PDF version for each milestone submission;
- Prepare the document utilizing In-design (or equivalent software), AutoCad, and developing all shape files and geo-data base information utilizing Arc GIS ESRI; and,
- Provide a compact disk and/or thumb drive containing all working files at the completion (closeout) of the project.

## 2.2 Plan Deliverables

The Consulting Team will be expected to submit a final document that meets the purpose, goals and objectives, advances the principles outlined; and serves as:

- A vision for the Court Avenue corridor;
- A guiding document and action plan;
- A road-map for implementing the vision;
- A decision support tool for policy makers and implementation partners;
- A series of illustrative renderings;
- A definitive reference tool; and,
- A public resource.

The document will contain, but not be limited to the following specific components related to the inventory and analysis, recommendation, and capital improvements plan.

### Inventory and Analysis

The Plan incorporates an evaluation of existing and emerging conditions. This information provides the basis by which future development occurs, and helps identify challenges and potential for the implementation of recommendations.

#### Existing Conditions

The Consulting Team will review the existing plans and conduct field surveys, noting significant existing conditions, as well as documenting the key regulatory requirements, historic conditions, and environmental considerations. The field survey will also include an analysis of the existing utilities, facilities and building condition assessment.

A significant element of the overall plan will be devoted to addressing the challenges and capitalizing on the opportunities within the corridor through the examination of existing opportunities and constraints; as well as a strategic needs assessment.

- Opportunities and Constraints
  - A significant element of the overall plan will be devoted to addressing the challenges and capitalizing on the opportunities within the corridor.
- Strategic Needs Assessment
  - The assessment will include a general assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of each of the blocks along the corridor within the study area with regard to land use, infrastructure, transportation systems, economic development and amenities.
  - Review of existing plans, and current projects influencing the corridor and document the strategic needs of each.
- Demographics/Trend Analysis
  - The Consulting Team must evaluate the nature in which the existing corridor facilitates programming and prepare recommendations that analyze demographics, market trends and current programming and services.

## Recommendations

Development of, understanding, and embracing a comprehensive vision for this initiative will help decision-makers make future development choices in line with this plan.

The planning concepts and recommendations to be developed in this plan draw from the inventory and analysis and a number of past planning efforts, which remain relevant today.

Through the course of the development of this RFP, five major themes become the focus for future recommendations of this plan. These themes, or scenarios, often present multiple alternatives or options for how they could be addressed. In these cases, a means of comparison of the positives and negatives of the options should be developed. The themes to be considered by the Consulting Team include:

- Comprehensive Vision and Strategy;
- Priority Improvement Plans;
- Environmental Recommendations;
- Architectural Articulation and Design Guidelines; and,
- Innovation.

### Master Plan

A major focus of the study will be to create recommendations that will visually and functionally unify this series of individual city blocks into a comprehensively themed corridor; which includes an overall vision and placemaking strategy that develops a 'sense of place' into and within the study area. These public realm recommendations strive to develop a cultural artway, pedestrian mall and tactical urbanism connector that may include the following:

- Significant View-sheds
- Plazas, Nodes and/or Pedestrian Promenades
- Transit Waiting Environments
- Softscape through street Trees and Landscaping
- Lighting and Security
- Corridor Amenities and Furniture
- Gateways, Information Kiosks and Wayfinding
- Programmatic elements
- Branding

### Design Concepts

For the development of design concepts, the Consulting Team will focus on the primary Court Avenue segments and street intersections. The corridor streetscape includes the physical area from building face to building face within the study area and may extend to connected adjacent public facilities and/or amenities. In Downtown, the Court Avenue corridor serves many users including pedestrians, businesses, commercial drivers, transit operators. The corridor is where people are eating, being entertained, shopping or walking. The streets also are gathering spaces where people come together to celebrate. In non-pandemic times, the streetscape hosts many downtown events and we are beginning to see their return. Functionally, the street is a critical component of the drainage system.

The Consulting Team should also consider the following factors as part of the process of creating design concepts:

- Process will create design concept options for typical cross sections (not construction documents)
- Resulting design concepts need to balance the following outcomes:
  - Support a vibrant, active downtown streetscape that accommodates, supports and enhances the many stakeholders in Downtown Canton
  - Provide an effective urban street environment that has the flexibility and adaptability to accommodate multiple simultaneous uses such as: walking, dining, bicycling, gathering, delivery, emergency service, shade, and stormwater management
  - Consider that a short-term solution could be temporary in duration and/or seasonal
  - Maximize flexibility in order to adapt to the changing needs of downtown overtime and new ideas not yet imagined
  - Reduce street clutter and relics from past art installations
  - Create visual unity, a clear visual pattern
  - Support the urban tree canopy
  - Consider the potential impacts of the recommendations on City operations including trash collection, snow removal, street sweeping, etc. including both modifications to operations and the potential need to purchase new equipment
  - Provides a better physical sidewalk condition and an accessible path in the broadest possible way; consider the local deaf community, seeing impaired and others
  - Consider the future impact of automated vehicles
  - Support local transit needs
  - Consider streetscape elements that can assist in mitigating risk – including during events/festivals
  - Provides specific description/depiction of design elements included in the recommended concepts

### **Public Art**

Public art works to support creative, economically-competitive, healthy, and opportunity-rich communities. Excellent art is an essential part of building a strong community, as important as land-use, transportation, and infrastructure. The Plan looks to develop and enhance placemaking within the corridor.

### **Transit Recommendations**

The Court Avenue corridor within the study area carries high minimal motor vehicles and includes multiple non-signalized intersections. These same streets are used by large numbers of pedestrians. The plan will identify key points of conflict between motor vehicles and pedestrians and will develop detailed recommendations and design plans to mitigate these conflicts.

Working in cooperation with SARTA, the plan will evaluate bus service within parks and will make recommendations that would include possible enhanced transit waiting areas, better stop placement and potential transit stations providing connectivity to the Pro Football Hall of Fame and Village.

### **Architectural Articulation and Design Manual**

Articulation, in architecture design, is a method of styling the built form of a neighborhood through degrees of expression where each part is united with the whole work by means of a comprehensive vision – with fluidity and continuity of style.

The goals of the design guidelines are to:

- Encourage well-designed facilities and sites;
- Guide the placement, height and scale of structures and the general appearance of the facade;
- Improve the image and enhance the character of the corridor and adjacent neighborhood;
- Promote economic activity and increase property values;
- Promote sustainable building design, material choices and protect the environment; and,
- Support healthy living.

### **Innovation**

The Plan should identify new and innovative solutions to be applied to the corridor. Under the City's adopted policy for "Complete & Green Streets." A vision for a more sustainable future embracing a comprehensive forward looking approach to urban sustainability and redevelopment will be a priority. An ecodistrict approach is one way to transform corridors into a livable, prosperous, and highly sustainable mixed-use community. The Plan will become a road map that recommends how to achieve these goals by using a corridor-scale sustainable practices to integrate land use, transportation, environmental planning with high performance facilities, landscapes, and infrastructure; yielding greater economic benefits to the adjoining neighborhoods.

### **Capital Improvements Plan**

#### **Priority Improvement Plans**

The priority improvement plans will show the greatest level of detail for initial implementation along the corridor. These are areas that hold the greatest potential to change the image and functionality of the corridor; thereby stimulating development and revitalization. These targeted priority improvement plans will include 30% detailed design plans and illustrations of the proposed improvements, pedestrian enhancements and related installation modifications.

#### **Sequencing Strategy**

Ultimately, development tends to be dynamic in nature; therefore, the previously outlined recommendation themes will be developed to guide the short-term (immediate) and long-range (1-3 year horizon) solutions, with the idea that the city and its

stakeholders potentially could do short term/semipermanent temporary installations and removal of selected amenities “now” while raising funds for what is assumed to be a larger, longer term capital expenditures. The Plan will present a sequenced strategy for phased implementing steps, that will be identified during the planning process by highlighted key action items and important next steps.

### **Probable Costs and Funding**

The plan is a long-range vision and physical framework that will guide change over time. It will be implemented as a series of priority improvement plans / capital improvement projects, with multiple funding sources; possibly including development partnerships. Understanding that these enhancements will occur incrementally, in response to priorities and availability of funds, the overall conceptual probable cost estimate will be presented as a series of logically phased projects organized to correspond to the plan recommendations. Within each block, further phasing is possible. Alternatively, depending on funding availability and other considerations, two or more blocks could be combined into a development phase. The probable cost summaries will be arranged geographically for easy reference - actual phasing will be determined by the availability of funds, funding requirements, and community priorities.

To present a realistic estimate of probable costs, a number of assumptions will be required, related to materials, quantities, phasing, existing infrastructure, and existing surface/sub-surface conditions. The estimate is intended to be used for budgeting. It will align and be responsive to current city standards, development regulations and design guidelines.

Furthermore, knowledge in local, state, and federal funding sources, including the rules and regulations associated with them, as well as grant and philanthropic funding sources will be required. A funding toolbox, specific to the plan recommendations, will be provided.

### **Marketing and Branding Strategy**

A marketing and branding strategy to attract and grow support will be critical. The consultant team/firm(s) will evaluate current district branding and develop ideas for an identity and/or targeted message concept for marketing to strategic public and private partners.

## **2.3 Fee**

The negotiated fee for this proposal shall cover the full scope of services, tasks and deliverables requested here-within; and all anticipated costs and expenses for the consultant team/firm(s).

# Requirements

The City of Canton is seeking experienced Consultant Team/Firm(S) with strong urban design, landscape architectural and visual arts expertise to provide planning and design services for the Re-imagining of Court Avenue.

Please direct all questions regarding this “Request for Proposal (RFP)” in writing to the Director of Purchasing.

3.0

### 3.0 Requirements

#### 3.1 Overview

Requests for Proposals for qualified consultant team/firm(s) or organizations interested in providing this Re-imagining of Court Avenue Master Plan and Comprehensive Strategy by the Mayor's Office, Department of Planning.

#### 3.2 Selection Procedures

Each Consultant Team/Firm(s) shall submit its proposal in the number, form, and manner, and by the date and time; and at the location required in this solicitation.

Firms interested in being considered for selection should respond by submitting an original and ten (10) complete duplicates of your Letter of Interest; in hard copy (double-sided) and an electronic PDF copy on USB Flash Drive or CD-ROM to the following address by 4:00 p.m., Eastern Time on Wednesday, August 25, 2021; as outlined in the schedule/time-line here-within.

Canton City Hall  
Department of Purchasing  
218 Cleveland Avenue SW, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Canton, OH 44702  
Attn: Andrew Roth, Director of Purchasing

Responses received after 4:00 PM on the response due date will not be considered.

#### Familiarity, Responsibility, and Interpretation

By submission of a proposal, the Consultant Team/Firm(s) acknowledges that it is aware of and understands all requirements in this advertisement and that its failure to become familiar with all the information outlined prior to the proposal submission deadline, will not relieve it from responsibility for all parts of its proposal; and, if selected for contract, its complete performance of the contract in compliance with its terms. Consultant Team/Firm(s) acknowledges that the City of Canton has no responsibility for any conclusions or interpretations made within the Letter(s) of Interest.

The City of Canton is not responsible for providing any explanation, clarification, or interpretation concerning this advertisement, except by written request for information.

If questions arise, or if an intended meaning of any part of this is unclear or in doubt, send a written request for clarification or interpretation via the City's bid and proposal tool, Vendor Registry. <https://vrapp.vendorregistry.com/Bids/View/Bid-sList?buyerId=7dbbbd5b-4400-4d33-af3d-8d355f5c754e>.

#### Scope of Services

Each Consultant Team/Firm(s) shall carefully read, and provide all information requested. The Letter of Interest must be organized to address each of the elements outlined in the 'Scope of Services,' and in the order listed here-within.

#### 3.3 Requirements for Proposals

##### Preparing and Submitting Proposals:

- Provide the information requested within this document, in the same order listed, and signed by an officer of the firm. Do not send additional forms, marketing brochures, or other material.
- Each proposal shall include the following parts in the below order. Please separate and identify each part by tabs for quick reference. Each proposal should be organized so as to facilitate its evaluation. Proposal is limited to 100 pages (i.e. 50 double-sided pages).
- Please adhere to the following requirements in preparing and Letters of Interest:
  - Utilize a minimum font size of 12-point and maintain margins of 1" on all four sides.
  - Page numbers must be centered at the bottom of each page.
  - Use 8½" x 11" paper only (11" x 17" fold-out pages are acceptable).

##### Proposal Content:

###### Cover Letter:

The cover letter shall identify and introduce the firm and provide other general information about firm's business organization including, at least, in one or more attachments or in the proposal, firm's name, principal address, telephone number and email address.

If a corporation, provide the state of incorporation, and full name, title and experience of each high level corporate officer. If the firm is not an Ohio corporation, please state whether or not the firm is qualified to do business in the State of Ohio. A foreign corporation must provide evidence prior to execution of a contract that it is qualified to do business in the State of Ohio or it must register with the state.

If the firm is a sole proprietorship, state the name of the proprietor doing business. If a partnership, state the full name, address, of each partner; whether the partner is a general or limited partner, and whether active or passive; state each part-

ner's experience and the proportionate share of the business owned by each partner. Principal officer of each firm; each officer's experience and the proportionate share of the joint venture owned by each joint venture partner.

If using subcontractors, state the name of each firm participating in the proposal, each subcontractor's responsibilities, and each subcontractor's experience related to their proposed responsibilities.

**Executive Summary:**

The executive summary should provide a complete and concise summary of the Consultant Team/Firm(s) background, areas(s) and level(s) of expertise, relevant experience and ability to meet the requirements of this advertisement, and should briefly state why the Consultant Team/Firm(s) is the best candidate for the engagement. The summary should be organized so it can serve as a stand-alone summary apart from the remainder of the proposal.

**Proposal:**

In the proposal section, each Consultant Team/Firm(s) should state in detail its qualifications, and experience, and how its services and/or approach are unique and best suited to meet the requirements and intent of this proposal. Consultant Team/Firm(s) may include as much information as needed to differentiate its services and product(s) from other submissions.

At a minimum, please include, the following:

- Confirmation that the Consultant Team/Firm(s) has visited and/or is familiar with the study area;
- Consultant Team/Firm(s) shall describe in detail how the management and operating plan for delivery of the services outlined in this proposal will achieve the purpose, goals and objectives; and, In its response to this subsection, Consultant Team/Firm(s) shall describe in detail:
  - An organizational chart identifying the project manager and key personnel that will serve an active role specific to this RFP;
  - Describe staff capacity and ability to perform the work in a timely manner, relative to present workload, and assigned staff availability;
  - Consultant Team/Firm(s) shall submit an anticipated time-line for completing this scope of services;
  - A project approach and operational plan describing in detail how Consultant Team/Firm(s) will achieve the intent and purpose(s) of the scope of services;
  - Provide a description of project deliverables that meet the Scope of Services;
  - Project management tools to be used;
  - Fee; and,
  - Additional Supporting Materials: Consultant Team/Firm(s) are invited to include a maximum of five (5) additional (double-sided) pages of information not covered which may strengthen their proposal or describe any unique qualifications or experiences relevant to this initiative.

### 3.4 Schedule/Time-line

The plan is to be completed and on file with the City of Canton within six (6) months from the date of authorization. It is anticipated that the selected Consultant Team/Firm(s) will be authorized to proceed by September, 2021. Refer to the following schedule/time-line summary as outlined below:

- Request for Qualifications Advertised 08/06/2021 & 08/13/2021
- Request for Proposals Due: 08/25/2021
- Consultant Selection/Award: 09/03/2021
- Authorization to Proceed (Contract) 09/10/2021
- Project Coordination/Kick-off Meeting: 10/01/2021
- Planned Project Completion 03/11/2022

Note: The authorization to proceed is the official project start date – contract negotiation and execution phase commences. Furthermore, The planned kick-off meeting is tentative and is subject to change.

### 3.5 Proposal Evaluation, Selection and Rating Criteria

**Proposal Evaluation Methodology:**

The issuing Department of Planning will evaluate each Letter of Interest submitted and will present its recommendations to the Canton Administration including, but not limited to the Mayor. The Department of Purchasing will only consider proposals that are received on or before the submission deadline, and which meet all the requirements.

**Consultant Selection and Rating Criteria:**

The selection committee will score each proposal received in each of the following categories:

- Experience and Qualifications
- Project Management Plan
- Methodology, Work Plan, and Approach
- Deliverables
- Schedule/Time-line and References

The ratings are not intended or to be interpreted as a reflection of a Consultant Team/Firm(s) professional abilities. Instead, they reflect the best attempt to quantify each Consultant Team/Firm(s) ability to provide the services sought by the City of Canton and to meet the specific requirements, for comparison purposes.

**Experience/Qualifications:**

Each Consultant Team/Firm(s) team will be evaluated in regard to their experience and qualifications appropriate to the proposed initiative. Scores will be based on each team's experience on similar projects and in similar project areas, as highlighted in the materials included within the . Important factors to consider include:

- Highlighted prime and/or sub-consultant project experience similar to this scope of services, or those that include applicable elements.

- Demonstrated knowledge and technical expertise critical to the proposed scope of services.
- Exhibited success in plan development, from site investigation/data collection, to conducting design charrette workshops, and through effective plan preparation.

**Project Management Plan:**

Each Consultant Team/Firm(s) team will be evaluated based on demonstration of past project management and performance as evidenced in the submitted proposal. Important factors to consider include:

- Demonstration of effective past project management, resulting in the delivery of a high quality work product that engenders key stakeholder and community buy-in.
- Consulting firm size, capability, and resumes of key personnel, including appropriate credentials; such as education and professional certifications and work experience.

**Methodology, Work Plan, and Approach:**

Each Consultant Team/Firm(s) team will be evaluated based on the approach presented in the to complete the project. Important factors to consider include:

- Demonstration of understanding of the purpose, goals and objectives of the scope of services.
- Proven methods and strategies to best accomplish all deliverables of the proposed initiative, creatively and sustainability.

**Deliverables:**

Each Consultant Team/Firm(s) team will be evaluated based on the Scope of Services and deliverables outlined; including project components that will achieve the principles of the proposed initiative. Important factors to consider include:

- Project components highlighted in the scope of services, as well as additional components recommended.
- Outlined product form – graphically how will the deliverables for the proposed initiative be presented.
- Estimated completion dates that comply with the outlined project schedule/time-line summary and not extending beyond March 11, 2022.

**Fee:**

Estimated Fee associated with the outlined scope of services.

**References:**

Submit at least two (2) written, verifiable, references dated within the last six months from clients for which the Consultant Team/Firm(s) has rendered services substantially similar to those sought by this, and recommending Consultant Team/Firm(s) for selection for such services.

References should include appropriate contact information and relevance to the proposed initiative.

**Table 1 Selection Rating Form**

Category	Value	Criteria	Score
Experience and Qualifications	20	Refer to Section 3.0 Requirements for Detailed Description	
Project Management Plan	10		
Methodology, Work Plan, and Approach	10		
Deliverables	20		
Fee	30		
References	10		
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>		

Note: (Consultant Selection Rating Forms will be utilized for Letter of Interest evaluation and oral presentations)

**Donn B. Angus, APA, ASLA**  
Mayor's Office | Director of Planning

**Department of Planning**  
**Zoning, Urban Design, Annexation and Historic Preservation**

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