

## INTRODUCTION

The City of Cambridge (“City”) is seeking proposals from a consultant or team (“Consultant”) to create a vision for the programming, and develop models and recommendations for operation and governance of the Harvard Square Kiosk. The completed vision document will be used to help guide the future governance, operations, and programming uses of the Kiosk and the surrounding plaza. A key intention for this project is to develop a governance and operations framework for implementation that ensures the public nature of the Kiosk and its surroundings over time. The Consultant will be expected to build on the community process and the ideas developed as part of the [Harvard Square Vision Plan \(2014\)](#), and examine the feasibility of existing ideas generated from subsequent community workshops.

This RFP outlines the scope of services that the City is seeking as well as the selection and evaluation criteria to be used by the City in awarding the bid to a Consultant.

## BACKGROUND

The City of Cambridge has been engaged in a public process to develop recommendations for the public open space in the center of Harvard Square. In fall 2013, the City hosted the first community placemaking workshop with initial consulting support from the Project for Public Spaces to discuss ideas and to develop recommendations for the public open space in Harvard Square including the restoration and repurposing of the Harvard Square Kiosk. As a result of this placemaking workshop, a community-driven vision for Harvard Square was developed. This vision has been the guiding framework for subsequent community conversations, site evaluations, and long-term planning discussions.

### *Short-term planning: Small-scale Improvements*

The City’s short-term improvement strategy initially focused on “lighter, quicker, cheaper” interventions that come at a lower risk and a lower cost. The first of this type of intervention was placing loose tables and chairs in a portion of the Square followed by landscaping improvements with planters and flowers. The benefit of using this approach is that the City has been able to test ideas to inform public improvements. The changes in the Square had an instant positive effect. Participant evaluations from the January 2015 follow-up workshop described the small scale changes as transformational, and noted that a wider audience is enjoying the use of the plaza. Having addressed many of the low-cost hardscape changes, the City seeks to develop the next iteration of larger scale improvements.

### *The Next Iteration: Repurposing the Harvard Square Kiosk and Plaza*

The Harvard Square Kiosk is the most recognizable structure in Harvard Square. The kiosk is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and benefits from additional historical protection by being within the Harvard Square Conservation District. The Cambridge Historical Commission has also initiated a landmark designation study of the Kiosk. The Commission will have to approve any publically visible exterior alteration to the historic character of the building. Proposed alterations to the exterior would be reviewed at a public hearing to provide an open forum for discussion.

Recent public discussions suggest that the Kiosk’s current use does little in the way of serving as a beacon for the Square. The main challenges identified with the kiosk is that it is very closed off to the plaza and its single use as a newsstand does not encourage people to linger in the Square. The City has been facilitating community discussions on repurposing the iconic structure requesting input and ideas on the possibility of transforming it into a multifunctional space to better integrate the building with the plaza and to create opportunities to engage the public through effective programming and use.

Most recently, the City has been examining possible public realm improvements with the Department of Public Works and their consultant team on a feasibility study that is surveying bringing utilities to the Harvard Square Plaza and accessibility upgrades.

*Kiosk Ideas and Concept of Use from the Community Placemaking Workshops*

The following recommendations include key ideas and concepts for repurposing the kiosk that have taken shape over the course of three community placemaking workshops:

- Restore the kiosk to enhance its historic appeal
- Open up the kiosk on all sides to increase visibility, transparency, and make the area around it more inviting
- Transform the kiosk into a multi-functional, flexible space with outdoor seating that will draw more people to the Square; uses could include information kiosk, food, and seating
- Centralize and provide the best in local information and wayfinding
- Serve and engage a diverse population including residents, students, tourists, international visitors, youth/teens, homeless, university faculty and staff, local businesses, and street performers and artists
- Engage the community year round through a variety of programming both scheduled and spontaneous. This may include performances, art displays and exhibits, civic activities. Other programming considerations:
  - Seasonal variety of local community offerings
  - Collaborations with community partners (public, nonprofit, private)
  - Emphasis on public engagement, place, culture, and history

**PURPOSE/PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The primary purpose of this project is to create a vision for the programming and develop models and recommendations for governance and operation of the Harvard Square Kiosk. The outcome of this process will be used to inform the future stewardship, curatorship, and oversight of the Kiosk and the surrounding plaza. The goals of this process are to:

- Assess both existing and new programming ideas for the public spaces both within the Kiosk and the surrounding plaza. This includes programs, events, outdoor amenities, lighting, and signage and wayfinding.
- Examine the feasibility of different types of programming and provide recommendations for future uses. Develop ideas that take into consideration seasonal offerings, and local character to enhance the activation of the Square.
- Engage and serve a diverse population including residents, students, tourists/foreign visitors, teens, families, homeless population, universities, businesses, street performers and artists through a variety of programming concepts.
- Develop a budgeting plan for different types of programming in the Square and the associated operational costs. The City would like the Consultant to identify a dollar estimate to set a reasonable expectation of what may be achieved through recommended programming.
- Recommend possible governance models that ensure the public nature of the uses over time. Identify any opportunities and pitfalls related to different types of governance and financing models taking into account the City's procurement process.
- Consider other public, nonprofit, and private partnerships for programming and governance.

- Provide initial ideas and strategies for possible sources of revenue to reduce the City's future maintenance and operating costs associated with these improvements.
- Present a detailed operations and maintenance plan associated with the proposed activities for the Kiosk and surrounding area.
- Present ideas to City leaders, community members, business and institutional communities and justify the rationale for recommendations.

### **PROJECT DIRECTION**

Direction and oversight of the Harvard Square Kiosk process will be managed by the City with support and guidance from a Harvard Square Kiosk Working Group. The Working Group will be chaired by the City and will include representation from diverse stakeholder sectors including residents across Cambridge neighborhoods, subject matter experts, a Planning Board member, and institutional and business representatives local to the Square. The Working Group will provide information and guidance to the Consultant, as needed, to facilitate the development of a programming plan and governance framework for the continued stewardship, curatorship, and oversight of the Kiosk.

Support to the Consultant will include, but is not limited to the sharing of community input from previous placemaking workshops, an extensive knowledge of the Cambridge community, and access to key stakeholders. Staff will also provide subject matter expertise including urban design and the public realm, and other supports such as logistics and communications. It is the intention that the Working Group review the Consultant's programming, governance, and operations framework in order to offer feedback and guidance on the process. It is also expected that the Consultant meet with the Working Group to review governance models and programming ideas and to discuss the feasibility of various ideas.

### **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

Development of a Programming and Budgeting Plan, a Governance Framework, and Operations and Maintenance Plan including ideas for possible revenue sources. In addition, consideration of public, nonprofit, and private partnerships for the continued curatorship and stewardship of the Kiosk.

- To create a detailed programming and budgeting plan to activate the Kiosk and surrounding area in Harvard Square. Address how the proposed programming and use of the Kiosk fulfills the interests of the diverse populations within Harvard Square.
- To identify what support is needed from the City and the Working Group to fulfill the requests for this project.
- To put forward multiple detailed governance models for a potential future framework for managing the Kiosk and its operations including suggestions for possible public, nonprofit and private partnerships. Identify opportunities and potential pitfalls for each of the proposed governance and financial models and provide guidance with consideration of the City's procurement process.
- To prepare a detailed project timeline addressing all items within the scope of this RFP.
- To articulate within the scope of this RFP the number and types of meetings with key stakeholders that the Consultant plans in order to fulfill this project taking into account the ideas and input gathered from previous community workshops. The City does not wish to duplicate previous efforts to understand programming and use interests. If the Consultant wishes to perform additional community outreach, include a detailed description of what the Consultant wishes to achieve, and how it will be achieved through community workshops, focus groups, and/or other types of outreach efforts.

- The Consultant is expected to attend *a minimum* of two (2) community meetings to engage the public in discussing options and to present recommendations for programming, governance and operations models with the public.
- Within the scope and project timeline, specify the associated Consultant team member(s) who will be responsible for completing each task.

**In completing this process, the Consultant will provide the City with a written report that:**

- A. Proposes a vision for the programming and use(s) of the Harvard Square Kiosk and the surrounding plaza:
  - Within the recommendations, indicate which audiences the various types of programming might serve to ensure there is a variety of programming to meet the interests and needs of the diverse population that frequents Harvard Square.
  - Review and address the feasibility of ideas conceived from previous community workshops and provide a detailed understanding of the opportunities both within the Kiosk and surrounding plaza with consideration of the space constraints and future infrastructure improvements to the plaza. Within the recommendations, include considerations for seasonal opportunities.
  - Include a budgeting plan that corresponds with the proposed types of programming. The budgeting plan should include a dollar estimate to help understand what may be financially achieved through various types of programming.
- B. Identifies multiple governance models for the continued stewardship of the Harvard Square Kiosk that ensures the public nature of the uses over time.
  - Provide input and guidance on the feasibility and effectiveness of various public, nonprofit, and private partnerships for the continued stewardship and curatorship of the Kiosk.
  - Within the report, the Consultant is expected to provide a detailed analysis for each of the proposed governance models with consideration of the City's procurement process.
  - Within the analysis, identify opportunities and potential barriers for each of the identified governance models and types of partnerships in the continued stewardship.
- C. Provides a detailed Operations and Maintenance Plan associated with the proposed uses of the Kiosk and surrounding area.
  - Detail the operational and maintenance costs associated with the proposed use for the Kiosk and surrounding plaza. Items that the Consultant will be asked to detail in the operations and maintenance plan may include but are not limited to staffing, funding, documentation, safety/security, facilities management and repairs, waste/recycling. There may be additional items identified by the Harvard Square Kiosk Working Group or the City during the consulting contract.
  - Provide ideas for possible sources of revenue for the City to consider to reduce costs associated with operations and maintenance. Include suggestions and guidance that are based on experience and/or knowledge of best practices related to public spaces in other cities and towns.

**PRELIMINARY PROJECT SCHEDULE**

The City is interested in advancing this process to coincide with Department of Public Works upgrades to the Harvard Square Plaza as it is anticipated that programming and use ideas will inform other hardscape design changes to the Plaza. The following is an **approximate** timeframe for the project:

- RFP Posting                      December 15, 2016
- Proposals Due                      Six (6) weeks after RFP Posting Date
- Contract Award                      Four (4) weeks after Proposals Due Date
- Project Completion                      Six (6) months after Contract Award Date

**MEETINGS AND PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

The Consultant will meet with City staff on at least a bi-monthly basis. The Consultant is expected to meet with the Working Group **at least five (5) times** over the course of the total process; more specifically, **at least twice** prior to review ideas for the programming and uses of the Kiosk, **at least twice** during the process to review governance and financial models, followed by **at least one** additional community meeting to share the vision for Harvard Square Kiosk and to receive feedback on the draft report. Further the Consultant may be requested to present its findings and recommendations for a potential governance framework and uses to the City Council or at other public meetings during the process.

**DELIVERABLES**

The Consultant shall provide interim, draft final, and final written reports to the City staff that cover all items described above. The Consultant shall work with city staff on the appropriate timing for the materials based on their proposed work plan. The final report and any interim products will be submitted to the City in digital and hard copy formats and the final report and recommendations on the vision for Harvard Square Kiosk may be made available on the City’s website. The City of Cambridge retains the right to the use of all the materials produced, in whole or in part, and interim products as it deems fit.

## QUALITY REQUIREMENTS

**A no response or a failure to respond to any of the following quality requirements will result in a rejection of your proposal. Please use the form provided in this document.**

Indicate **Yes or No** for each of the following requirements and provide the name of the qualified team member.

1. The Team Leader has at least five (5) years of documented experience in developing programming plans for the public realm in an urban environment (comparable in size to Cambridge or larger).

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Consultant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. The Project Team has at least five (5) years of documented experience in the following disciplines: urban design and placemaking in the public realm, fiscal management analysis and advice, community outreach and engagement.

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Urban Design & Placemaking in the Public Realm Consultant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Fiscal Management Analysis and Advice Consultant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Community Outreach & Engagement Consultant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

3. The Consultant has conducted at least two (2) similar placemaking studies, the results of which were used to inform the completed development of programming and operations plan for a public agency.

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

## Required Submissions

In addition, the City is requiring that proposers submit examples of recent programming, operations and maintenance plans and budgets. When submitting examples, please make sure to include the project scope, outreach methods for identifying possible programming ideas and governance models, and budgets related to programming, operations, and maintenance costs. In particular, the City would like to understand the proposer's approach to identifying programming ideas within a public realm.

## COMPARATIVE EVALUATION CRITERIA

Successful proposals will include at a minimum, examples of recent studies similar to the scope described in this Request for Proposal. Responses to this Request for Proposal will also be evaluated according to the following criteria, which are intended to assist the City in evaluating the proposals. Responses to the following areas should be brief, yet complete.

Each responsive and responsible proposal shall be assigned a composite rating using the categories of “highly advantageous” “advantageous” or “not advantageous”.

### 1. Experience with Programming and the Public Realm

- **Highly Advantageous** — To receive a highly advantageous rating the Team Leader and members will have successful experience of at least 5 years and with 3 or more projects on similar studies, including the development of programming and budgeting plans within the public realm. At least one example of a programming study or plan will show programming that serves a diverse population.
- **Advantageous** — To receive an advantageous rating the Team Leader and members will have successful experience between 3 and 5 years and with at least 2 projects on similar studies, including the development of programming and budgeting plans within the public realm.
- **Not Advantageous** — To receive a not advantageous rating the Team Leader and members will have successful experience of less than 3 years and with 1 project on similar studies, including the development of programming and budgeting plans within the public realm.

### 2. Experience with Governance & Operations Models

- **Highly Advantageous** — To receive a highly advantageous rating the Team Leader and members will have successful experience of at least 5 years and with 3 or more projects on similar studies, including the development of governance and operations models. At least one of the projects demonstrates experience with a City procurement process.
- **Advantageous** — To receive an advantageous rating the Team Leader and members will have successful experience between 3 and 5 years and with at least 2 projects on similar studies, including the development of governance and operations models.
- **Not Advantageous** — To receive a not advantageous rating the Team Leader and members will have successful experience of less than 3 years and with 1 project on similar studies, including the development of governance and operations models.

### 3. Strategy

- **Highly Advantageous** — To receive a highly advantageous rating a proposal will have a detailed and well-thought out strategy to address all aspects of the scope of work, including a comprehensive programming and governance plan and a project timeline with realistic milestones to accomplish all project elements within the contract timeframe.
- **Advantageous** — To receive an advantageous rating a proposal will have a detailed and well-thought out strategy to address most aspects of the scope of work, including a comprehensive programming and governance plan and a project timeline with realistic milestones to accomplish most project elements within the contract timeframe.
- **Not Advantageous** — To receive a not advantageous rating a proposal will have a strategy to address less than half of the aspects of the scope of work and/or will not have a programming and governance plan and a project timeline with realistic milestones to accomplish all project elements within the contract timeframe.

#### 4. Project Staffing

- **Highly Advantageous** – To receive a highly advantageous rating the Project Team will be identified and have clearly defined responsibilities for each team member and a Team Leader will be designated. The staffing plan must identify “backup” staff that will be available to complete the project in a timely manner if the original project staff is no longer available to work on this project.
- **Advantageous**— To receive an advantageous rating the Project Team will be identified and a Team Leader will be designated. The staffing plan must indicate that sufficient staffing will be available to complete the project in a timely manner.
- **Not Advantageous**— To receive a not advantageous rating the Project Team will not have defined responsibilities and/or will not have an identified Team Leader and/or will not have sufficient staffing to complete the project in a timely manner.

#### 5. Quality of References

The City reserves the right to use itself as a reference.

- **Highly Advantageous** – To receive a highly advantageous rating the Consultant will provide three (3) or more references, among them at least two governmental entities, who can comment positively on their experience with the Consultant(s), their areas of expertise, and their ability to complete a study of similar scope and complexity as described in this RFP. At least two (2) of these references must be for the Team Leader. At least one (1) reference must demonstrate that the Team Leader and another team member(s) have worked together successfully.
- **Advantageous**— To receive an advantageous rating the Consultant will provide three (3) references, among them at least one government entity, who can comment positively on their experiences with the Consultant(s), their areas of expertise, and their ability to complete a study of similar scope and complexity as described in this RFP. At least one of these references must be for the Team Leader.



- **Not Advantageous**— To receive a not advantageous rating the applicant will provide fewer than three (3) references who can comment positively on their experiences with the Consultant(s), their areas of expertise, and their ability to complete a study of similar scope and complexity as described in this RFP.

## 6. Interview

Proposers *may be* asked to participate in an interview and make a presentation to the Evaluation Committee.

- **Highly Advantageous** – To receive a highly advantageous rating, the proposer’s oral and visual presentation will be clear and well organized and demonstrate a strong public speaking/presentation ability to clearly communicate a command of all of the issues highlighted in this RFP.
- **Advantageous** – To receive an advantageous rating, the proposer’s oral and visual presentation will be clear and well organized and demonstrate the proposer’s ability to communicate effectively about several of the issues highlighted in this RFP.
- **Not Advantageous** –To receive a not advantageous rating, the proposer’s oral and visual presentation was not clear and/or well organized and did not demonstrate the proposer’s ability to communicate effectively about the issues highlighted in this RFP.