



**Request for Proposals (RFP) for  
3-Year Strategic Planning**

**Issued: 08/01/2024**

**Proposals Due: 09/02/2024 by 5:00PM EST**

- I. **Summary of Request:** The River District Association (RDA) is accepting proposals from qualified professional(s) (“Consultant(s)”) who will create a 3 year strategic plan that will include input from stakeholder, district property and business owners, and the Board of Directors. Please see the timeline below for important deadlines and review the following pages for complete information on the request for proposal process.
- II. **Timeline of Activities and Proposal Format:** An electronic proposal shall be submitted by the deadline per the RFP.

RDA will receive proposals in response to this RFP until the deadline stated on the cover page of this Request for Proposal (RFP). Proposals received after that time will not be reviewed. **Proposals shall be submitted via email to [diana@riverdistrictassociation.com](mailto:diana@riverdistrictassociation.com) with email subject line: “2024 Strategic Planning & Fund Development Consultant Proposal”**

- III. **Background and Overview:** The River District Association (RDA) is an independent 501(c)(3) corporation, registered as the Downtown Danville Association, and was established in 1999 to promote the businesses, attractions and history of Danville’s downtown community, which is now enthusiastically called the River District. RDA believes that a thriving downtown is critical to enhancing the quality of life and the economic well-being of Danville and the surrounding region. To that end, the RDA staff and Board of Directors serve to make Danville’s River District a model for excellence in downtown revitalization.

To support this work, RDA works closely with the City of Danville to maintain accreditation with the Virginia Main Street and National Main Street Center Programs, which are recognized nationally as the most successful formula for downtown revitalization. RDA is committed to the Main Street Four-Point Approach™ of organization, promotion, design and economic restructuring to develop transformation strategies that contribute to River District revitalization and increase demand for River District products and services.

RDA also has adopted Main Street America's Guiding Principles for best practices, which set the Main Street methodology apart from other redevelopment strategies. To these eight principles, RDA adds inclusivity, recognizing that the work should benefit all residents, employees and visitors to the River District.

RDA has successfully implemented 2 strategic plans since 2017, and the district (and community) have witnessed over \$300 MM in investment; in addition, the organization has helped to attract or expand more than 100 businesses in the district during this time. RDA was awarded the “Great American Main Street Award” (GAMSA) in 2023 from Main Street America; this is the highest national recognition obtainable by the MSA organization. All of the work that RDA has accomplished has been in collaboration with many community and regional stakeholders, the local government, and property and business owners in the district.

Due to the unprecedented growth of the downtown area and the community overall, it will be of utmost importance that input is sought from all stakeholders as it will be a baseline to inform the direction of the organization for the next three years. RDA seeks to create a strategic plan that will guide the ongoing rigorous growth of the organization that will take into account the need for new partnerships to ensure the availability of

necessary financial resources. This will also include a review of the current plan, programs, and services with the understanding that some may be discontinued or reworked to meet the current needs of the downtown area and the community.

To learn more about RDA visit: <https://www.riverdistrictassociation.com/>

**IV. Scope of Work/Service Expectations:** RDA anticipates the following services to be provided by the consultant(s). The selected firm or individual(s) will be viewed as an active partner in assuring RDA's high-level satisfaction during the process, the outcome and the cost associated with developing its programs.

A. Scope of Work: Strategic Planning (including stakeholder engagement plan)

1. Develop, with the Board of Directors and CEO, an overarching focus on work for the next three years, including frameworks, directions, and strategies for key issues;
2. Develop a stakeholder engagement plan that will give vital information regarding the needs of the district today and the near-term future; the information from the engagement will inform the overall strategic plan;
3. Incorporate collaboration in the plan's development across all parts of the organization and among key stakeholders for greater impact. This will include new ways to collaborate with both existing and new stakeholders;
4. Develop the plan with the board utilizing structured and comprehensive decision making as it relates prioritizing existing programs vs new programs regarding capacity and availability of time, resources, money, etc;
5. Ensure the final format of the plan provides at-a-glance monitoring to measure plan progress and is easy to disseminate and understand.

**V. Qualifications of Proposer(s):** Previous experience (preferably 10 years or more) having developed successful strategic and fund development plans for other organizations, preferably those with mission/vision similar to RDA and/or with organizations that focus on downtown revitalization with extra consideration given to those affiliated with the National Main Street program.

**VI. Standard Terms and Conditions:** When preparing the proposal for submission to RDA in response to this RFP, Proposers should be aware of the following terms and conditions:

- A. RDA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to consider alternatives, to waive any informalities and irregularities, and to re-solicit proposals;
- B. RDA reserves the right to conduct reviews of and discussions with those who have submitted proposals or other entities as it deems necessary or appropriate

to assist in the evaluation of any proposal or to secure maximum clarification and completeness of any proposal.

- C. All proposals submitted must be valid for a period of ninety (90) days after the date of the proposal deadline.
- D. RDA assumes no responsibility for payment of any expenses incurred by any individual or firm as part of the RFP process.

**VII. Proposal Evaluation:** RDA will select the proposer whose offer will provide the most favorable mix of credentials and cost, thereby ensuring overall best value procurement. RDA reserves the right to award the contract to a successful proposer who may not necessarily be the lowest bidder based upon cost comparison.

The following evaluation criteria, using a 100-point scoring system, will be utilized to evaluate the proposals:

- A. General organization and completeness of the proposal (10 points)
- B. Background and experience as demonstrated by resumes by consultant(s) to be assigned to the project (25 points)
- C. Past performance as demonstrated by work samples and verifiable reference testimonials (25 points)
- D. Thoroughly defined approach and methodology determined reasonably capable of completing the total project within a five (5) month period, from start to finish (25 points)
- E. Cost reasonableness and competitiveness (15 points)

**VIII. Proposal Submittal:** Firms or individuals who are interested in providing services as outlined in this RFP will be responsible for ensuring that their proposal is appropriately delivered prior to the deadline for submission

- A. The proposal should include:
  1. The firm or individual's name and mailing address, with a description of your business entity type (corporation, general partnership, Limited Liability Company, Sole Proprietor, etc.) as well as identification of the state and year in which the business entity was incorporated or formed;
  2. A brief history of your business, including years of operation, general business description, number of clients serviced, types of services generally offered, and statement of philosophy of customer service levels;
  3. Identification of the key personnel who will be assigned to perform services for RDA throughout the term of the contract. Proposals should include resumes stating qualifications for each, as well as a stated description and commitment of their availability and accessibility as

relates to other projects that they may be assigned to during the term of the contract;

4. A description of experience in providing similar services to organizations similar to RDA in terms of size, mission and vision, clearly identifying any participating in National Main Street program initiatives;
5. A list three (3) or more current or recent clients willing to serve as references for your work. Provide contact names, organization names, telephone numbers, email addresses for each reference; and
6. A description of how the project will incorporate technology (Zoom, etc.) and in-person convenings to facilitate meetings in ways that maximize the benefits of participation and input. This should also include anticipated methods that will be used for gathering input from the board, additional stakeholders, and district property owners/businesses.
7. Provide detailed specific costs (and narrative if necessary) for services to be rendered.

B. In general, the proposal is expected to contain the following elements:

1. Executive Summary;
2. Background and Experience;
3. Approach and Methodology;
4. Timeline of Process and Engagement;
5. Proposed Staff Qualifications; and
6. Cost Proposal.

**IX. Confidentiality:** Any and all information and data provided with or related to this RFP are proprietary to RDA and should be treated as confidential information. It is for your exclusive use in preparing a proposal and must not be shared, where written or oral, with any other firm or used for any other purpose. The use of the River District Association's name is strictly prohibited.

In addition, if anything submitted in your proposal is confidential to your organization, it should be clearly marked as such.

**X. Anticipated Timeline:** The RFP process is expected to proceed according to the following anticipated schedule. Please note that RDA recognizes this timeline is aggressive and spans time that may conflict with holidays, etc. Proposers should carefully reflect on the schedule and include any anticipated barriers that would impact the project's ability to successfully meet the timeline's demands.

A. 08/01/2024: RFP Issued

- B. 08/21/2024: Deadline for all questions and clarification inquiries submitted electronically to [info@riverdistrictassociation.com](mailto:info@riverdistrictassociation.com)
- C. 08/28/2024: Responses to questions and clarification inquiries from RDA to proposers
- D. 09/02/2024: Proposals due (**Responses received after 5PM EST on this date will not be considered.**)
- E. 09/05/2024: Consultant Selection
- F. 01/29/2025: Final Deliverables Due: Strategic Plan