



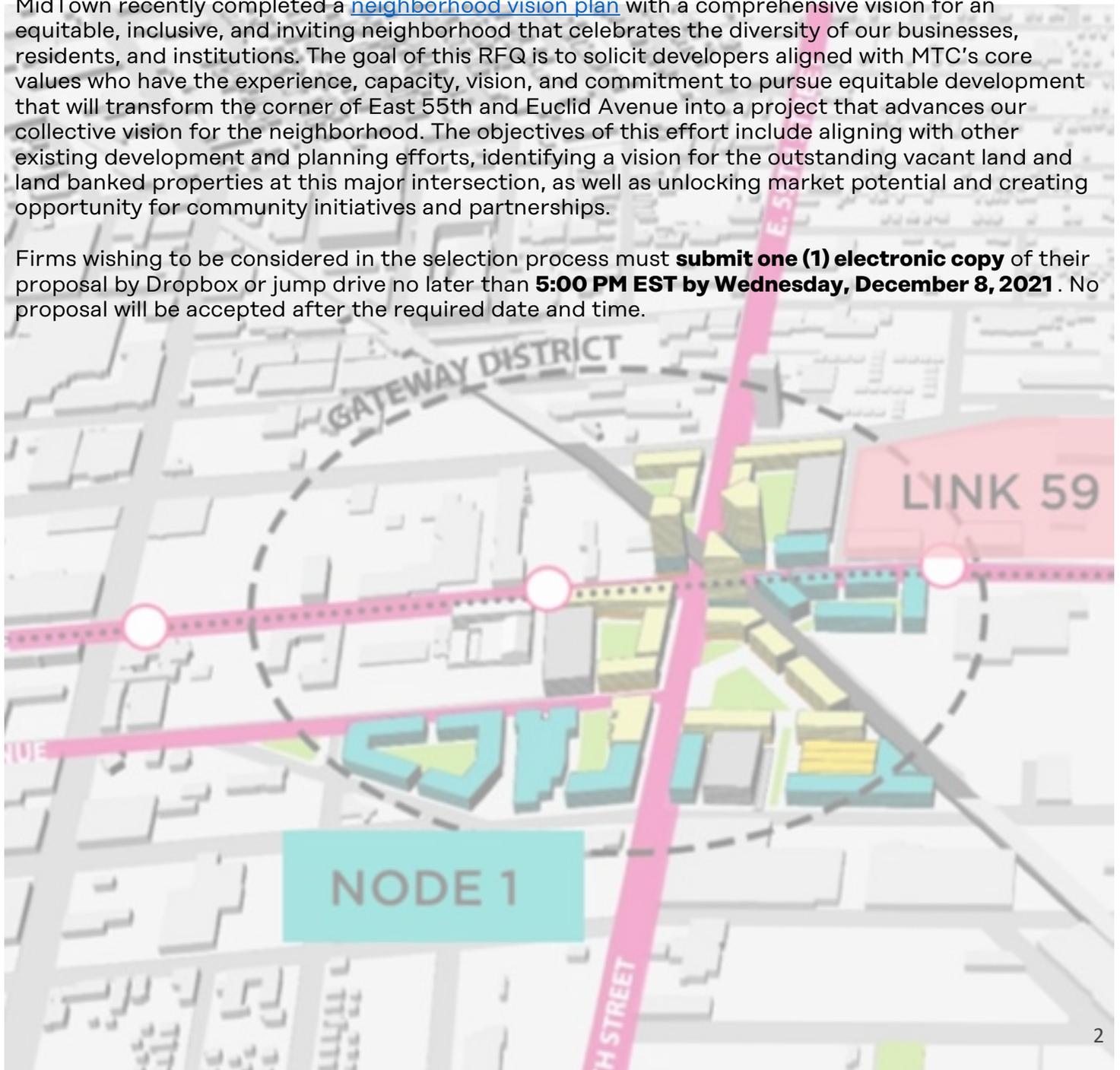
**E55TH & EUCLID AVE
CLEVELAND, OHIO 44103
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION**

OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

MidTown Cleveland, Inc. (MTC) is soliciting qualifications for a partner who will develop one of the most important intersections in the city of Cleveland, E 55th Street & Euclid Avenue. This intersection, which sits at the geographic center of the east side of Cleveland along the hugely successful Health Line bus-rapid transit line, has been underutilized and blighted for decades. MidTown and its partners recently assembled four acres of land on the southwest corner of Euclid Avenue and East 55th Street and also demolished and remediated a gas station in preparation for development. Just to the west of the site, AEG Presents completed a \$3 million rehabilitation of the historic Agora Theater in 2018. An adjacent office building in the Agora complex is also being converted to apartments. Just to the east of the site sits the Link59 campus, with a beautiful new Dave's grocery store, a University Hospitals outpatient facility, gleaming new offices, and the future home of the Cleveland Foundation.

MidTown recently completed a [neighborhood vision plan](#) with a comprehensive vision for an equitable, inclusive, and inviting neighborhood that celebrates the diversity of our businesses, residents, and institutions. The goal of this RFQ is to solicit developers aligned with MTC's core values who have the experience, capacity, vision, and commitment to pursue equitable development that will transform the corner of East 55th and Euclid Avenue into a project that advances our collective vision for the neighborhood. The objectives of this effort include aligning with other existing development and planning efforts, identifying a vision for the outstanding vacant land and land banked properties at this major intersection, as well as unlocking market potential and creating opportunity for community initiatives and partnerships.

Firms wishing to be considered in the selection process must **submit one (1) electronic copy** of their proposal by Dropbox or jump drive no later than **5:00 PM EST by Wednesday, December 8, 2021**. No proposal will be accepted after the required date and time.



INTRODUCTION

Cleveland's MidTown Neighborhood

The MidTown neighborhood has a deep and textured history. Most people are familiar with the story of Dunham Tavern, a stagecoach stop in the 1800s and the oldest building on its original foundation in the city, and Millionaire's Row, Euclid Avenue's lineup of opulent mansions from the industrialists who built Cleveland at its peak. Less told are the stories of the indigenous peoples who occupied the MidTown geography hundreds of years ago, the diversity of commercial, industrial, residential, and mixed-use development in the neighborhood in the first half of the 20th century, and the vibrancy of Black music, culture, and entrepreneurship along Euclid Avenue - each destroyed by decades of demolition and disinvestment that followed directly from racism, redlining and white flight.

For the last few decades, MidTown has functioned as a commercial corridor on the east side of Cleveland, providing key east-west connectivity between eastern suburbs surrounding University Circle and Downtown Cleveland as well as offering inexpensive real estate for a variety of institutional users and social service agencies. This started to change once the nationally-recognized Health Line Bus Rapid Transit began service nearly eleven years ago, kickstarting a real estate boom of close to \$10 billion along the length of Euclid Avenue with \$350+ million within MidTown's boundaries. The growth in MidTown added thousands of jobs, 1 million square feet of commercial space, the first market rate housing in decades, and a sense that this neighborhood could once again be something more than just a pass through.



The MidTown neighborhood is now at a critical juncture with several catalytic development projects that will accelerate real estate development and economic growth in the neighborhood and advance MidTown's strategic priorities. First, The Cleveland Foundation, one of the country's preeminent philanthropic institutions, has broken ground on its new headquarters, a strategic move which will help catalyze economic growth on the east side of Cleveland. Concurrent with that effort are plans for a multi-building innovation campus that brings R&D, inclusive entrepreneurship, and job growth to the doorstep of Hough, a historically Black residential community. The first phase includes 150,000 square feet of new development along a historic north-south corridor on land that has been vacant for decades. Meant to corral institutional buy-in and stimulate regional economic growth, the innovation campus seeks to employ the best practices from innovation districts around the nation. Land is under control for future phases that will add up to 1 million square feet of additional space. Adjacent to these buildings, a \$15 million streetscape investment will better link the Hough and MidTown neighborhoods and a master plan has been completed for a dynamic green campus at Dunham Tavern. Finally, two catalytic residential projects are in predevelopment – 160 units of new construction market rate housing at East 73rd and Euclid and 140 units of mixed-income in an adaptive re-use project at East 55th and Carnegie.

What happens in MidTown over the next decade will directly impact the tens of thousands of residents in neighborhoods north, south, east, and west of MidTown. As disparities continue to widen nationally and across Cleveland, we must act with urgency to ensure that this development, our planning efforts and the others that follow will reduce disparity and advance racial equity. Equitable development and inclusion must be core values from the very beginning in order to begin closing the racial wealth gap. Our recently completed a Neighborhood Vision Plan expands on the foundation we have built over the past two years in equitable real estate development and civic engagement and presents a community-informed vision for the future of the neighborhood.

Overview of MidTown Cleveland, Inc

MidTown Cleveland, Inc. (MTC) is a 39-year-old 501(c)(3) non-profit community and economic development organization whose mission is to leverage MidTown's diverse assets to develop a dynamic neighborhood that unites Cleveland's Downtown and University Circle.

MTC's strategic vision - a connected community in the center of it all, an inclusive place for people to innovate, create, prosper, and live - continues to drive catalytic transformation for both MTC the organization and the MidTown neighborhood. MTC has made great strides in advancing its 2016 [strategic plan](#) in each of the plan's four major goal areas:

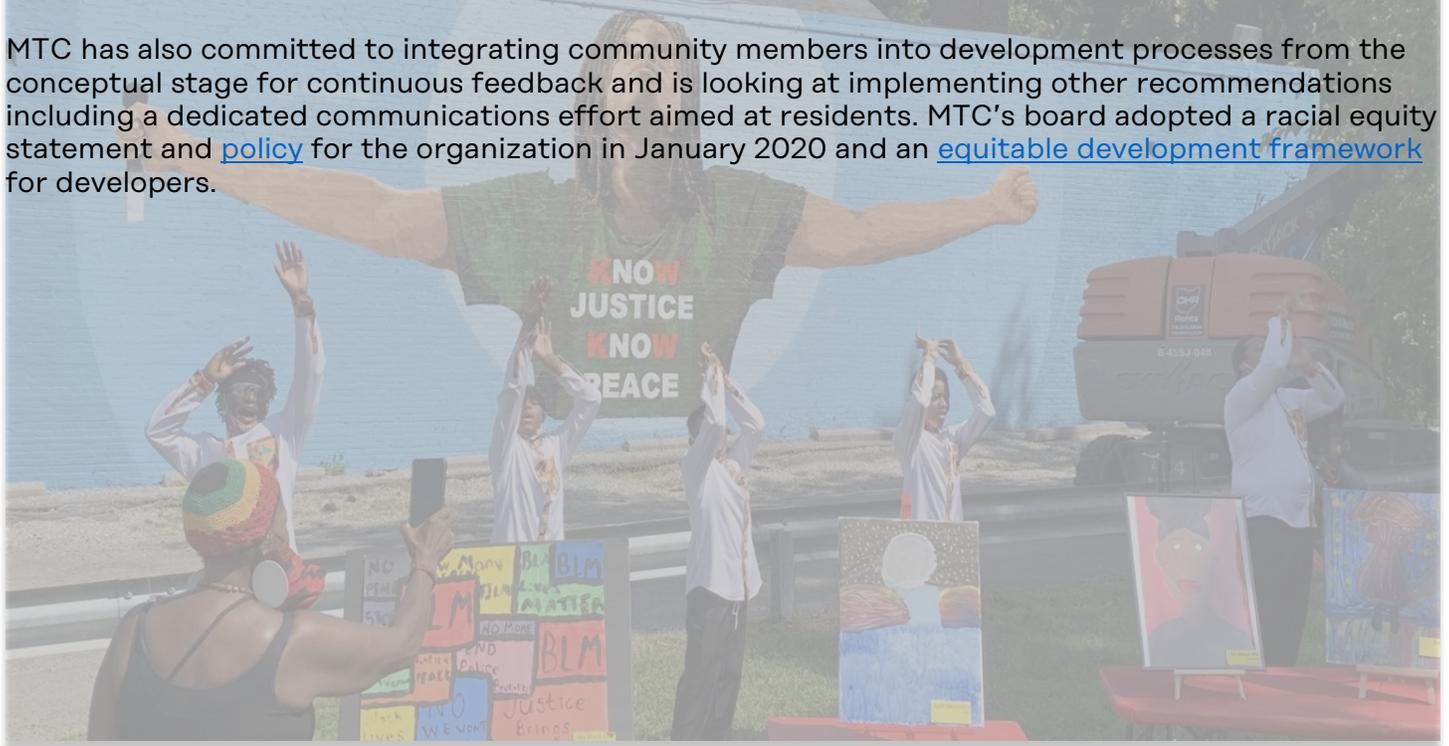
- Connecting the MidTown Community
- Creating a Complete MidTown Neighborhood
- Building the MidTown Brand
- Strengthening MTC's Capacity

MidTown's dynamic and diverse [team](#) of twelve professionals works to attract and support real estate development, plan for the future of the neighborhood, complete transformative public art and placemaking projects, engage and empower the community, attract and support businesses in the area, and hold programs to build a stronger sense of community.

Commitment to Racial Equity and Inclusion and Equitable Civic Engagement

Since 2017, MTC has pursued an internal transformation around racial equity and inclusion, initiating change throughout each part of the organization. MTC has examined internal real estate development processes through the lens of racial equity and inclusion to determine how real estate projects--and our internal processes--can play a role in dismantling inequitable development practices stemming from historically race-based policies, reducing economic isolation in nearby historically Black communities, and creating spaces that are inclusive of Black people and culture.

MTC has also committed to integrating community members into development processes from the conceptual stage for continuous feedback and is looking at implementing other recommendations including a dedicated communications effort aimed at residents. MTC's board adopted a racial equity statement and [policy](#) for the organization in January 2020 and an [equitable development framework](#) for developers.



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

Two recently completed planning efforts along with two ongoing strategic initiatives provide important context to the development opportunity at East 55th and Euclid.

MidTown Neighborhood Vision Plan

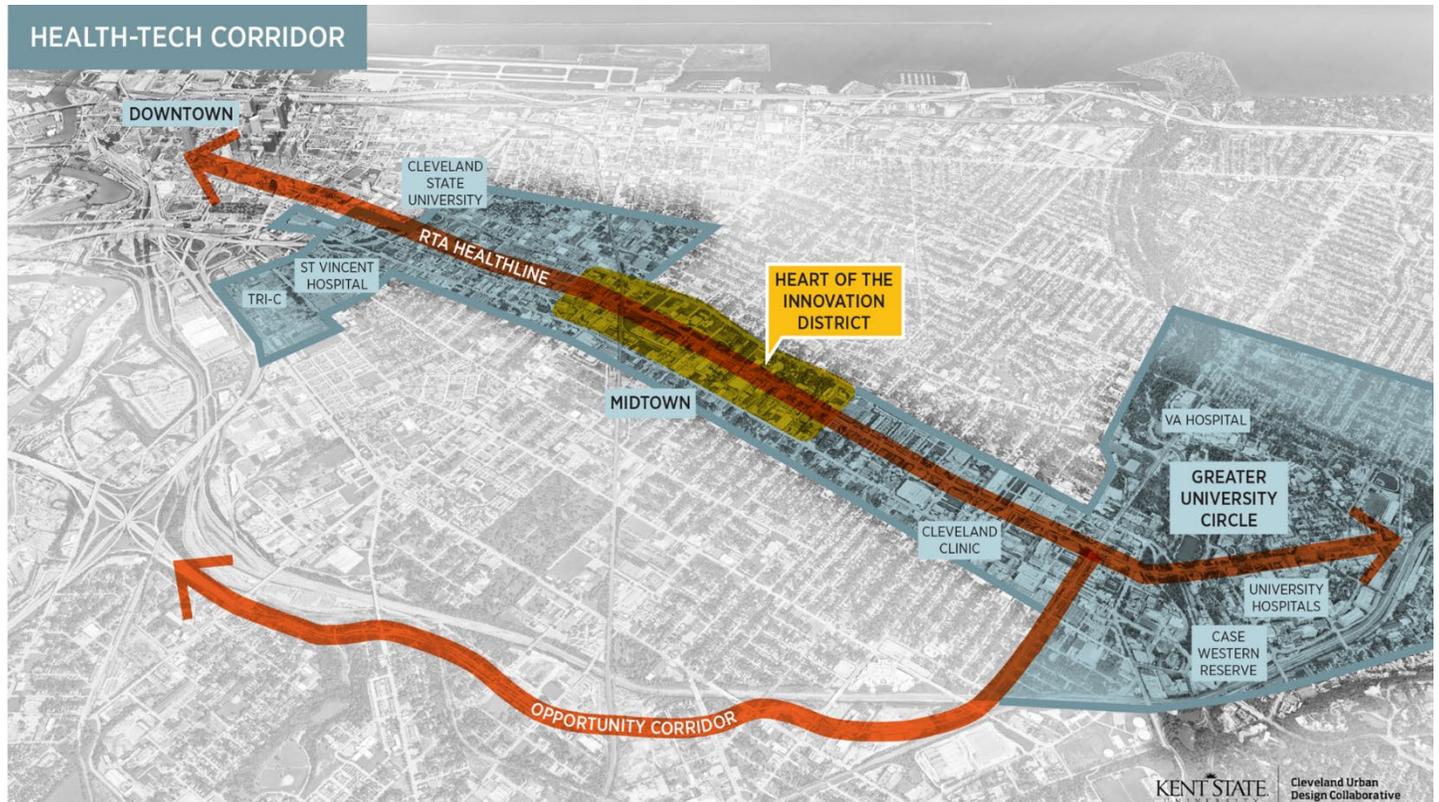
Completed in 2021, the MidTown [Neighborhood Vision Plan](#) is a place-based, holistic, living neighborhood plan representing a guiding vision of the people, places, organizations, and built environment that will further connect the MidTown neighborhood physically and socially. The objectives of this effort include aligning other existing development and planning efforts into a cohesive framework; identifying and determining a vision for the outstanding vacant land and land banked properties; understanding the future identity of significant MidTown districts and corridors; integrating ongoing community initiatives and partnerships, as well as connecting people in place. Through focused and extensive public outreach, we sought to translate the vision, hopes, dreams, and priorities of our community members into tangible and realistic actions for the next 5 years.

Equitable Housing

In 2020, MidTown completed an equitable housing development study to establish a Benchmark Neighborhood affordability index for the current neighborhood rental real estate market. For purposes of this study the "affordability index" is defined as the percentage of existing rental units that are affordable to residents currently making the MidTown neighborhood median household income of \$20,280 (Data from Progress Index Cleveland) The study also identified market intervention strategies based upon existing best practices to preserve the affordability of the neighborhood as it undergoes an extensive transformation over the next five years. Click [here](#) for the final report.

Health-Tech Corridor

The development site sits in the middle of one of the fastest growing jobs hubs in Northeast Ohio, the [Cleveland Health-Tech Corridor](#) (HTC). The HTC is a 1,600 acre area spanning the heart of Cleveland's east side, connecting Cleveland's vibrant Downtown to its cultural hub of University Circle. Because of the immense healthcare, technology, and educational capital that Cleveland's hospitals and universities provide, the HTC has taken off as the place in the region to develop business synergies and partnerships in the health and technology sector. Much of this growth was spurred by the \$200 million RTA Healthline bus rapid transit system that was completed in 2008. Since the project was completed, employment in the HTC has doubled from 36,850 to 72,080 and over 180 health-tech and high-tech companies have located in the Corridor. The new economic activity in the district had led to 500,000 square feet of new or renovated office and lab space, and over \$5 billion of investment since 2008.

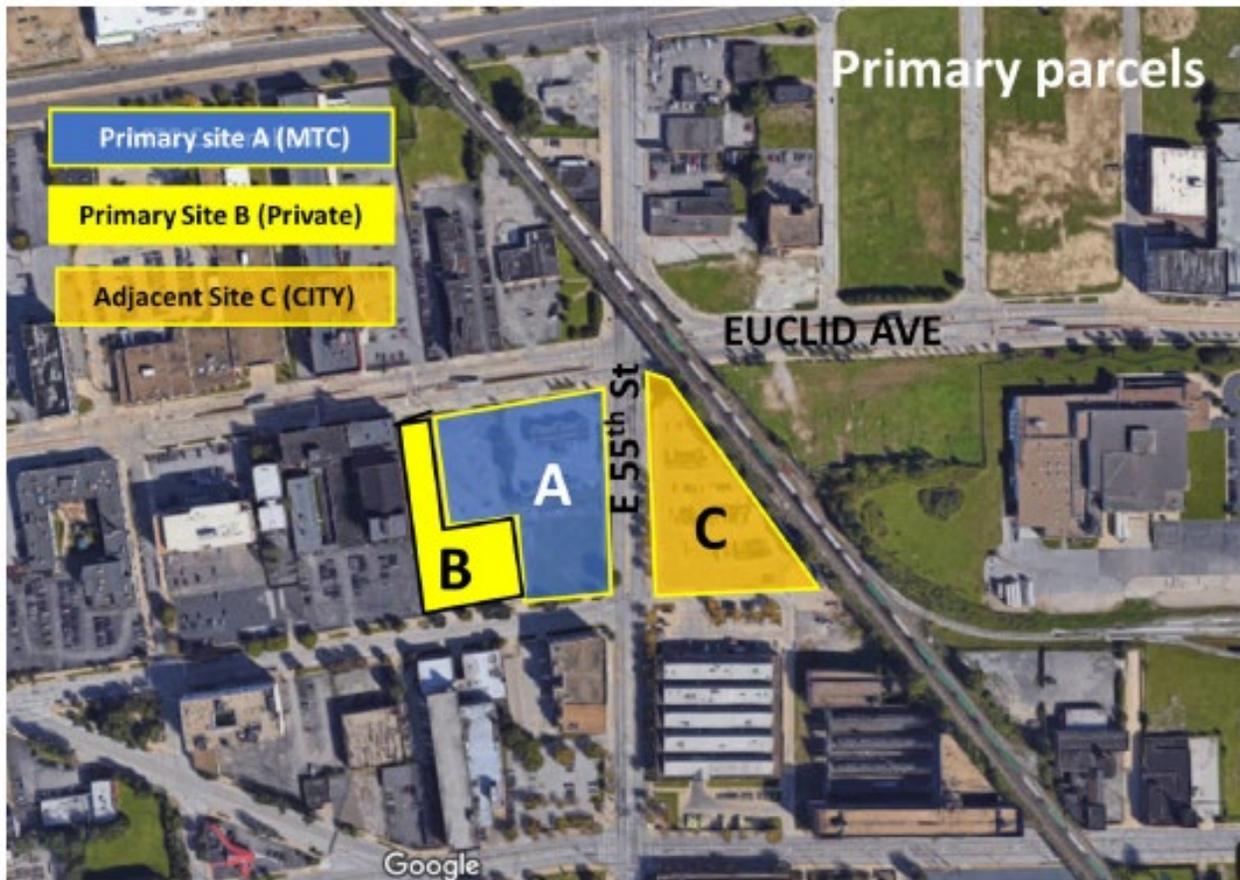


Innovation District

MidTown continues to build on the success of the Cleveland Health-Tech Corridor by creating a new center for Cleveland's innovation economy adjacent to the future Cleveland Foundation HQ on Euclid Avenue & East 66th Street. MidTown has entered into a partnership with [Wexford Science and Technology](#) as the master developer for a new innovation [community](#) in MidTown. A highly-collaborative, walkable and inclusive set of buildings will further link the HTC anchor institutions and companies with the area residents and entrepreneurs. Wexford is a unique developer who only works on large scale innovation communities and has partnered with world class institutions across the country on 15 such projects over the last 20 years. The project promises to help attract more jobs, organizations and opportunities to MidTown, and a critical goal is to ensure long-term, sustainable benefits in education, workforce development and investment for all stakeholders in the community.

PROJECT SPECIFICS

The opportunity at East 55th and Euclid includes primary sites on the SW corner of Euclid and East 55th, an adjacent site controlled by the City of Cleveland on the SE corner of Euclid and East 55th, and additional smaller ancillary sites on the NE and NW corners of the intersection.



A. Primary Site A (3 Acres) PPNS 103-10-011, -012, -013, -014, -025

The site is controlled by MidTown and is currently vacant land. Formerly a gas station, environmental remediation will be complete this summer to bring the property to OEPA standards.

B. Primary Site B (1 Acre) PPNS 103-10-015, -016

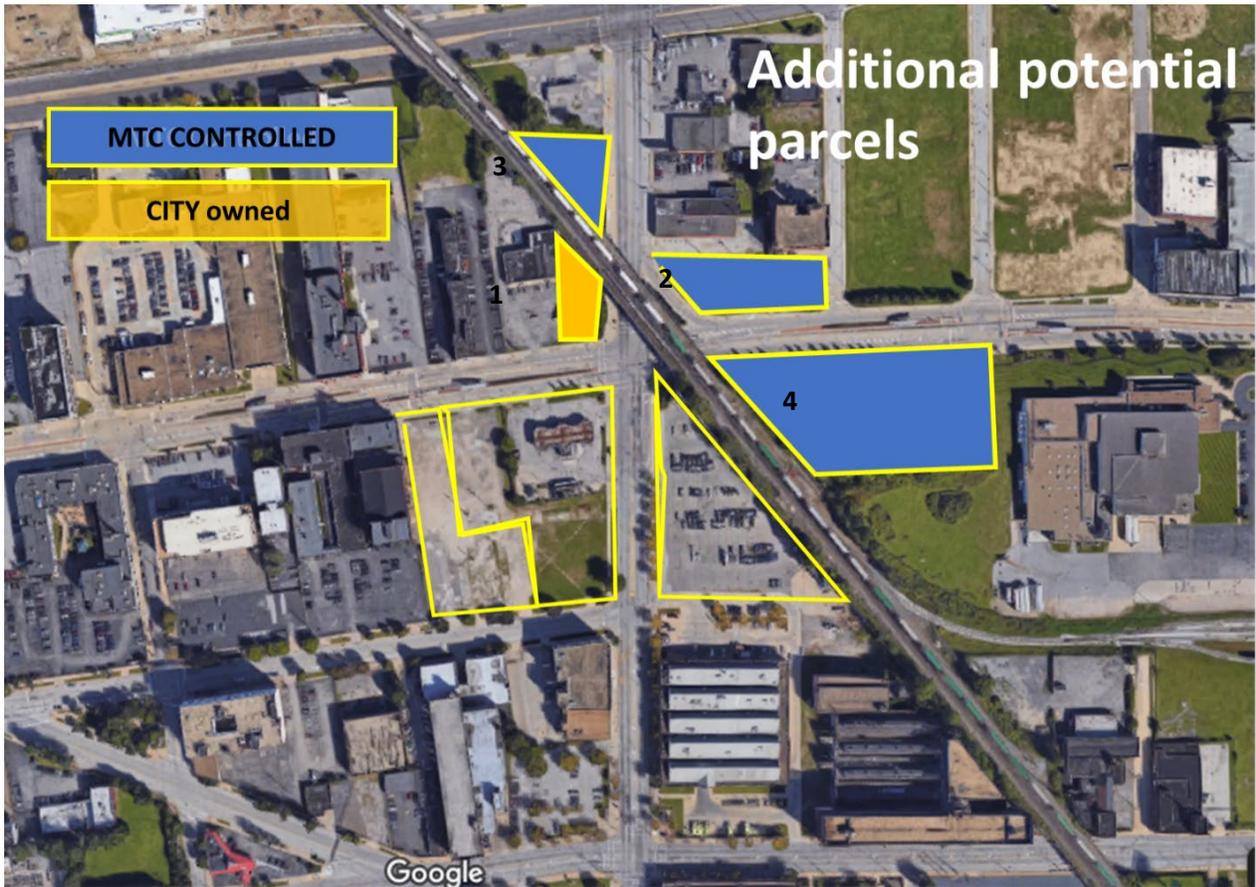
Just to the west of Primary Site A is one acre owned by AEG Presents, the world's second-largest concert promoter. AEG purchased Cleveland's historic Agora Theatre and Ballroom in 2018 and currently utilizes this parcel for access and parking. AEG Presents is engaged in the current RFQ process along with MidTown and will be part of the proposal evaluation process. The terms and extent of AEG's involvement in the project are still to be determined.

C. Adjacent Site (2 Acres) PPN 118-11-001

The easterly adjacent site across E 55th St is controlled by the City of Cleveland and is currently being used as a parking lot for broken down service vehicles awaiting repair in an adjacent garage. The City has also committed to participating in the redevelopment effort and has agreed to vacate and sell or lease this site for development. The City is also an active participant in the redevelopment of the Warner Swasey building to the southeast into mixed-use residential and commercial.

Ancillary sites

Additional parcels on the northwest and northeast corners of E 55th are controlled by MTC and the City which could be future development sites.



	Parcel #	Acreage	Current Use
1. City	103-100-27	(.3 Acres)	Vacant land bank lot
2. MTC	118-02-71, -064;	(1.1 Acres)	Vacant lot
3. MTC	103-10-008, -009, -010;	(.3 Acres)	Vacant commercial building
4. MTC	118-11-004 to -011	(2.3 Acres)	Vacant lot

Traffic Counts

Located at the center of two main thoroughfares, Euclid & E 55th St, the site has incredible access for vehicle and public transit. Euclid Avenue hosts the Healthline, a \$200M public investment along Euclid Ave with 4 million riders per year, as well as 10,000 vehicles daily. Between 15,000 and 20,000 vehicles travel north/south on E 55th St, while approximately 30,000 vehicles travel north and south of the site on Chester Ave and Carnegie Ave.

Demographic info

With over 2,000 residents in MidTown today — and nearly 600 units of new housing planned, MidTown has become a place where developers are increasingly looking at multifamily projects. While most of the populations skew below 50% AMI, the gap in middle income housing continues to be challenging, as higher income product comes onto the market.

DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The redevelopment of the site is critical to the continued transformation of MidTown into a vibrant, connected, and inclusive neighborhood. The site sits at an important crossroads connecting major east-west and north-south routes through Cleveland's east side, and is adjacent to new and renovated office, laboratory, healthcare, and entertainment facilities. MTC seeks to work with developers that understand the fundamental need to meet the following guidelines:

- 1) **Drive Density and Economic Value.** Complement existing and proposed development in the neighborhood to create a dense and connected mixed-use neighborhood. Uses that maximize employment and/or residents at the site will be given preference to lower density uses. Ensure district parking is addressed including potential for structured parking supported by Agora concert traffic.
- 2) **Create a Sense of Place.** Adhere to the existing zoning, Midtown Mixed-Use which seeks to:
 - a. Encourage a pedestrian-oriented mix of uses including retail, residential, offices and light industrial
 - b. Expand the available economic development options while strengthening the existing uses found in the Midtown District
 - c. Encourage a compact land development pattern that increases resident and employment densities to support the GCRTA's Health Line and facilitates transit usage to/from the Midtown area
 - d. Establish design criteria for new development or redevelopment to ensure that an aesthetically pleasing and pedestrian friendly environment is provided
 - e. Incorporate sustainable and innovative development principles, including stormwater management and green building practices like LEED Certification.
- 3) **Honor, Value, and Connect the Neighborhood.** Consideration for the surrounding neighborhood context in regard to design and use(s). Ensure that the site plan addresses the north-south connection between MidTown and the Central and Hough neighborhoods. Integrate ongoing community engagement and empowerment initiatives that have explicit community goals and needs.
- 4) **Advance Neighborhood Vision Plan Strategies.** The Neighborhood Vision Plan ("NVP") includes six goals and twenty strategies codeveloped with MidTown's residents, businesses, and stakeholders. The Euclid and East 55th development should advance as many NVP strategies as possible.



SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINE

Interested firms are invited to submit their qualifications and interest in the site in the manner outlined below. Responses should be no more than twenty-five (25) pages in length, including attachments. Responses must include the following information at a minimum:

- **Philosophy/Vision of organization**
- **Project team:** Highlight the firm profiles and experience of lead project team members, including design firm and general contractor.
- **Outline of development process and approach to this project**
- **Relevant experience:** Submit 2-5 examples of recently completed projects of similar program and scale. Items to highlight include:
 - Overall budget
 - Program
 - Financing
 - Timing from design to completion
 - Examples of complicated capital stacks (IE NMTC, OZ funding, other public sources)
- **Statement of purpose:** MidTown has recently released an Equitable Development Framework for development partners. Submit an example of recently completed projects that takes into consideration the principles of racial equity and inclusion with respect to the surrounding neighborhood context and/or neighborhood wealth-building initiatives.

Timing

RFQ to be released November 1st, 2021.

Questions regarding the RFQ process should be submitted to Richard Barga at rbarga@midtowncleveland.org by November 20th, 2021.

RFQ responses can be delivered on jumpdrive to MidTown Cleveland, Inc. 5000 Euclid Ave, Suite 100, Cleveland, Ohio 44103 with attention to Richard Barga, VP of Economic Development or via Dropbox or similar platform at rbarga@midtowncleveland.org.

Selection Process and Tentative Schedule

The proposals considered in the selection process will be evaluated by a committee made up of Midtown staff and stakeholders. The selection committee may choose to interview the highest rated consultants after reviewing proposals.