

Request for Proposals

Development Authority of DeKalb County

Southwest DeKalb Creative District

I. Introduction and overview

Today DeKalb County is home to over 18,000 businesses and is one of the most diverse job markets in the State of Georgia. Industry presence ranges from healthcare, manufacturing, and entertainment, just to name a few, with ongoing opportunities born from an ecosystem centered on collaboration between residents and leaders from the business, government, nonprofit and community sectors advancing equity and prosperity throughout the county.

To continue our efforts to advance economic opportunities in traditionally underinvested and underserved communities within DeKalb County, the Development Authority of DeKalb County (Decide DeKalb) is soliciting proposals from consultants to create a “creative district” strategy in Southwest DeKalb County, Georgia. Southwest DeKalb County is largely unincorporated, with a small portion falling within the City of Atlanta.

Decide DeKalb’s vision for this creative district is for it to be a robust ecosystem and hub for creative industries, serving as a model for equitable economic development. This district will encourage and create opportunities for participation in the evolving economic landscape for legacy residents and business owners.

The Southwest DeKalb creative district aims to:

- Drive the creation of jobs for creatives;
- Provide a suite of wraparound services and programs to support entrepreneurs and small business growth;
- Attract ancillary and complementary businesses;
- Support and encourage the creation of housing options, both market rate and affordable;
- Leverage existing and proposed economic development tools and incentives; and
- Deliver amenities that promote a high quality of life for the community.

Please read each section carefully for information regarding the request and submittal instructions.

The point of contact for this RFP is Geoffrey Loften. Please reference this RFP as “Southwest DeKalb Creative District Strategy” in the subject line of all emails. His contact information is:

Geoffrey Loften, Equitable Economic Development Program Manager
gloften@decidedekalb.com

Key dates:

- 12/2/2024: RFP Issued
- 12/13/2024: Questions and requests for clarifications must be submitted via email to Geoffrey Loften at gloften@decidedekalb.com by 5:00 PM EST
- 12/17/2024: Responses to questions and clarifications are posted by 5:00 PM EST
- 12/27/2024: All proposal submissions are due by 5:00 PM EST
- 2/3/2025: Projected start date

Decide DeKalb retains the right to adjust the timeline as necessary without prior notice.

II. Budget

Decide DeKalb, in partnership with Advance DeKalb, has allocated a total of \$200,000 to create this strategic plan and perform any associated community engagement. Responses to this solicitation should include a budget which includes all elements included in the scope of work and the cost proposal must fully encompass all activities in the respondent’s proposal.

III. Scope of Work

Decide DeKalb is seeking an experienced strategic planning consultant to create a plan for policies and programs that will support the creation of a Creative District in Southwest DeKalb County.

The selected firm will:

- **Conduct a feasibility study** to better define and establish the boundaries [See *Exhibit A for proposed boundaries*] of the Creative District in Southwest DeKalb County.
- **Engage the community** as a part of the planning process by establishing and convening a stakeholder committee, ensuring their active participation and support.
- **Develop a strategic plan** that recommends initiatives and action items to align with Decide DeKalb’s vision for the Creative District. This plan should place a high priority on programs and recommendations that support equitable economic development principles.
- **Create an implementation timeline** to guide the development of the Creative District.
- **Propose programming recommendations** with a detailed budget and metrics for each initiative.

IV. Submission requirements

A submission must include:

- Cost proposals
- Timeline proposals
- How the proposal will address the scope of work requirements
- Marketing plan for performing the community engagement functions of the scope of work
- Examples of previous strategies for economic development or non-profit organizations that are relevant to this topic
- Resumes of the staff that are proposed to work on the strategic plan

V. Submission process

- Proposals must be submitted electronically to gloften@decidedekalb.com by 5:00 PM EST on 12/27/2024 Southwest DeKalb Creative District”
 - Submissions may be sent under a Dropbox or other cloud storage hyperlink, or as emailed attachments in PDF format.
 - Submissions should be no more than 20 pages single spaced in the following format:
 - Cover Page
 - Contact Information and Website
 - Description of Proposed Work
 - Cost Proposal
 - Timeline Proposal
 - Examples
 - Resumes
 - **The submission email must include a contact phone number in the body of the email. For security purposes, Decide DeKalb will contact this phone number before opening links or attachments.**

VI. Evaluation criteria

- Past performance in creating strategic plans that align with the goals of this Southwest DeKalb Creative District Strategic Plan
- Marketing plan and capabilities
- Cost to perform the scope of work
- Decide DeKalb may request to interview respondents during the evaluation process, however, this is not a requirement for the selection process.
- Decide DeKalb is committed to the practice on non-discrimination in the selection of its vendors with a desire to reflect diversity in the participation of vendors. Decide DeKalb strongly encourages participation by DBE, FBE, and MBE in all of its contracts. Decide DeKalb anticipates that as part of a responsive proposal, a vendor will include participation by DBE, FBE and/or MBE.

VII. Selection process

Qualified submissions will be reviewed by a selection committee and ranked based on the scope of work criteria. Firms shall have no contact related to this project with Decide DeKalb during the RFP process other than with the contact person for questions and clarifications. Any firm that currently provides Consultant services to Decide DeKalb may continue to discuss those matters with all staff, except for matters pertaining to this RFP.

EXHIBIT A – Map of Proposed Boundaries

