



# Request for Proposals

## NEIGHBORHOOD VISION PLAN 2025

**MidTown Cleveland, Inc.**  
5000 EUCLID AVENUE, SUITE 100  
CLEVELAND, OHIO 44103  
216.391.5080 PHONE  
[midtowncleveland.org](http://midtowncleveland.org)



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REQUEST

### TO PROSPECTIVE FIRMS:

MidTown Cleveland, Inc. is soliciting proposals to produce a Neighborhood Vision Plan for the MidTown neighborhood in the City of Cleveland. 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 and University Circle and downtown and inexpensive real estate for a variety of institutional users and social service agencies.

The MidTown neighborhood is now at a critical juncture with several catalytic development projects that will spur the acceleration of real estate development and economic growth in the neighborhood and advance MidTown's strategic priorities. 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.

The goal of the neighborhood vision plan is to create a place-based, holistic, living neighborhood plan with a guiding vision for the next five years of MidTown of the people, places, organizations and built environment that will further connect the neighborhood physically and socially. The objectives

of this effort include aligning other existing development and planning efforts into a cohesive whole and 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, and connecting people in place.

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 Thursday, January 9, 2020**. No proposal will be accepted after the required date and time unless a notification by the project team extends the deadline by a written addendum.

Should you have any questions regarding this solicitation, please contact Joyce Huang, MidTown Cleveland, Inc.'s Director of Planning and Placemaking at [jhuang@midtowncleveland.org](mailto:jhuang@midtowncleveland.org) or (216) 391-5080 ext. 103.

We look forward to reviewing your responses.

Respectfully,

Jeff Epstein, Executive Director  
MidTown Cleveland, Inc.

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Neighborhood Vision Plan 2025  
MidTown Neighborhood  
Cleveland, Ohio

Issued November 2019 by:

**MidTown Cleveland, Inc.**

Partners:

**City of Cleveland Planning Commission**

**ThirdSpace Action Lab**

**LAND studio**

**MidTown Residents**

Proposals due no later than 5:00 PM EST on January 9, 2020

All inquiries should be directed to:

Joyce Huang

Director of Planning and Placemaking

MidTown Cleveland, Inc.

[jhuang@midtowncleveland.org](mailto:jhuang@midtowncleveland.org)



**Our Mission**  
is to leverage  
the MidTown  
neighborhood's diverse  
assets to develop a  
dynamic neighborhood  
that unites Cleveland's  
Downtown and  
University Circle.

**Our Vision**  
is for a connected  
community in the center  
of it all, an inclusive place  
for people to innovate,  
create, prosper and live.



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 with 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 density and 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 and University Circle and downtown and inexpensive real estate for a variety of institutional users and social service agencies.<sup>1</sup> This started to change once the nationally-recognized HealthLine 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 \$300+ million within MidTown’s boundaries. The growth in MidTown added thousands of jobs, 700,000 square feet of office, the first market rate housing in decades, and

a sense that this neighborhood could once again be more than just a commercial corridor.

Despite this economic growth, disparities remain between the investment in the neighborhood and the economic position of the approximately 1,720 residents in MidTown. Poverty rates of MidTown residents have increased from 44% to 50%, and the median household income has seen a 17% decrease from 2008-2012 to 2013-2017, while median gross rents have remained the same.<sup>2</sup> Without intentionally developing with equity in mind, these disparities will likely increase.

As the rate of development accelerates, MidTown Cleveland, Inc. (MTC) is keenly aware that what happens in MidTown directly impacts the dense residential neighborhoods to the north and south of our commercial corridors, communities of color that have experienced the generational consequences of racial redlining, urban renewal, and disinvestment. MTC owns a responsibility to connect residents in MidTown and surrounding residential neighborhoods to the growing opportunity within MidTown and to empower residents to shape the future which will directly impact them. We must plan for a future in which everyone can afford to remain in the neighborhoods they have lived in for years to benefit from the jobs, amenities, and housing in MidTown—without displacement.

<sup>1</sup> These include the County’s Board of Elections and Child Family Services offices; the regional sewer district; multiple paratransit garages; the City’s recycling facility and service vehicle repair garage; two homeless/rehab shelters; and a private methadone clinic.

<sup>2</sup> 2008-2012 and 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The MidTown neighborhood is now at a critical juncture with several catalytic development projects that will spur the acceleration of 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, announced it will move from Downtown into MidTown in an effort to help catalyze economic growth on the east side of Cleveland. Concurrent with that effort are plans for a multi-building innovation campus that bring R&D, inclusive entrepreneurship, and job growth to the doorstep of Hough, a historically Black residential community. The first phase includes 100,000 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.

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, and we see the Neighborhood Vision Plan as an opportunity to expand on the foundation that we have built over the past two years in equitable real estate development and civic engagement.



MidTown Cleveland, Inc.'s service area and neighbors



## ABOUT MIDTOWN CLEVELAND, INC.

MidTown Cleveland, Inc. (MTC) is a 35-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. In 2020, MTC will enter the final year of its 2017-2020 strategic plan which represented a major pivot from a chamber of commerce model with a vision of being a high quality business district to a more comprehensive, integrated, and inclusive community and economic development organization model.

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. In just over two years, MTC has made great strides in advancing its strategic plan in its four goal areas:

### **CONNECTING THE MIDTOWN COMMUNITY.**

MidTown is a neighborhood that shapes and is shaped by its surrounding neighborhoods. MTC has expanded social and physical connections within MidTown and between its surrounding neighborhoods by engaging hundreds of residents in events, connecting companies to residents through the Hire Local pilot initiative, and developing a robust and diverse slate of programming to strengthen the community.

### **CREATING A COMPLETE MIDTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD.**

Through comprehensive planning and development in MidTown, MTC has focused on placemaking and placekeeping efforts to elevate stories within neighborhoods and promote a stronger sense of MidTown as a place rather than a pass-through. In addition, a diverse range of development adds to the vibrancy of MidTown and has accelerated our efforts to create a dynamic neighborhood with a new grocery store (Dave's Market and eatery), hotel (Hilton Tru), health care (University Hospitals Rainbow Center for Women and Children), office

(Link59), entertainment (Children's Museum, Agora, and Masonic Temple), and housing (One MidTown, Offset Lofts, The MidTown, Innerbelt Lofts). MTC has connected the development dots through gateway and wayfinding signage and pole banners to help foster visual continuity throughout MidTown and public artwork including murals and art-designed utility box wraps to bring color to the corridors.

### **BUILDING THE MIDTOWN BRAND.**

In 2017, MTC refreshed its brand identity, reflecting the organization's change in strategic direction. This brand identity has been incorporated in signage and banners to help foster a cohesive aesthetic and vision and change the narrative in the neighborhood. Today there is a buzz about MidTown as one of the hottest markets in the City, and employees, residents, and stakeholders feel a sense of pride in the neighborhood. Moving forward, MTC aims to leverage a collective brand and story to garner more active partners and collaborators.

### **STRENGTHENING MTC'S CAPACITY.**

In just over three years, MTC has grown from four full-time staff to nine, with plans to add two additional team members in early 2020. The expanded and talented MTC team now has capacity around community engagement, AsiaTown, economic development, and planning and placemaking. Over the past year and a half, MTC has also pursued an internal transformation to operationalize racial equity and inclusion in our work, recognizing that deferring to default practices will only widen racial disparities.

Over the next three years, MTC will dive deeper into these four strategic plan goals toward creating a dynamic and connected neighborhood, while also starting a planning process for a new neighborhood vision plan with a resulting update to MTC's strategic plan.

## COMMITMENT TO RACIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION

We aspire to create a racially equitable and inclusive neighborhood that ensures that all people benefit from and shape our neighborhood's growth and change, particularly historically marginalized people of color. At MTC, we envision a neighborhood that is an intentionally welcoming place for diverse stakeholders and communities of color to work, live, play, and belong, and a place where the dominant white culture and systemic white advantage is called out and challenged to change.

For MidTown to be a racially equitable and inclusive neighborhood, we believe that power must be shared and held by populations who have been made to be marginalized. We believe that racial equity includes a state in which life outcomes can no longer be predicted solely based on race. MTC has been publicly explicit about the organization's goals around racial equity and about how to infuse these principles into practice, discussing racial equity goals and aspirations at each of its last two annual meetings. MTC's desired long-term goal is to adopt policies, practices and processes that not only increase the transactional outcomes which positively impact historically marginalized people in and around MidTown in affordability, wealth-building and overall health, but also to pursue transformational ones that increase relationship, partnership, healing and trust.

Since 2017, MTC has pursued an internal transformation around racial equity and inclusion, initiating change throughout each part of the organization. MTC has been examining internal real estate development processes through the lens of racial equity and inclusion, determining 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 is also drafting a racial equity statement for the organization and an equity framework to share with developers, and dedicating a board committee to evaluate and develop policies, processes, and practices to keep the organization accountable to its commitment to racial equity and inclusion.

These changes in MTC's operations are just a start. As a historically white organization neighboring predominantly black neighborhoods, MTC must reverse its history of inequitable wealth building along the Euclid Avenue corridor in spite of decades of disparities and disinvestment in surrounding neighborhoods. To advance MTC's vision of MidTown as a community for all people to thrive, there is much more that needs to be done to begin to reconcile these disparities. A key aspect of the work is to invest more deeply in MidTown's neighboring communities and to integrate innovative community planning practices into projects.

## MTC'S DEFINITION AND PRINCIPLES OF RACIAL EQUITY

*Racial equity is both an outcome and a process.*

*The outcome of racial equity is a future state in which race no longer predicts life outcomes.*

*The process is one through which we work to provide an abundance of opportunities for those disadvantaged by racial inequity and structural racism; to name historically racist systems and structures and work to disrupt and dismantle them; and to help build new systems with those who have been negatively impacted by racial inequity and structural racism.*

*We acknowledge the long, rich, and diverse history of our neighborhood, from the trails of indigenous peoples to the Dunham stagecoach tavern, from Millionaire's Row to industrial innovation, from the legacy of black music and entrepreneurship to the Health-Tech Corridor. We also acknowledge that racial redlining, mass demolition, displacement, and structural racism is unfortunately part of the legacy of both our neighborhood and our organization.*

*We aspire to create a model equitable neighborhood, with strategies to ensure that all people benefit from and shape our neighborhood's growth and change, particularly historically marginalized people of color. To achieve this, our organization will be intentional about the following values:*

- **Inclusion.** Taking active steps towards having a board of directors and staff reflective of the full diversity of our neighborhood and includes the voices of residents

- **Historical Acknowledgment.** Acknowledging the generational impact of ongoing structural and cultural racism in our community and doing what we can to disrupt and reverse it
- **Power Sharing.** Sharing power over decision making that impacts our neighborhood by making our processes more transparent and finding meaningful ways for people to engage in the neighborhood
- **Relationship Building.** Developing meaningful long term relationships built on trust, collaboration, and open communication with the full diverse cross section of the MidTown community
- **Authentic Community Engagement.** Identifying, engaging, and supporting local leaders over the long-term to build capacity and shared ownership by creating infrastructure for ongoing community involvement, engagement and relationship building
- **Economic Opportunity.** Target wealth creation opportunities on historically marginalized communities through creative approaches to entrepreneurship, project spending, and ownership models
- **Inclusive Spaces.** Creating a neighborhood filled with places, spaces, and developments that are specifically welcoming to people of all backgrounds

## PLANNING CONTEXT AND APPROACH

Over the years across the neighborhood, MidTown's corridors lost density and scale as we experienced periods of disinvestment, abandonment, and demolition. Consequently, much of the historic physical and social infrastructure from the neighborhood has dissipated, leaving little space for our diverse community to interact with one another. As MidTown began redeveloping, the physical form that then replaced its former density was built at the automotive scale and not at the people scale and the massive diversity of building typology, density and uses (ranging from small non-profit offices to large, subindustrial campuses) that developed over decades resulted a non-cohesive urban experience. One of our primary struggles is changing the perception that MidTown is a neighborhood and a place, not a pass-through.

Without intentional planning, the \$300 million in real estate investment over the past 10 years has resulted in a hodgepodge of discrete parcel-by-parcel development at various scales and uses. And though MidTown implemented zoning changes that called for a more urban form and welcomed the investment of multimodal infrastructure (Healthline

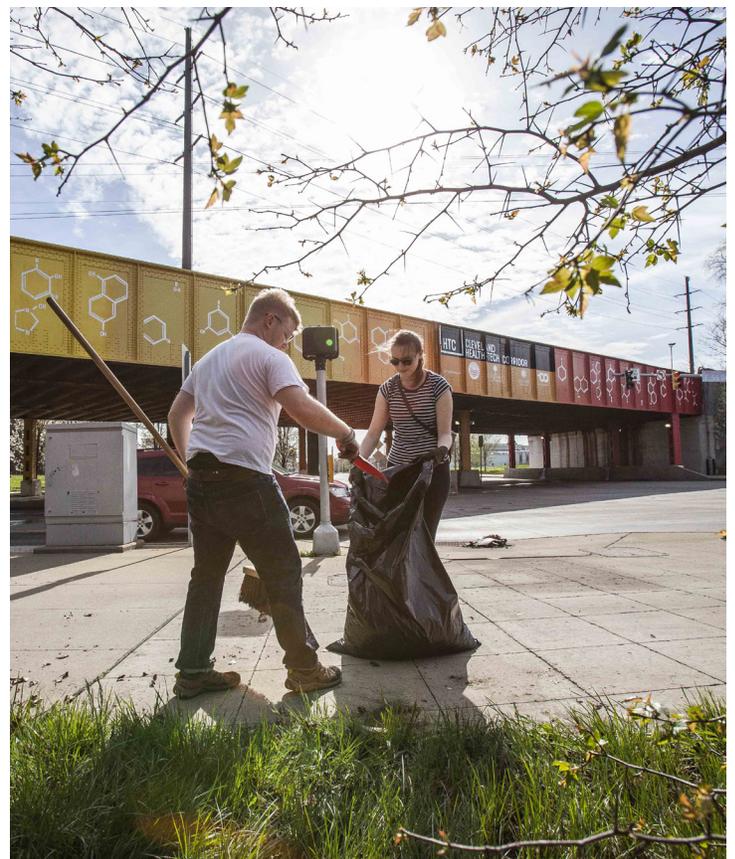
BRT and bike lanes), there continues to be an observable lack of people on the street, particularly along the Euclid Avenue corridor.

Finally, because the original intent of MidTown Cleveland, Inc. was to serve the business corridor, the geographic "boundaries" of its service area overlaps with historically Black neighborhoods such as Hough and Fairfax. MTC desires to be thoughtful about this dynamic as a more recently branded neighborhood and is open to a concept of "permeable borders" – one that invites the representation of the distinct cultures from the surrounding neighborhoods to influence that of MidTown's. Within the commercial corridor itself, MTC has recently established a strong, flexible "TOWN" brand that has the opportunity to be implemented in a more place-based fashion.

The visioning process that we seek aims to bring clarity to the identit(ies) reflected in the "Five MidTowns" (see map on p. 10) and how we can ultimately bring more physical and social connectedness to the diversity that we celebrate in our neighborhood.

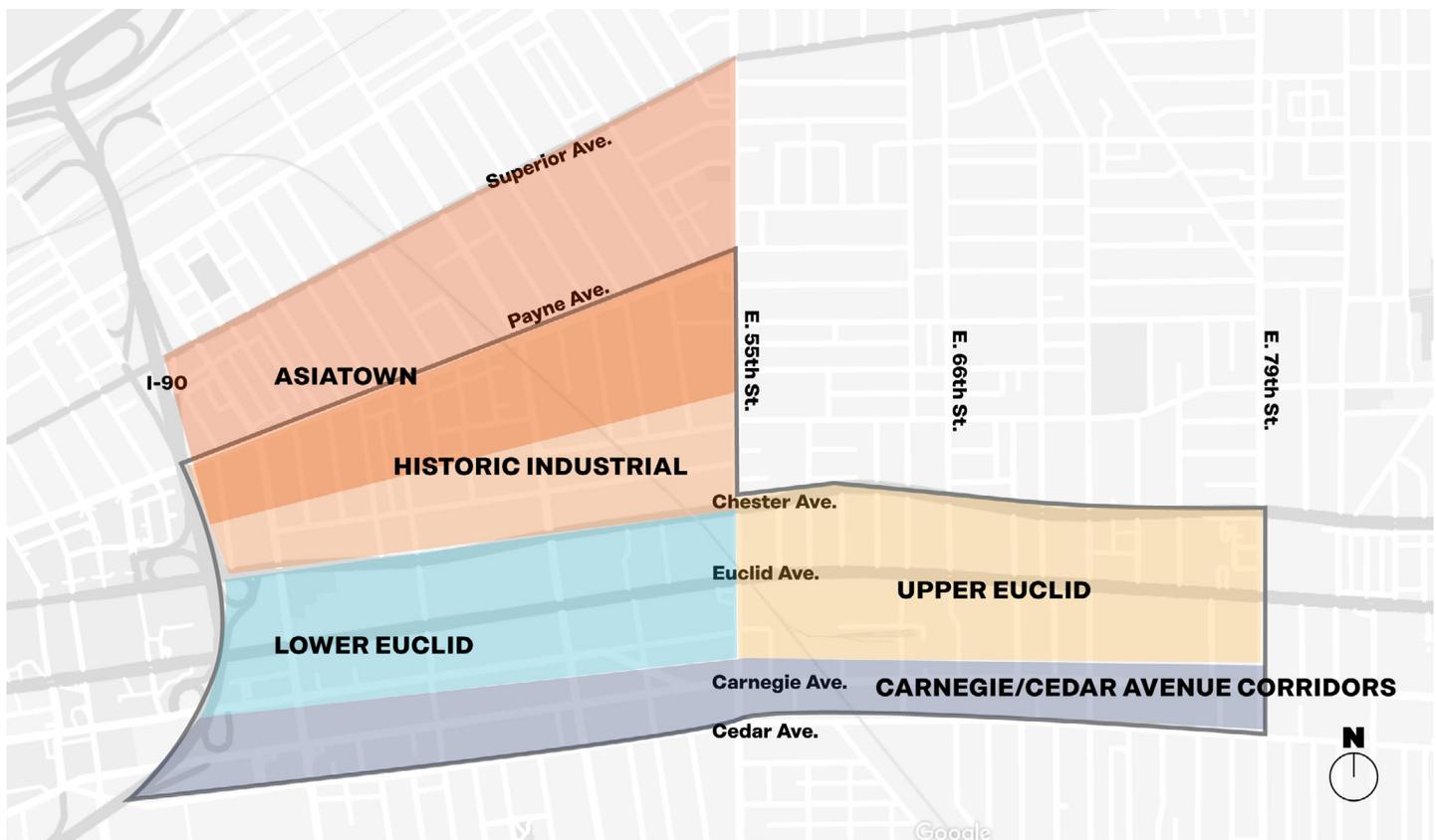


Euclid Avenue and E. 55th Street, 1913 and 2019



In response to our commitment to racial equity and inclusion, our planning and placemaking/placekeeping approaches include the following principles:

- **Thoughtful growth.** We balance the tension of urgency around Cleveland’s development with the need to slow down development to ensure we are planful about neighborhood growth and involve community voices.
- **Ground truthing.** We lean on data-driven methods but will rely heavily on community feedback as a way of test concepts.
- **Holistic view of neighborhood.** We understand that neighborhood development is not just about planning for land use but also for the social, cultural, physical, and mental health of a community.
- **Innovation.** We seek to utilize design thinking principles and other processes to rethink planning solutions to long-standing problems and disparities and bring innovative approaches to planning our neighborhood.
- **Planning Alignment.** With multiple smaller-scale planning efforts and community-based initiatives across the MidTown neighborhood, we seek to ensure those efforts are aligned into a cohesive whole.
- **Land is not necessarily a blank slate.** Our inherited legacies of colonial settlement, land takings, redlining, and disinvestment necessitates that we acknowledge that land is not a blank slate or racially neutral, but has embodied the histories of many people—particularly the historically marginalized. It requires us to consider the residents as experts of their communities and to promote placebuilding/placekeeping activities that bring spatial justice to any past inequities.



MidTown's five district areas



## GOAL AND SCOPE

With the last master plan completed in 2005, MidTown Cleveland, Inc. is due for a new neighborhood master plan. MTC intends for the 2025 Neighborhood Vision Plan to weave together the foundational work from the organization's strategic plan of the past three years (2017-2020) into a cohesive neighborhood vision for the next five years. Once the Neighborhood Vision Plan is complete, MTC will use the resulting deliverables to pursue an update to the organization's strategic plan.

The goal of the neighborhood vision plan is to create a **place-based, holistic, living** neighborhood plan with a guiding vision for the next five years of MidTown of the people, places, organizations, and built environment that will further connect the neighborhood physically and socially.

- **Place-based:** We want to take the main goals of the 2017 MidTown Strategic Plan and see them implemented in a place-based plan.
- **Holistic:** We are interested in a comprehensive definition of a neighborhood that includes but is not limited to land use. This includes community and economic development, connectivity and transportation, and public realm and social infrastructure planning.
- **Living:** To avoid a static plan that will sit on the shelf, we will explore engaging the consultant annually to evaluate and update the plan to keep the document relevant over the next five years.

## PLAN OBJECTIVES

### PUTTING TOGETHER THE PUZZLE PIECES.

Aligning other existing development and planning efforts into a cohesive whole and identifying and determining a vision for the outstanding vacant land and land banked properties.

### UNEARTHING THE VIBE.

Understanding the future identity of significant MidTown districts and corridors, specifically along the cross-section of Euclid Avenue and E. 55th Street, the Chester Avenue corridor and the E. 55th Street Corridor. Additional corridors for consideration may include Prospect Avenue, the historic industrial remnants along Commerce and Perkins Avenue, and Payne Avenue (AsiaTown). We want to explore whether there an overarching and unifying vision for the entirety of our diverse neighborhood which makes sense, or whether we continue to steer into the eclectic and diverse nature of the neighborhood, both physically and socially.

### MAKING AND RECLAIMING SPACE FOR COMMUNITY.

Integrating ongoing community initiatives and partnerships that have explicit, co-created community goals and needs.

### CONNECTING PEOPLE IN PLACE.

Creating places of social infrastructure in the public realm for deeper community connection and physical circulation.

### GROWING TOGETHER.

Integrating MidTown initiatives in racial equity and arts & culture into real estate development and economic development planning.



## TASKS AND DELIVERABLES

### TASKS INCLUDE

- 1.0** Project coordination and kick-off meeting to align core team on communication expectations, project budget and timeline, plan outline.
- 2.0** Co-create an innovative process for community engagement with MTC staff and existing community groups including residents, small businesses, and institutions.
- 3.0** Analysis and neighborhood understanding by quantitative and qualitative means. Sources may include data, interviews, source documents, existing plans and studies, neighborhood tours.
- 4.0** Preparation of plan concepts in accordance with ideas from the community and best practices. This will include a draft, a final draft, and a final plan for approval.
- 5.0** Presentation of plan for formal adoption at City of Cleveland Planning Commission and the MTC Board of Trustees meeting. Select members of the team may also be present for final presentation of the plan to the public at a community meeting.
- 6.0** Create a scope for annual review of the plan for the next 3-5 years.

### DELIVERABLES, AT MINIMUM:

#### Neighborhood Understanding

- An updated place-based “census” of people and organizations
- Analysis of existing conditions and emerging neighborhood themes
- Prioritized neighborhood nodes for development and growth
- Documentation and innovative capture of community goals and needs
- Neighborhood vision and identity concept or statement

#### Land Use Plan

- Identity and land use/revitalization plan for the following focused geographies:
  - o Euclid Avenue and Chester Avenue from E. 46th Street to E. 79th Street
  - o E. 55th Street spine from Carnegie Avenue to Chester Avenue between E. 46th to the railway
- Vision and land use plan for vacant land and land banked properties with the integration of community-based planning efforts into land use

#### Development Plan

- Recommend locations for housing typologies that are congruent with and/or assimilate into the existing neighborhood context based upon the findings from the Enterprise Section (4) Equitable Housing Development Study (see “Recent and Concurrent Planning Efforts”)
- Market demand analysis for neighborhood retail and amenities using the purchasing power of area residents, employees, and commuters
- Tools for racial equity in real estate processes with strategies that foster social and economic belonging and inclusion

#### Urban Space and Design

- Public realm planning for streets, public space, or other social infrastructure that promotes neighborly cohesion
- A plan with strategies that encourage more people walking on the street and/or traveling around the neighborhood without the use of a car, including district-wide parking planning
- Design guidelines for corridors to strengthen physical connections
- Additional plans around emerging neighborhood themes (arts & culture, youth empowerment, technology & innovation)

### Communication Tools

- Documented process for feedback loops from community throughout the planning period
- Plan summaries that can be shared publicly through website and social media channels
- A slide deck for use in community and internal MTC meetings
- USB drive or online drive for all data, analyses, presentations and deliverables/reports

### Implementation, Timeline and Budget

- Any early action activities that make sense for immediate implementation
- Short (1-3 years) and mid- to long-term (3-5 years) implementation schedule
- Identified top 10 priorities
- Estimated budget for priority actions

### PLAN FORMAT:

- Executive summary of findings and priority actions
- Aesthetically pleasing graphic representation of the plan
- Analysis of the neighborhood using maps and brief explanations
- Key findings from exploration of neighborhood identity
- Appendix of data analysis and other databases
- A slide deck for use in community and internal MTC meetings
- Full documentation of all aspects of the plan process, including all meeting materials, minutes, presentations, public feedback, and attendance from steering committees and public meetings



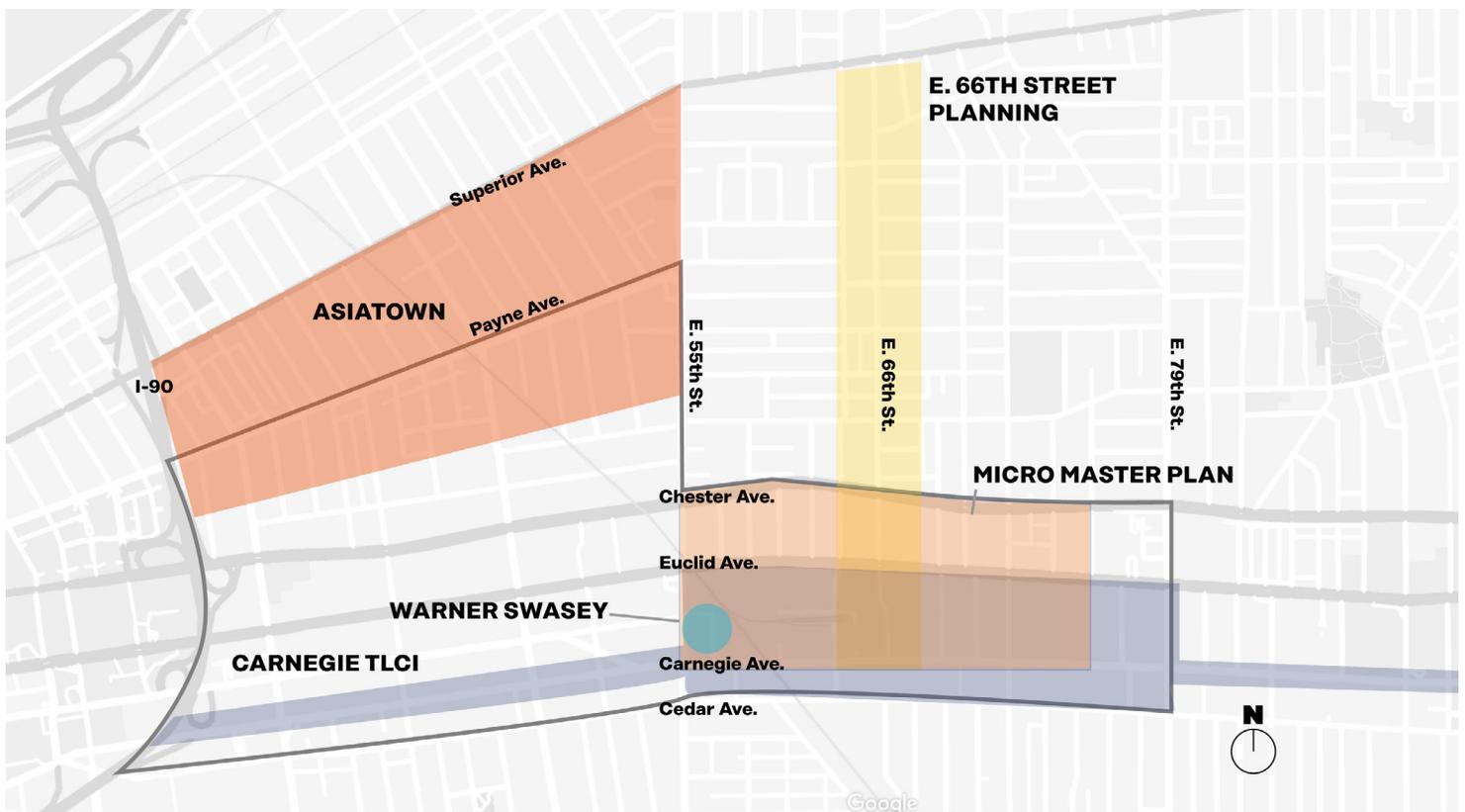
## RECENT PLANNING EFFORTS

Please see the map below for the geographic locations of recent planning efforts and/or major efforts to transform the physical realm. Plans that are not highlighted on the map apply to MidTown's overall footprint.

- Carnegie Avenue Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative plan (will complete on December 6, 2019)
- MidTown Art Plan (November 2019)
- MidTown Wayfinding Signage Implementation (November 2019)
- MidTown Micro Master Plan (May 2018)

## CONCURRENT PLANNING EFFORTS

- POW! WOW! Cleveland International Mural Festival
- Enterprise Community Partners Equitable Housing Development Study
- E. 66th Street Planning and Development
  - The Cleveland Foundation Headquarters
  - Innovation District
  - Dunham Tavern Strategic Plan and Landscape Planning
  - National Endowment of the Arts Planning Grant
  - Additional Hough development north of Chester Avenue
- Warner and Swasey Campus Redevelopment Strategy
- Cuyahoga County Healthy Urban Tree Plan (will be complete in summer 2020)
- AsiaTown Initiative (strategic vision will be completed in spring 2020)



Geographies for MidTown's other planning efforts

# THE TEAM

## CORE PROJECT TEAM

- Consultant team
- MTC staff, primarily the Executive Director and Director of Planning and Placemaking with ad hoc involvement from MTC Staff, including the Director of Economic Development, Community Engagement and Marketing Manager, AsiaTown Project Manager
- MTC partners, including ThirdSpace Action Lab and LAND studio
- City of Cleveland Planning Staff Member
- MTC Residents

## PARTNERS

MTC has ongoing partnerships with the following firms. The selected consultant team will be working closely with our partners as a part of the Core Project Team:

- **ThirdSpace Action Lab**, assisting MTC with integration of racial equity and inclusion principles across the organization’s policies, processes and practices
- **LAND Studio**, assisting MTC with neighborhood public realm planning

## STEERING COMMITTEE

MTC will assemble a steering committee of stakeholders including residents, businesses, institutions, and City Council representatives that represent the various geographic areas of MidTown. The steering committee may also include MTC board members and cross-disciplinary advisors.





## PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

We invite consultant teams to submit proposals for the MidTown Neighborhood Vision Plan. Firms are encouraged to assemble a team that will deliver the optimal product and results. MTC seeks firms that share a commitment to organizational justice and racial equity, inclusion and belonging. The final consultant team should have project teams whose teams closely resemble the make-up of the community. Strong preference will be given to project teams with at least 20% of their combined organizations comprised of people of color.

The proposal can be up to 30 pages double-sided (or 60 single pages total). The cover letter, table of contents, and front and back cover will not count in your total page limit.

Please include in your response:

- **Cover letter.** This may be submitted as a separate document.
- **Project understanding.** Reflect an understanding of the nature of MTC's request and of the neighborhood.
- **Planning philosophy and approach.** Discuss where the consultant teams align or differ from MTC's planning approach.
- **Project team structure.** Describe the structure, makeup and roles of the project team. Include all strategic partner organization(s), names, titles, and headshot of each project team member.
- **Project scope.** Describe how the consultant team will address the requested project scope.
- **Community engagement approach.** Describe how the consultant team will interface with

the community. Include specific examples of strategies and tools.

- **Project schedule** (suggestion of 12 to 18 months). Please include an estimated number of hours of work for each phase of the project schedule.
- **Project cost.** Provide an estimate of cost based on the deliverables requested.
- **Relevant experience.** Include 2-3 examples of past projects that may be relevant to the nature of MTC's requests for this project.
- **Team diversity.** Please provide a brief statement on your efforts to increase the racial diversity of underrepresented groups in the lead firm's various departments related to professional services (planning, architecture, design, etc.)
- **Team bios.** Please provide professional bios and past experience of the team members.
- **Attachments.** (Optional) Letter(s) of support and any other relevant materials.

### BUDGET

Our objective is to solicit innovative approaches to addressing the plan elements listed in the RFP. MTC has committed funds of \$100,000.00 for the plan in the year 2020. However, please feel free to submit your best proposals based on this knowledge with an estimated cost of services. If compelled by the responses, MTC will work to raise additional resources.



## SOLICITATION PROCESS

### EVALUATION, SELECTION AND NOTIFICATION

Upon receipt of responses to this RFP, the Core Team will review and determine which firms and/or teams, if any, will be interviewed for further consideration. Additionally, the Core Team reserves the right to waive this step and proceed with selection based on the above-noted qualifications. Alternately, the Core Team reserves the right to reject any and all responses.

All respondents will be notified of these decisions at the appropriate time. Evaluation of teams will be based on the following criteria:

- Firm experience, technical expertise, and knowledge of individual team members
- Methodology and project understanding
- Capacity of firms to complete the project
- Cultural competency and demonstrable evidence of alignment with MTC's equity statement and values
- Firm diversity

The Core Team will meet to review the RFP submissions the week of January 13, 2020. The consultant team(s) selected to move onto the next round will receive an interview between the days of Wednesday, February 5–Friday, February 7, 2020. All consultant team(s) will be notified about their selection status by e-mail.

### QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RFP

Any answers to questions regarding the RFP will be updated on MTC's website. Any questions should be directed to Joyce Huang, Director of Planning and Placemaking, at [jhuang@midtowncleveland.org](mailto:jhuang@midtowncleveland.org) or (216) 391-5080 ext. 103.

### SUBMISSIONS

Please submit a digital copy of the proposal via DropBox or jump drive by **January 9, 2020 at 5:00 PM EST** to:

Joyce Huang, Director of Planning and Placemaking  
MidTown Cleveland, Inc.  
5000 Euclid Avenue, Suite 100  
Cleveland, OH 44103

[jhuang@midtowncleveland.org](mailto:jhuang@midtowncleveland.org)

### PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

November 25, 2019	RFP issue date
January 9, 2020, 5:00 PM EST	Deadline for submission
January 16, 2020	Top candidates selected
February 5-7, 2020	Interviews conducted
February 14, 2020	Consultant identified; all candidates notified
March 19, 2020	Contracts signed
April 1, 2020	Project commencement and kick-off meeting

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## HEALTH-TECH CORRIDOR

MidTown is also a leader of the Cleveland Health-Tech Corridor initiative, a place-based economic development strategy founded in 2010 by a consortium of partners including the City of Cleveland, Bio-Enterprise, The Cleveland Foundation and MidTown Cleveland Inc. The goal of the Health-Tech Corridor is to create a connected corridor where entrepreneurs, researchers, innovators and funders can collide to take an idea from conceptualization to commercialization all within three square miles in the heart of the City. The HTC extends beyond MidTown to the east and west, but the core business growth and corridor leadership has been driven by and staffed by MidTown.

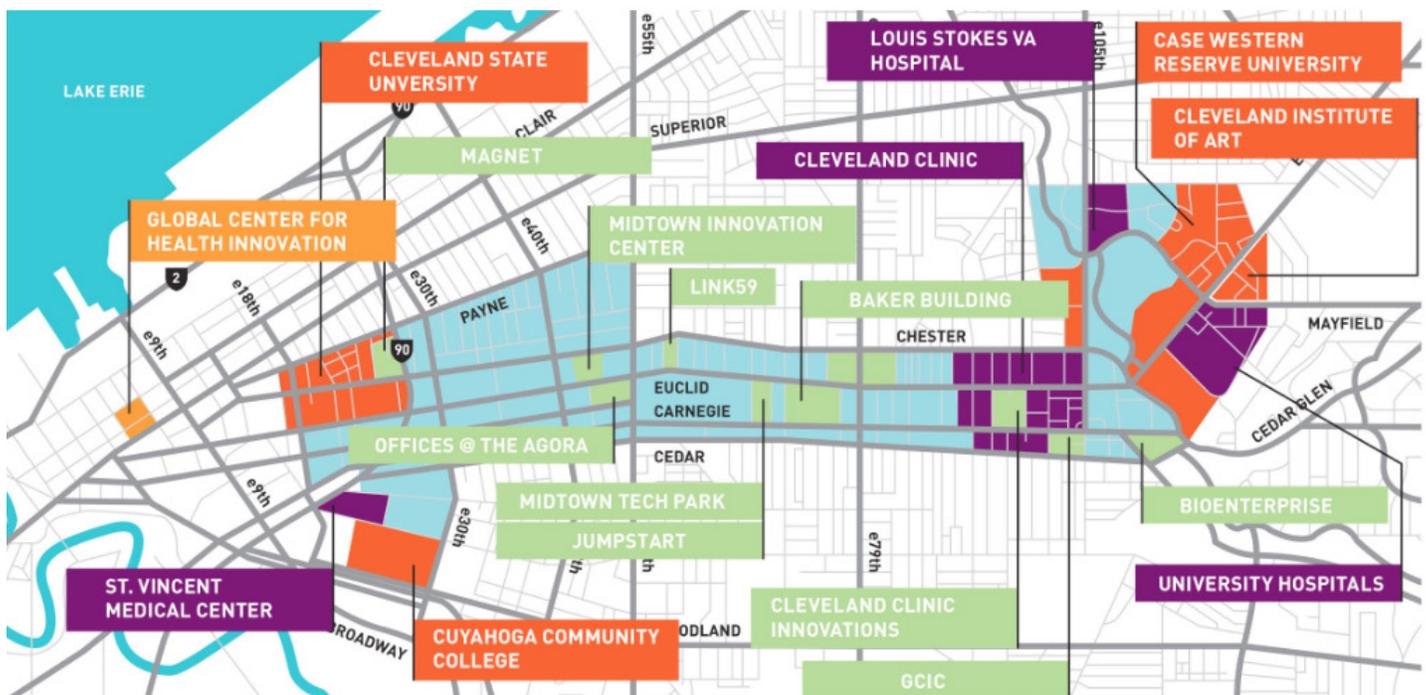
To date the Health-Tech Corridor is responsible for the construction and absorption of 775,000 square feet of class A and B office space. Over 70 companies have spun out of the research institutes and have followed on to create 1,700 jobs with an average wage of \$62,000.

The Health-Tech Corridor is in the beginning stages of a significant strategic and structural changes. The announcement of the Cleveland Foundation's move to MidTown and their desire to scale an

innovation district that more deeply engages the anchor institutions will necessitate a new way of thinking about the Health and Innovation sectors vis a vis the neighborhood.

## ASIATOWN

In 2017, MTC, along with St. Clair Superior Development Corporation (SCSDC), led an effort to convene key stakeholders in AsiaTown to focus community development efforts in AsiaTown. In 2019, this effort developed to hire staff dedicated to the neighborhood, with a focus on economic development and business support, placemaking and placekeeping, and promoting the neighborhood's visibility and brand awareness. This AsiaTown team focuses on the neighborhood, primarily between E. 30th and E. 55th Streets from Payne to Superior Avenues, and leverages existing partners and resources from partner neighborhood organizations. While housed in MTC, this team serves to add capacity to place-based work in the neighborhood. The AsiaTown team will be pursuing a concurrent visioning process in 2020 in order to identify a cohesive neighborhood vision and to prioritize projects from a 2012 neighborhood plan for implementation and funding.



Key institutions along the Health-Tech Corridor