

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

Consulting Services: Strategic Planning, Needs Assessment, Feasibility Study, and/or Financial Feasibility Study

Issued By:

West and Wilkinson Boulevard Merchants Association (WWBMA)
West Boulevard and Wilkinson Boulevard Corridors
Charlotte, NC

Project Timeline:

- Accepting Proposals/Questions: 12/01/24 to 12/30/24
- RFP Due: 12/31/2024 by 5:00 PM
- Notice to Finalist: 01/24/2025
- Interviews: 01/13-17/2025
- Target Contract Execution: 1/31/25
- Target Deliverable Completion Date: 08/30/2025

I. Introduction

The WWBMA is seeking a qualified consultant or consulting firm to develop a comprehensive strategic plan, conduct a needs assessment, feasibility study, and/or financial feasibility study. This initiative supports the WWBMA's mission to foster a thriving business community in the West Boulevard and Wilkinson Boulevard corridors, combining profitability and growth with a commitment to community empowerment. This WWBMA empowers local businesses along West Boulevard and Wilkinson Boulevard by promoting economic growth, enhancing community engagement, and advocating for our members' needs.

We aim to build a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable business district through collaboration and dedicated support services. The selected consultant will work closely with stakeholders to ensure that the plans and assessments align with the pride, tenacity, and legacy of the west side communities we serve.

We strongly encourage proposals from underrepresented groups, culturally competent individuals and organizations, and local professionals who have a deep understanding of Charlotte's west side community dynamics.

II. Organization Overview

The West and Wilkinson Boulevard Merchants Association (WWBMA) is dedicated to fostering an inclusive and thriving business ecosystem in the West Boulevard and Wilkinson Boulevard corridors. Balancing business growth with community values, ensuring our efforts benefit the current and future businesses and residents in the area. This WWBMA aims to leverage the rich

cultural history, entrepreneurial spirit, and resilience of the west side to create opportunities for economic empowerment and sustained development.

The WWBMA seeks a consultant to guide us through strategic planning and/or assessments that will inform our path toward sustainable, equitable development in line with the community's needs and aspirations.

III. Project Scope of Work

The WWBMA is soliciting proposals for one or more of the following:

1. Strategic Plan Development (2025-2027)

- Conduct a market and SWOT analysis
- Create a long-term strategic plan (3-5 years) that aligns with the WWBMA's mission to support equitable business growth and community development.
- Identify key objectives, goals, key performance indicators, and strategies, ensuring alignment with the values and aspirations of the West Boulevard and Wilkinson Boulevard communities.

2. Needs Assessment

- Conduct a thorough needs assessment to identify the current and future needs of the community, businesses, and potential entrepreneurs in the corridors.
- Analyze community feedback and economic data to inform business development initiatives.

3. Feasibility Study

- Examine the feasibility of new business development programs, services, or infrastructure in the corridors.
- Provide actionable recommendations based on market research, demographic analysis, and local conditions.

4. Financial Feasibility Study

- Analyze the financial sustainability of proposed business initiatives or programs.
- Provide financial models, cost projections, and funding recommendations to ensure long-term viability.

IV. Budget

The budget for this engagement ranges from \$25,000 to \$35,000, depending upon the scope and depth of the services provided. Proposals should outline a breakdown of costs for each service requested including; hourly rates, materials and overhead.

V. Qualifications and Proposal Requirements

The ideal consultant or consulting firm will have the following qualifications:

- Demonstrated experience with strategic planning, needs assessments, and feasibility studies for community-based organizations, small businesses, or economic development projects.
- A culturally competent approach that incorporates an understanding of historically marginalized communities, particularly the west side of Charlotte.
- Familiarity with the business, economic, and social landscape of the West Boulevard and Wilkinson Boulevard corridors is strongly preferred.
- Experience working with nonprofits, public-private partnerships, or community organizations.
- Strong facilitation and communication skills, particularly with diverse stakeholders and community members.

VI. Proposal Submission Requirements

Please submit a proposal that includes the following:

1. Executive Summary

A brief summary of the consulting firm, qualifications, and proposed approach.

2. Approach & Methodology

Detailed description of your approach to fulfilling the scope of work, including stakeholder engagement, research methods, and any innovative strategies.

3. Experience & Qualifications

Examples of relevant past projects, particularly those that demonstrate your experience with strategic planning, needs assessments, and feasibility studies for similar communities or initiatives. Resumes of key personnel who will be involved in the project.

4. Project Timeline

Proposed timeline for completing the requested services.

5. Cost Proposal/Budget

Detailed cost breakdown for each component of the project (Strategic Plan, Needs Assessment, Feasibility Study, Financial Feasibility Study).

6. References

Contact information for at least two references from previous clients.

7. Statement on Cultural Competency and Community Understanding

A description of how your firm incorporates cultural competency and belonging into your work and how you plan to approach the unique dynamics of Charlotte's west side communities.

VII. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Experience and Qualifications (30%)
Relevant experience in strategic planning, needs assessments, and feasibility studies.
- Approach and Methodology (30%)
Clarity and feasibility of the proposed approach and alignment with the WWBMA's mission.
- Cost and Budget Justification (20%)
Competitive pricing and transparency of cost structure.
- Cultural Competency and Local Knowledge (20%)
Demonstrated understanding of the West Boulevard and Wilkinson Boulevard communities and a commitment to inclusive, community-centered work.

VIII. Submission Instructions

- All proposals must be submitted via email by 12/31/2024 by 5:00 PM. Under the title "WWBMA RFP Proposal - (Your Company/Organization Name)"
- All responses must be:
 - Page numbered with the respondent's/firm's name on each page
 - Organized according to the list above
 - Formatted for 8.5 x 11 inch paper
 - No more than 10 pages, excluding bios or other attachments. Detailed conciseness is appreciated.
 - All elements of the response must be contained in a single PDF file.

IX. Contact Information

For any questions or clarification regarding this RFP, please contact:

Dr. Alexandra Arrington/Gina Esquivel, Alexandra Arrington Consulting LLC
Project Managers at
merchantsassoc@westblvdnc.org (subject: RFP Questions/Clarifications)

Thank you for your interest in partnering with the WWBMA. We look forward to reviewing your proposal and collaborating to support the west side business community's growth and prosperity.