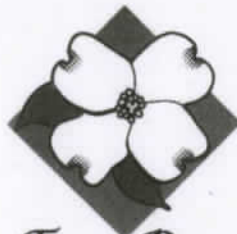


Geography - Planning

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

**CITY OF FLOWERY BRANCH
DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN
AND MARKET ANALYSIS**



Flowery Branch

**Issued April 1, 2013
Proposals Due April 29, 2013**

**NOTICE INVITING PROPOSALS
FOR
CITY OF FLOWERY BRANCH**

Redevelopment Plan and Market Analysis

NOTICE IS HEREBY given that the City of Flowery Branch is seeking proposals from qualified consulting firms to create a Redevelopment Plan and Market Analysis within the downtown area of Flowery Branch. Under the direction of the City Manager, the consulting firm is expected to perform responsible, professional work in the research, compilation of data, analysis and studies as described in the Request for Proposals (RFP).

Proposals will be received by the City of Flowery Branch, hereinafter called the "City," at the office of the City Clerk, 5517 Main Street, Flowery Branch, Georgia, 30542, until April 29, 2011, at 3:00 p.m.

Each Proposal must be submitted in a sealed envelope or box, addressed to the City at the above referenced address. Each sealed envelope must be plainly marked on the outside "**City of Flowery Branch Redevelopment Plan and Market Analysis.**" If forwarded by mail, the sealed envelope containing the Proposal must be enclosed in another envelope addressed to the City of Flowery Branch, Georgia, c/o City Clerk, 5517 Main Street, Flowery Branch, GA 30542.

The City reserves the right to take all proposals received under advisement for a period not to exceed ninety (90) days after the date upon which such proposals are opened and declared, and all proposals submitted shall remain valid and subject to enforcement during that period of time.

Dated April 1, 2013.

Bill Andrew, City Manager
City of Flowery Branch, Georgia

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Redevelopment Plan and Market Analysis

IMPORTANT DATES

- Bid Period- April 1 to April 29, 2013
- Proposal Review- May 1 to May 15, 2013
- Presentation of Proposals to City Council and consultant selection- June 6, 2013 (Tentative)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Redevelopment Plan and Market Analysis

ABOUT FLOWERY BRANCH

Background

Flowery Branch is blessed to have a long history dating back to when "Cotton was King," and when the big iron horse brought prosperity to the area. The Southern Railway System laid its tracks from Charlotte to Atlanta in 1873 and Flowery Branch was officially established as a city the following year. Located on the shores of Lake Lanier and approximately 44 miles northeast of Atlanta, Flowery Branch has managed to maintain its hometown atmosphere.

Today, that same prosperity is evident in the revitalization of the old Flowery Branch downtown, referred to in this proposal as "Old Town." A recently completed streetscape project and rehabilitated train depot along with a proposed mixed use project are energizing the city's historic core. Remarkably, the same desire that brought many to Flowery Branch so long ago has lured a new identity to the area, with a strong desire to protect that cherished hometown feeling.

City Characteristics

Flowery Branch is located in the southern portion of Hall County, approximately 44 miles northeast of Atlanta and 12 miles south of Gainesville. The City of Flowery Branch is bounded to the north, east, and south by unincorporated portions of Hall County and to the west by Lake Lanier. As of the 2010 Census, Flowery Branch had a population of approximately 5,679 (estimated to be 6,286 according to adopted Comprehensive Plan). An estimated 1,421 jobs and 255 establishments existed within the city limits of Flowery Branch in 2010, according to a tabulation of the city's business license data base (Flowery Branch Comprehensive Plan, Community Agenda Revised 2011, p. 14). Because of Flowery Branch's location and amenities (including excellent highway access, small town atmosphere and proximity to Lake Lanier including Lake Lanier Islands), the City's economic base is poised to grow. Flowery Branch intends to capitalize on its potential with regard to historic preservation and creating a destination downtown (Old Town).

Land Use

The City is principally a small bedroom community consisting of modest single-family homes constructed from early 1900's until present. Geographically, most of the City has gentle, undulating topography. Major commercial areas include the Spout Springs Road/I-985 interchange corridor, Thurman Tanner Parkway industrial corridor and the historic downtown business district.

ABOUT THE STUDY AREA

Selected Characteristics

The Norfolk Southern Atlanta/Gainesville Railroad parallels US Highway 23 (SR 13) and bisects Old Town Flowery Branch. Trains travel through the City frequently. The city supports improvements of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in Old Town but does not presently have the financial resources needed to implement such an aggressive multi-modal improvement program.

Vision for Old Town

The city's adopted comprehensive plan (revised 2011) includes a vision statement for the city which also addresses the study area, generally known as "Old Town." Relevant parts of the vision statement area as follows (excerpted from the full vision statement):

"Flowery Branch will preserve its small town feel, which is generated by Old Town with its historic district and skinny streets... City leaders will play a large role in revitalizing Old Town as a major prong of its economic development efforts. In Old Town, residential properties will transition in use and obsolete buildings will be redeveloped, all guided by a responsive urban redevelopment strategy and a redevelopment plan that has the backing of the citizenry and property owners, and all the while being sensitive to its historic resources. We envision Old Town will be free from truck and boat traffic by facilitating direct access from McEver Road to Spouts Springs Road, to be accomplished in the city's transportation plans... Flowery Branch will by 2015 or 2020 have a new city hall that meets the needs for city office space and that stimulates redevelopment prospects in Old Town. Flowery Branch will encourage small parks and pocket open spaces in Old Town and elsewhere in the city. Old Town will retain its historic qualities and new development will respect historic characteristics short of artificially imitating them. The city, particularly Old Town, will become more pedestrian friendly with the addition of safe sidewalks and multi-use trails in appropriate locations. We envision being able to walk or bike safely from the peace and quiet of the city's suburban and traditional neighborhoods to neighborhood commercial facilities... Flowery Branch's Old Town, with its grid pattern of skinny streets and authentic historic character along the railroad, upon revitalization with a vibrant mix of retail, restaurants, civic uses and housing and the installation of sidewalks and streetscapes, will be the gem of South Hall, the premier destination place for residents in the greater South Hall area." (Source: City of Flowery Branch Comprehensive Plan, Community Agenda, Revised 2011).

Downtown Transportation Study

In 2010, a downtown transportation study was completed. The purpose of the study was to identify vehicular and pedestrian system improvements within a 543-acre study area bounded by McEver Road to the north, Lights Ferry Road to the west, Atlanta Highway (SR 13) and Mulberry Street to the south, and Gainesville Street to the east. The study area for the redevelopment plan is likely to be smaller than that of the transportation study. That

comprehensive downtown transportation study includes recommendations for improving the connectivity of Old Town with other parts of the city.

Downtown Streetscape Enhancement

Phase I of the Flowery Branch Main Street Streetscape was completed at a cost of \$502,000 using TEA-21 federal funds and general fund reserves. The city recently completed Phase II of the streetscape project that includes a sidewalk extension along Railroad Avenue and a portion of Church Street.

Historic Resources Protection

A number of important historic resources are located in the study area, and preservation has remained a vital component of the city's planning efforts. In 2008, the city completed major historic preservation program initiatives including an update of its historic preservation element, a complete survey of all historic resources in the city, consolidation of its two local historic districts into a single district, comprehensive revisions to the city's historic preservation ordinance, adoption of design guidelines for redevelopment, and a rewrite of the historic district sign regulations. There is an existing National Register of Historic Places Historic District in downtown Flowery Branch, focused exclusively on the commercial street-front buildings along Main Street. The comprehensive plan community agenda suggests there is potential to expand the National Register Historic District.

Character and Land Use

The adopted comprehensive plan, community agenda, designates Old Town as a unique character area. The Old Town character area envisions the following land use mixes: predominantly mixed use and main street-style commercial, including retail and service establishments, restaurants, offices, civic buildings and uses, institutional, and residential, and pocket parks and civic green spaces. Policies for the Old Town character area are also articulated in the comprehensive plan. Character areas adjacent to Old Town, which may or may not be included in the redevelopment plan, include a mixed use (downtown) area and traditional neighborhood development.

With regard to future land use, the city's plan designates much if not all of the Old Town character area as central business, which envisions a compact area of mostly commercial uses but with mixes of public-institutional and residential uses as appropriate. Intensities of building in Old Town are governed by different Floor-Area Ratios (FARs) established in Chapter 10 of the comprehensive plan, community agenda.

Existing Redevelopment Planning Framework

A redevelopment master and strategic plan for Old Town Flowery Branch, prepared and adopted as part of the 2010 comprehensive plan update, is included in Chapter 10 of the community agenda. The city completed and adopted revisions to its zoning ordinance in 2008 to facilitate this redevelopment plan. At that time, the redevelopment area boundary was made to conform to the Central Business District (CBD) zoning district boundary adopted on the City's official zoning map. The redevelopment plan establishes regulatory building intensity maximums and also

includes design guidelines. Proposers are strongly encouraged to review Chapter 10 of the community agenda prior to responding to this RFP.

Flowery Branch has made strides to facilitate redevelopment in Old Town by changing zoning regulations to facilitate redevelopment, exploring partnerships with private developers for redevelopment project, preparing a redevelopment element of this community agenda (see Chapter 10), and establishing a Tax Allocation District (TAD) in Old Town. The city has taken a very important step forward toward capital facilities provision and redevelopment by purchasing two tracts of land within Old Town (see properties shown in green on the following map). The adopted Community Agenda (2011) suggests that Flowery Branch will plan for a new city hall building and police headquarters building on one or more sites in the Old Town area, on tracts it has recently purchased (see Chapter 4, Community Facilities). The redevelopment plan requested in this RFP will build on the existing redevelopment plan, or replace, refine, amend, and extend, as appropriate.



REQUESTED SCOPE OF SERVICES

Over the last several years, the Flowery Branch area has purchased key properties within the downtown area and is therefore seeking to see the best use of these properties from the viewpoint of the city government, the needs of the citizens, and the ability of the market to sustain such a development. A firm boundary for the study area has not been delineated, but the plan will focus on the city's downtown (Old Town) area.

Specifically, this scope of services will include the following tasks, which are generally presented in chronological order.

Task 1. Review Existing Conditions, Plans, and Studies

The consultant will review existing physical conditions in the study area and become familiar with the adopted plans and studies of relevance to the study area, as well as the various issues and opportunities articulated in such plans and studies.

Task 2. Assess City-owned and Other Properties of Significance

The consultant will complete an assessment of two city-owned properties and other properties of significance in the study area with regard to redevelopment potential. Such assessment will not include detailed environmental considerations, but the requested assessment should include a description of physical characteristics (area, street frontage, topography, vegetation, location advantages, etc.), highest and best future land uses, maximum building potential, and infrastructure availability.

Task 3. Confirm or Refine Redevelopment Plan Boundary

The consultant will evaluate various boundaries now applicable to the study area, including redevelopment area boundary, character areas, historic district boundary, future land use plan map designations, zoning districts on the official zoning map, transportation study boundary, and others as appropriate. The consultant will submit a study area boundary map for confirmation or administrative approval by the city's project manager.

Task 4. Coordinate with Staff Throughout the Planning Process

Ongoing coordination between the consultant, the city's project manager, and other city staff as appropriate, is expected.

Task 5. Complete a Thorough Market Study

This task is second only to Task 7 (redevelopment plan) in complexity and level of effort. An examination of the existing, short-range, and longer-term market potential for development in the study area is essential, as the consulting team is expected to base the redevelopment plan and recommendations on the sound study of such existing and anticipated market conditions. The

overall objective of the market study is to determine the potential market for new residential, retail, restaurant, related commercial, service, and office space in the study area and how to allocate land within the study area to most realistically achieve that potential. The specific scope for the market study is negotiable and best left to market experts to determine. However, the city has the following general expectations for scope and content of the market study:

5.1. Market Position and Market Area. Current market position of the City of Flowery Branch and the study area, considered in a broader county and regional context. Regional context should include the Atlanta region, the Gainesville/Hall County region, and possibly the Athens metropolitan region. Note that the city's comprehensive plan projects population, housing, and employment growth for the city as a whole, and such projections should be considered where appropriate.

5.2. Demographic and Economic Profile: Analysis of demographic and economic trends (existing and anticipated) within the study area as well as larger geographic areas (or specified market area) from which customers and new residents will potentially be drawn. Characteristics analyzed should include population and household growth, age, income, race and ethnicity, market segmentation data, and employment.

5.3. Supply. Analysis of the existing and anticipated supply of residential, retail, restaurant, service, and office land uses in the study area and/or larger geographic areas which may compete with similar land uses in the study area. Data should be included on occupancy trends, lease rates, sales prices, retail sales trends, absorption rates, and overall quality. For residential land use, the market analyst should target analysis primarily at residential uses to be vertically mixed with non-residential uses, but attention should be given to other residential housing product types.

5.4. Demand. Analysis of the existing and anticipated demand for residential, retail, restaurant, service, and office land uses in the study area and larger geographic areas. Ideally, the demand analysis will quantify the percentage of total demand for each land use type that the study area will be able to capture within a specified planning horizon.

5.5. Development Programs. The market analyst should recommend a range, from the lowest to the highest, of development by specified land use type that can be supported by anticipated or forecasted market conditions. Ultimately, the market analyst should recommend the land use allocations (including appropriate mixes of land uses by square footage of floor area and number of residential units) that will achieve the city's vision for Old Town while remaining competitive in the marketplace during the anticipated planning horizon.

Task 6. Execute a Public Participation Program

The consultant will propose and seek approval of a public participation program for the redevelopment planning task of this project. The city does not have firm requirements for the public participation program, but the following observations and suggestions should be considered:

- Via city ownership of lands in the study area, the city government is a key stakeholder.
- Other stakeholders should be consulted and involved during the process. The city does not have a planning commission but a few other boards and commissions should be considered stakeholders and thus consulted during the participation process.
- Historically, public participation in planning in Flowery Branch has been modest, with a few meetings usually considered sufficient.
- The city envisions a public workshop where various planning considerations are summarized for the interested public, including: market potential, physical characteristics, infrastructure limitations, and vision/goals/policy framework. The public workshop may also be used to garner feedback on alternative redevelopment frameworks, although the city believes the range of differences in such alternatives will be rather narrow with regard to scale and intensity but perhaps more considerable in terms of possible land use mixtures.
- At least one public hearing will be conducted with the consultant facilitating.

The city suggests that a public participation program will be written and submitted by the selected consultant based on the proposal (refined as appropriate) and executed upon its approval by the city's project manager.

Task 7. Prepare a Redevelopment Plan

The redevelopment plan is envisioned to be an extensive document and is expected to include the following components:

- 7.1. Summary of Existing Conditions
- 7.2. Summary of Market Potential (from Market Study)
- 7.3. Issues and Opportunities
- 7.4. Goals, Policies, Objectives, and Strategies
- 7.5. Master (Physical) Plan Graphic
- 7.6. Description of Land Uses and Development Mixes Proposed
- 7.7. Assessment of Infrastructure Requirements
- 7.8. Legal Status of the Redevelopment Plan
- 7.9. Revisions to Existing Plans and Regulations Required to Implement the Plan
- 7.10. Alternatives and Recommendations for Financing Redevelopment
- 7.11. Other Implementation Measures Organized in a Short-term Work Program

Task 8. Draft Modifications to Current Plans and Regulations

The city's adopted comprehensive plan and land use regulations contemplate the redevelopment of Old Town. To the extent that changes are made to the overall redevelopment framework, revisions to the city's comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance may be required. To the extent such modifications are required as a result of the redevelopment plan, the consultant will draft those changes in ready-to-adopt format.

Task 9. Participate in the Adoption Process

A presentation of the final report to the Flowery Branch City Council will be required. The consultant may also be required to attend one additional council work session and/or adoption proceeding.

PROJECT BUDGET

A project budget of approximately Ninety-Five Thousand Dollars (\$95,000.00) is anticipated.

THE CITY'S ROLE

The staff of the City of Flowery Branch will play a secondary role in preparation of the study. However, the City believes that its own staff is most familiar with the day-to-day issues faced by Flowery Branch; hence, completion of the scope of services should be based on limited staff involvement.

Review of Draft Products

The City of Flowery Branch has high expectations regarding the level of quality of the work that will be produced by the consultant or consulting team. Once the consultant is ready to submit the first full draft to the City, the following review process should be anticipated for specified project deliverables:

- Consultant submits an administrative ("screencheck") draft.
- City staff reviews the administrative ("screencheck") draft and provides a consolidated set of comments.
- Consultant revises the administrative ("screencheck") draft and resubmits it as a second administrative draft.
- City staff reviews the second administrative draft to ensure that all comments have been adequately addressed.
- If all comments have been addressed, consultant will submit the product as a "draft."
- If all comments have not been addressed, the consultant will be required to refine and submit a third administrative draft. This process will continue until all of the City's comments have adequately addressed.

Information to be Provided by City

Consult the City of Flowery Branch's webpage for relevant information: www.flowerybranchga.com. The city will be responsible for providing meeting notices and places for public participation and staff coordination tasks. The city will provide the consultant with the existing Flowery Branch comprehensive plan, zoning code and zoning map, subdivision/land development regulations, downtown transportation study, information

pertaining to proposed and recently approved development projects within the study area, and other information as needed for the consultant to execute the proposed scope of services.

RFP GENERAL PROVISIONS

Amendments and Clarifications

It is anticipated that a number of questions or requests for clarification may arise as consultants review the project requirements. For questions, please contact Bill Andrew, City Manager, at (770) 967-6371 ext. 15 or e-mail at billafb@bellsouth.net.

Right to Reject Proposals

The City of Flowery Branch reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, or any part of any proposal, to waive minor technicalities, or to solicit new proposals on the same project, or on a modified project, which may include portions of the originally proposed project as the City of Flowery Branch may deem necessary in its interest. Proposals may be rejected for any alterations of form, additions or alternatives, or irregularities of any kind.

Notification of Withdrawal of Proposals

Proposals may be modified or withdrawn prior to the time and date specified for proposal submission by formal written notice from an authorized representative of the consultant. Proposals submitted will become the property of the City of Flowery Branch after the proposal submission deadline and may be released as public documents after that time.

Cost of Preparation of Proposal

The City of Flowery Branch will not pay any costs incurred in the preparation, printing, interview, or negotiation process. All costs associated with preparing and presenting proposals shall be borne by the proposing consultants.

Request for Proposals Is Not a Commitment

This Request for Proposals is not a contract or a commitment of any kind by the City of Flowery Branch and does not commit the City to award a contract. All proposals will become the property of the City of Flowery Branch.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND CONTENTS

Number of Copies

Two (2) bound copies and one (1) reproducible unbound copy.

Page Limit

None; however, submissions should be as brief as possible, and the total submission target page length is approximately 35 pages.

Proposal Contents

The following requirements must be met in all proposals submitted to the City.

1. **Cover Letter.** The cover letter shall indicate the consultant or consulting team's bid/proposed budget for the project. The cover letter should include a commitment that the consultant team, especially the project manager(s), is available to complete the project and shall remain in place for the duration of the project.
2. **Approach.** A statement of project understanding and a description of the consultant's philosophical and organizational approach to the project. It should also indicate how the final products will be organized, formatted, and presented in order to fulfill the City's desire for user-friendly documents.
4. **Scope of Services.** A detailed Scope of Services, providing general and detailed information on all of the work tasks specified in this request for proposal or required to complete all aspects of the project.
5. **Company Information.** Summarize the company, its legal type (sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation), and the range of services provided. Also, identify available company insurance coverage as may be relevant to the project.
6. **Qualifications and Experience of Personnel.** Information on the firm's or team's qualifications and experience in preparing redevelopment plans for municipal redevelopment areas, market analysis, and related disciplinary knowledge. The City of Flowery Branch believes that individuals, rather than firms, are ultimately the most important element in a project team. This section of the proposal must identify a project manager for the consulting team and all key persons to be assigned to the project. Subconsultants, if any, must be specifically identified; if subconsultants are proposed, include details in the section on company information (#5 above). The proposal should indicate the extent to which the prime consultant and any subconsultants have worked together on past projects. A team organizational chart is recommended. Resumes of key personnel are required (suggested length, 1 to 3 pages) and can be included at the end of the proposal. Descriptions of similar or related projects completed by the firm may be appended at the end of the proposal.
7. **References.** Provide three references, preferably local government personnel, who can attest to the firm's prior performance in similar or related projects. Provide e-mail address, phone, and complete, current mailing address. Please include a section identifying references, even if it duplicates descriptions of similar or related projects as described in #6 above.

8. **Budget.** A budget with a total dollar amount matching the bid/budget request stated in the cover letter. The budget should provide a dollar amount and hours by personnel for each task listed in the scope of services. The total costs for the project manager and other key personnel should be shown for each individual in a bidder's schedule of prices for this project, including hourly rates for the persons assigned to the project and any rates for subcontracted work. Also, show the costs of any reimbursable items (printing, mileage, etc.).
9. **Schedule.** A proposed schedule showing the total length of time necessary to complete the project. It is anticipated that the project will require at least **FOUR** months to complete, but additional time may be allowed by the City if it is shown that such additional time is needed to complete all of the tasks in a manner that will yield a quality product.
10. **Additional Information.** Any additional information that would reflect the bidder's ability to provide the services described in this RFP.
11. **Work Sample (Optional).** The submission may include a sample of completed work that is relevant to the scope of services the city is requesting. In lieu of submitting a written work sample, the city will accept one or more references to the World Wide Web where the proposal review team may examine such relevant work sample(s). Samples may be judged on clarity, on the ability to explain complex ideas and technical information to the average reader, and on a lack of jargon and overly technical language.

SELECTION PROCESS

Proposal Review

The City will use the following process to select the consultant:

1. Proposals received by the deadline will be reviewed to ensure that each has met the minimum submission requirements outlined in this RFP. Proposals that do not meet these minimum requirements will be rejected.
2. The qualifications of each consultant firm and team members, the approach to be taken by the consultant, the scope of services, and firm's references as required under "SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS" will be reviewed.
3. City Staff will present the proposals/bids to the City Council.

Consultant Selection Criteria to be Considered

The City of Flowery Branch hereby commits to a thorough and objective review of qualifying proposals received. A review panel may be convened to review proposals received and to make a recommendation to the Flowery Branch City Council, which will make the final consultant

selection decision. Consideration will be given to the following criteria, which are not necessarily exhaustive:

1. The qualifications and experience of the consulting team, particularly with regard to redevelopment planning and market analysis.
2. Strength of the project manager assigned.
3. Understanding of the project and its various complex issues, as reflected in the statement of project understanding and the proposal generally.
4. Qualitative information obtained from references listed.
5. Budget proposal/total bid and the extent to which the proposer's scope of services provides efficient, quality services for the budget proposal/total bid, considering all tasks requested.
6. The city does not have an affirmative action policy but may in cases where two proposals are weighted relatively equal take into positive consideration minority or women business enterprise status.
7. The quality of work samples.