BIRMINGHAM ARTISTIC WAYFINDING SYSTEM

Request for Proposals

Due before 5pm CST, March 2, 2015 at
505 North 20th Street, Suite 1010 Birmingham, AL 35203

SUBMITTALS WILL BE OPENED PROMPTLY AT THE TIME AND PLACE SPECIFIED. SUBMITTALS RECEIVED AFTER THE FIRST SUBMISSION HAS BEEN OPENED WILL NOT BE OPENED AND WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED. THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL TO REV ON OR BEFORE THE STATED TIME AND DATE IS SOLELY AND STRICTLY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE RESPONDENT. REV IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR DELAYS CAUSED BY ANY MAIL, PACKAGE OR COURIER SERVICE, INCLUDING THE U.S. MAIL, OR CAUSED BY ANY OTHER OCCURRENCE. LATE OR MIS-DELIVERED PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

REV Birmingham
505 North 20th Street, Suite 1010
Birmingham, AL 35203
205.324.8797
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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
REGISTRATION FORM

This form will be used to communicate information with respect to questions and addenda as needed. Please fill out and email to rfp@revbirmingham.org. If we do not receive a form, there is a risk that you will not receive important information.

Name of Applicant______________________________________________________________

Address______________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Telephone____________________________________________________________

E-Mail_____________________________________________________________
BIRMINGHAM WAYFINDING

REV Birmingham (REV), in partnership with Birmingham Museum of Art (BMA) and The City of Birmingham (COB), is seeking a response to this Request For Proposals (RFP) from urban design consultants for the development of a comprehensive artistic wayfinding signage system design and construction of one (1) prototype sign in partnership with a local artist.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The National Endowment for the Arts has awarded the Birmingham Museum of Art, in partnership with REV Birmingham and the City of Birmingham, an Our Town grant for the development of an artistic wayfinding system for downtown Birmingham.

Birmingham, Alabama is experiencing a renaissance. New attractions including the award-winning Railroad Park and the new Regions Field have inspired a rapid expansion in the number of residential units in the City Center and inspired a new generation of retailers and restauranteurs adding to downtown vibrancy. An estimated 2 million people visit City Center attractions each year. An estimated 75,000 people work downtown. Approximately 9000 people live in the City Center, with an additional 1500 new residents projected to move into new units in the next few years. Currently, visitors and current residents experience downtown Birmingham disjointedly. This was strongly noted in the recently adopted Birmingham Comprehensive Plan, the first for Birmingham in 60 years. The Comprehensive Plan draws from the public’s expressed desire for connectivity, wayfinding, and public art and recommends the development of a wayfinding system so that those who travel through the city center, whether twice a day or once every five years, can creatively connect businesses, cultural districts, and landmarks in the city.

REV has implemented this Request for Proposal (RFP) process to solicit urban planning firms to create the plan; review past and current wayfinding and cultural signage; convene an advisory team for the development of the scope and implementation of the project; consult with local artists to conceptualize prototype physical wayfinding structures; and develop a total implementation budget. The consultant will also work with REV and the Birmingham Museum of Art to select a local artist to design and build the prototype wayfinding structure. In full implementation, multiple local artists will be engaged to design sculptural elements of individual wayfinding structures. This planning process should position REV to identify needs for and potential sources of funds for full implementation of the system.

SITE DESCRIPTION

For the purpose of this RFP, Birmingham’s City Center is defined as an area of downtown bounded by Interstate 65 to the west, Red Mountain Expressway to the east, BJCC complex to the North, and University of Alabama Birmingham’s wayfinding grid to the south. The City Center is characterized by a rich collection of historic buildings, wide streets in a strong grid pattern, mature trees and several important green spaces. In addition to being the largest concentration of employment in the state, the City Center is also home to many of the largest regional attractions including Regions Field, Railroad Park, the Birmingham Jefferson Convention Complex, Birmingham Museum of Art, Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, McWane Center, Alabama Theatre and more. One major barrier to easy navigation of downtown is the
predominance of one-way streets, which often confuse and frustrate infrequent visitors. Any wayfinding system should take these strengths and weaknesses into account.

PARTNERS & FUNDERS

The Birmingham Artistic Wayfinding Plan is a collaboration of REV Birmingham, Birmingham Museum of Art and the City of Birmingham. Funders include:

<table>
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<th>Partner</th>
<th>Primary Contact</th>
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<tr>
<td>Birmingham Museum of Art (BMA)</td>
<td>Gail Andrews, Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>City Action Partnership (CAP)</td>
<td>Teresa Thorne, Executive Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>City of Birmingham</td>
<td>Andre Bittas, Director of PEP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham (CFGB)</td>
<td>Koko McCall, Program Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)</td>
<td>No local contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REV Birmingham (REV)</td>
<td>Ben Wieseman, Director, Catalytic Develop</td>
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SCOPE OF WORK

The first objective is to develop a comprehensive wayfinding signage system design that provides a framework for visitors to navigate to and experience City Center attractions and districts while celebrating the unique identity of Birmingham. The effort shall be coordinated with existing and planned traffic studies of downtown Birmingham that are being developed by the Alabama Department of Transportation, the City of Birmingham and others.

The second objective of this project is to develop an artistic wayfinding signage structure, or structures, and consistent signage and mapping that, when installed, will assist visitors and community members in identifying and navigating to and among downtown Birmingham’s destinations and amenities, while reinforcing the brands of key City Center districts. Once the needs of the system and signage have been identified, the consultant will work with REV and Birmingham Museum of Art to select an artist to design the prototype sign. The framework should be designed to accommodate consistent wayfinding signage and site-specific sculpture created by a local artist or artists.

Final designs should identify a set of templates for wayfinding, gateway, and other graphic theme elements, including dimensions, color palette(s), font families, symbols, and suggested fabrication and maintenance specifications. The fabrication specifications should be at a level of detail that can be given directly to a manufacturer. All final designs should be made available with electronic artwork in PC-compatible files.

The selected bidder will oversee the development and design of this wayfinding project. Once awarded, the contractor will be responsible for all work surrounding the successful deployment of this project, including, but not limited to:
1. Perform a detailed assessment of the City Center, entrance points, traffic flow, existing and planned signage and key pedestrian and automotive destinations to develop a master map for vehicular wayfinding and, where necessary, for pedestrian wayfinding:

   a. Identify user groups, their specific needs, and potential wayfinding difficulties, particularly as they affect the disabled, senior citizens, city employees, students, and visitors;

   b. Analyze existing vehicular, pedestrian, parking, and directory/map signage. Document and analyze signage location, design, content and effectiveness, and compile an existing conditions report. Evaluate feasibility of reusing existing locations, poles, hardware on an individual location basis. Develop an inventory of all right-of-way signage, traffic control devices, building signage, pole and roof top mounted signs including historic markers, newspaper boxes, bulletin boards, kiosks, etc;

   c. Analyze existing traffic patterns, points of entry, circulation patterns, and map recommended locations for signage directing all users to the downtown, users within the Downtown, including analyzing access to municipal parking lots spread around the business district;

   d. Review existing reports, studies, plans and surveys including: various parking and traffic studies; the Birmingham Comprehensive Plan; the City Center Master Plan Update, and other related studies and plans;

   e. Review Federal, State, and County requirements and restrictions related to signage in right of way areas and gateway treatments at entrances to the community and Downtown;

   f. Conduct an engineering study to determine where each sign may be placed so as to ensure compliance with municipal, state and federal standards and regulations;

   g. Evaluate local zoning and signage code requirements for the signage and provide a list of recommended regulatory changes to these ordinances; and

   h. Analyze Birmingham architectural/historic style to develop an appropriate design aesthetic for the system and consider locations for historic and cultural interpretive signage.

2. Coordinate public engagement to ensure stakeholder and community input:

   a. Conduct at least one stakeholder meeting comprised of representatives from REV, BMA, Mayor’s Office, City Council, Planning Commission, Design Review, business and property owners and others to discuss guiding principles, expectations, schedule, and shared information for the Plan;
b. Conduct one open public informational meeting where the broader stakeholder community is invited to provide their input regarding appropriate location of signage, concept designs, and language on proposed signs; and

c. Conduct a final stakeholder meeting to review and offer comments on draft plan and design.

3. Develop detailed wayfinding map and signage. The design should consist of a minimum of two design concepts for consideration:

   a. Determine what destinations should be included in the system;
   b. Determine locations of signage;
   c. Determine what sign types and wayfinding elements will be needed;
   d. Determine budget and outline phasing issues with recommendations for sources of funding for implementation.

4. Develop, in partnership with REV, Birmingham Museum of Art and selected artist(s), wayfinding signage structural design. Accompanying these designs should be design guidelines and standards to aid in consistent fabrication and installation:

   a. Prepare detailed designs for select sign types and installation logic for each sign type;
   b. Present two initial design concepts for review with written statements regarding rationale for design choices and materials. Also, a statement of probable cost for the fabrication and installation of the system (the project steering committee will select one design concept for additional refinements);
   c. Complete two rounds of refinements on the design concept selected by stakeholders;
   d. Apply the approved design to the remaining sign types; and
   e. Present the full sign type prototype array.

5. Determine graphic theme elements, including dimensions, color palette(s), font families, symbols, which are to be informed by overall signage design.

6. Recommend materials that may better serve the function of the signage while being considerate of the design.

7. Create construction documents, shop drawings, engineering plans and/or the like to ensure that the design is functionally sound.

8. Present periodic summary reports to REV.

**DELIVERABLES**

1. Seven color copies of a multi-layered Comprehensive Signage and Wayfinding System Plan;
2. Final Design Intent Drawings with scaled drawings of potential sign types and concepts;
3. Preliminary sign location plan;
4. Message schedule with a number of various sign types;
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

In order to be considered for award of this RFP, each vendor team must meet these minimum requirements:
1. Developed multiple city systems and designs.
2. Provide at least two (2) written references from existing or former clients in the past 3 years.
3. Have knowledge of City of Birmingham Planning Engineering and Permits and ALDOT processes and and understand the requirements for placement of signage on State and City roadways.
4. Complete this RFP and submit their response by the deadline.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Responses to this RFP should be provided in the following numbered format as listed below. Please limit response to 10 pages. Submit one original and five copies.

1. Provide a brief description of previous work with municipalities and ALDOT and specifically experience with environmental graphic design, identity and brand development, destination marketing and wayfinding.
2. Explain past experience as a consultant and provide two references from past contract work.
3. Describe the general project approach that would be employed to complete the project.
4. Provide a cost proposal associated with each part of the work specified.
5. Provide next steps for future phases of the Birmingham Artistic Wayfinding project with recommendations for the fabrication and installation phases.

SELECTION PROCESS

A Selection Committee made up of REV and BMA staff will evaluate Proposals/Bids. The selection of a consultant will be based on qualifications and the content of the proposal submitted. The Selection Committee will consider the overall quality of each vendor's submittal and how well their proposed project strategy meets the needs of all interested parties. The following categories will be considered in the selection of the qualified vendor. Proposals should contain the following information, and will be scored in the following manner, based upon five criteria:

1. The firm’s prior experience and expertise in developing wayfinding programs and demonstrating their ability to create executable programs and unique offerings. Include information on projects where the firm rendered professional services similar to those requested in this RFP. (20 pts.)
2. A minimum of two references for any of the above mentioned projects. Feedback from these references and similar project clients will provide basis for scoring. (20 pts.)
3. Project leadership and key personnel to be assigned to the project, their relevant experience, and roles to be taken on. Include a list of possible sub-contractors to be used with their past experience and qualifications. (20 pts.)
4. Work Plan: Provide the technical approach used to accomplish the required work. Include tasks, methodologies, and descriptions of the process. Include information on timeline of the project and ability to meet project deadline. (20 pts.)

5. Compensation/Project Budget: Provide the firm’s fees for preparing wayfinding design plans. Identify costs for completing all services and work tasks, and identify the total overall cost of the bid. Firms may elect to subcontract portions of the project to other firms. If such partnerships are proposed, the dollar amount of their participation should be identified. (20 pts.)

In the event that two or more vendors are deemed equally qualified, the Selection Committee will host interviews with said vendors to make their final decision. The final selection of the most qualified vendor will be carried out by the Selection Committee. REV reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

ACCEPTANCE/REJECTION

REV reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses to this RFP, waive informalities, and request re-bids on the services specified in the RFP. The Selected Proposer(s) evaluated and ranked in accordance with the requirements of this RFP shall be awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract ("Contract") with REV. Such Contract(s) will be furnished by REV, will contain certain terms as are in REV’s best interests, and may be executed for groups of projects or on a project by project basis. REV reserves the right to make specific task assignments for individual project(s) by subsequent Work Order(s) issued pursuant to the awarded Contract(s).

COSTS OF PROPOSAL

All expenses involved with the preparation and submission of Responses to REV, or any work performed in connection therewith shall be borne by the Proposer(s).

CONTRACT

The selected consultant will be required to adhere to REV and the City of Birmingham’s insurance requirements and include indemnification language in the final contract.

INSURANCE

The work shall be completed under a not-to-exceed cost contract agreement. Specific contract terms and conditions shall be negotiated with REV Birmingham. It is recognized that a single firm may not offer all of the proposed service and that sub-consultants may be included in the submittal. All sub-consultants shall be subject to REV approval. REV reserves the right to contract directly with other firm for additional services. Additionally, REV will not allow mark-up on work done by an individual sub-consultant if the work by that consultant exceeds 50% of the total consultant cost.
SCHEDULE

The following is the anticipated schedule for the RFP process. REV reserves the right to modify any part of this schedule.

- **RFP Release**: February 2, 2015
- **Proposals Due**: March 2, 2015
- **Review of RFPs & Firm Selection**: March 2015
- **Execute Contract**: April 1, 2015
- **Project Initiation**: April 2015
- **Project Completion**: October 2015

SUBMISSION PROCESS

The original and five (5) color copies of each individual’s proposal, along with an electronic copy, must be submitted in a sealed envelope by 5:00 P.M. CST on Monday, March 2, 2015. All submittals must be on 8 1/2” X 11” paper, neatly typed on one side only, with normal margins, and spacing. The original document package must not be bound and the document package copies should be individually bound.

Please submit proposals to the address below. Proposals submitted by fax or e-mail will not be accepted.

**REV Birmingham**
505 North 20th Street, Suite 1010
Birmingham, AL 35203

COMMUNICATIONS

REV staff will communicate with potential Proposers regarding this RFP only with regard to matters of process and procedure already contained in this RFP document. Contact with REV regarding this RFP or any aspect of a proposal by a respondent or any representative of a respondent shall be limited to written communications until such time that the consultants have been approved. All questions or requests for additional information must be asked and answered in writing by email or certified mail. To ensure that your request or question has been received, contact Ben Wieseman at 205.623.0628 only to verify that REV is in receipt of your request. The request must contain the RFP title, Proposer’s name, contact person name, address, phone number, and email address. Any responses to such questions or requests shall be furnished to all respondents in the form of an addendum to this RFP. Questions should be directed in writing only (email preferred) to:

**Email:** Ben Wieseman  
rfp@revbirmingham.org

**Mail:** Ben Wieseman  
Director, Catalytic Development  
REV Birmingham  
505 North 20th Street, Suite 1010  
Birmingham, AL 35203  
205.623.0628