



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Midtown Viaducts Public Art + Light Project on Cass and Second Avenues

### OVERVIEW:

Midtown Detroit, Inc. (MDI) in partnership with the New Economy Initiative (NEI) is seeking proposals to transform the undersides of two viaducts located in Midtown Detroit's TechTown district with public art and light.

The Second and Cass Avenue viaducts are two fully operational railroad bridge grade separations located between Baltimore and Amsterdam Streets in TechTown. Originally constructed in 1934, these once magnificent viaducts have been poorly maintained over the years and lack adequate lighting, contributing to unsafe perceptions of the district. This call seeks to give these industrial bridges new life—making them a choice destination rather than a place to simply pass through.



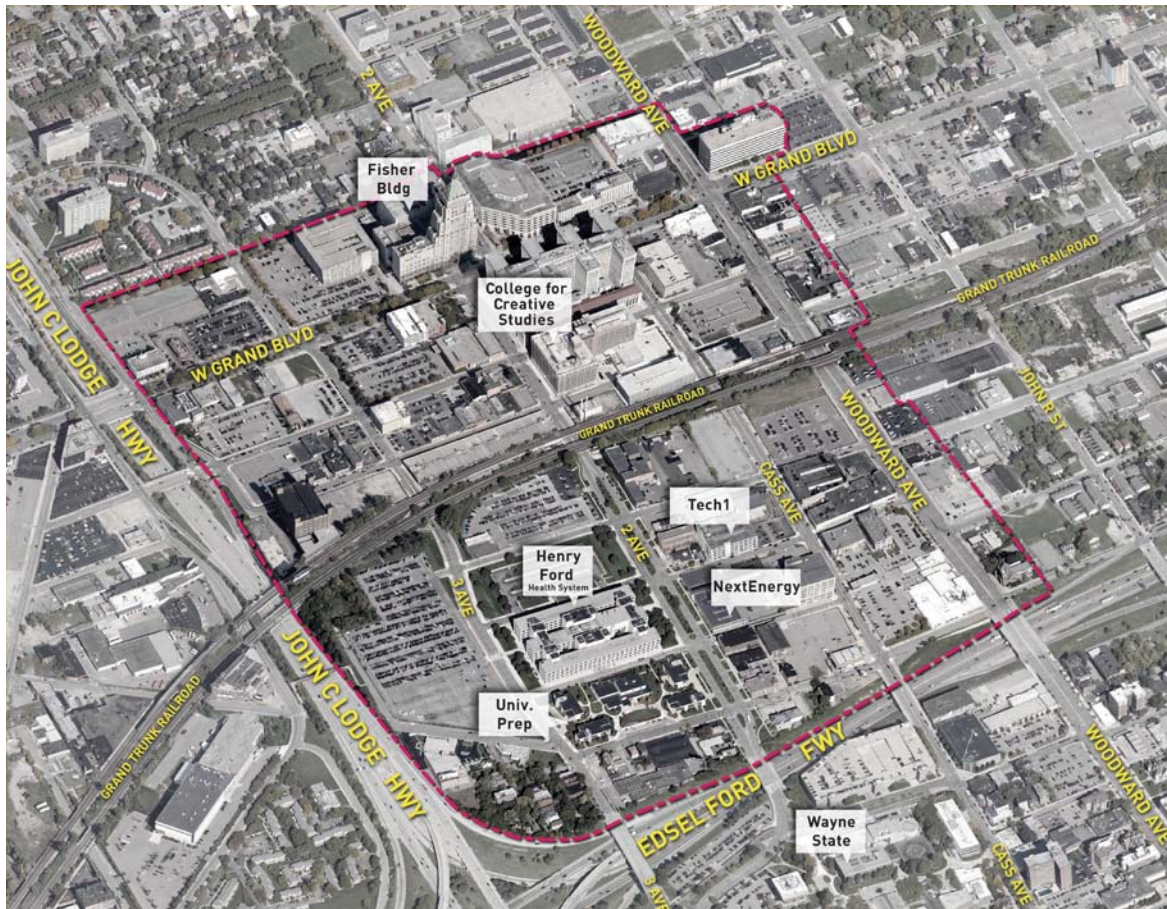
### CONTEXT:

TechTown is a 20-block urban area located within the larger Midtown Detroit District, and bound by W. Grand Blvd. to the north, Woodward Avenue to the east, the Ford Freeway (I-94) to the south, and the Lodge Highway (M-10) to the west. TechTown is an emerging innovation district anchored by three key institutions in Midtown Detroit—Wayne State University (WSU), the College for Creative Studies (CCS), and the Henry Ford Health System (HFHS).

Within the last year, MDI and its partners facilitated the creation of the TechTown District Plan, an aspirational framework for development over the next 20 years. The Plan establishes an urban design framework for the District, identifies key parcels for development, identifies public realm and infrastructure improvements, defines programs, and prioritizes opportunities. The Plan is a "road map" for the District's leadership and will help build momentum and support for a vibrant, mixed-use innovation district. The Midtown Viaducts Project will contribute to the growing vibrancy of the district and will become a unique destination for visitors.

For more information on the TechTown District Plan and the history of the neighborhood visit: [www.midtownviaducts.com](http://www.midtownviaducts.com).

**TechTown District Map:**



**PARTNERS:**

**Midtown Detroit, Inc.** is a nonprofit planning and development organization that supports the physical maintenance and revitalization of the Midtown Detroit area, while working to enhance public awareness, appreciation and use of the district. MDI has over 160 members representing the area’s academic, cultural, medical and service institutions, corporations, businesses, and community organizations, and has been responsible for the completion and operation of over 35 programs and projects which have leveraged over \$3.2B in investment in the last ten years. MDI’s current community initiatives include: 1) beautification and maintenance; 2) community development; 3) planning and economic development; 4) marketing; 5) security services; and 6) special events and arts programming. For more information, please visit: [www.midtrowndetroitinc.org](http://www.midtrowndetroitinc.org).

**The New Economy Initiative for Southeast Michigan (NEI)** is an innovative philanthropic effort to accelerate the transition of metro Detroit to an innovation-based economy that expands opportunity for all. Ten national, regional and local foundations have committed \$100 million to this unprecedented eight-year initiative, including the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan (Detroit), the Max M.



and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation (Southfield, Michigan), the Ford Foundation (New York), the Hudson-Webber Foundation (Detroit), the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (Battle Creek, Michigan), the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation (Miami), The Kresge Foundation (Troy, Michigan), the McGregor Fund (Detroit), the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation (Flint, Michigan), and the Skillman Foundation (Detroit). The participating foundations are leading the implementation and governance of the Initiative. The Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, which initiated the collaborative, is serving as its administrative home. For more information, please visit: [www.neweconomyinitiative.org](http://www.neweconomyinitiative.org).

**PROJECT SCOPE:**

The scope of the overall project includes two (2) public art and lighting installations on the undersides of viaducts a block from each other on Second and Cass Avenues in Midtown, Detroit (see page 7 for site map). Applicants may provide proposals for either one or both viaducts. If applying for both viaducts, proposals may treat each viaduct as two separate installations or visually connect the two viaducts with a cohesive design. The focus is to install permanent public artwork that incorporates lighting into its design for each viaduct. Each installation must be secure, durable, energy efficient, and weather and vandal resistant.

**GOALS & OBJECTIVES:** The Midtown Viaduct Public Art Project will complement existing TechTown innovation efforts, motivate future efforts and seek to achieve the following goals:

- Demonstrate artistic excellence;
- Combine art and function to create a friendlier environment that promotes use of the space;
- Create a signature presence for the viaducts through installations or interventions that encourage daytime and nighttime interaction. This can be whimsical and/or colorful; reflect on the history of the area; incorporate sound and/or digital art; reflect on the natural environment; or incorporate material exploration;
- Create a sense of place for the viaducts, making it a choice destination rather than a “place-to-pass-through;”
- Provide adequate and artfully designed lighting for pedestrian and biker safety;
- Utilize sustainable building materials;
- Improve perceptions and encourage street activity in the TechTown District;
- Provide a visual connection between the viaducts and the rest of the TechTown district; and
- Contribute to TechTown’s identity as a hub of innovation.

**ELIGIBILITY:**

This call is open to all professional artists, architects, designers, design firms and/or teams consisting of these entities located in the following eight southeast Michigan counties: Genesee, Lapeer, Livingston, Macomb, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw and Wayne. National and international partners may be included in any given team as long as the project lead can prove residency or physical presence in one of the previously mentioned eight counties. Winning proposals will be selected by a panel of Detroit-based curators and arts professionals.

Applicants should have the capacity to work with multiple project partners including the project stakeholders, the project’s engineering firm, outdoor lighting specialists and local government entities.



Previous experience with public art and public infrastructure improvements is preferred, but not required.

**BUDGET:**

The total budget for design and installation for a public art and lighting project for each viaduct is \$75,000. A maximum budget of \$150,000 is available for the design and installation on both viaducts. The budget includes the artist design fee and costs associated with design, fabrication, travel and transportation to the site, insurance, installation, contingency fund and documentation of artwork. Should selected artist/team choose to work with an electric company of their choice, these costs should also be included in the budget. MDI will cover the cost of permits.

**MAINTENANCE:**

Midtown Detroit, Inc. will be responsible for the long-term maintenance of both viaducts after art and lighting are installed. Maintenance plans with details on routine care and its estimated costs are required as part of the overall application. Proposals will in part be judged on the feasibility and long-term maintenance of the project, and whether or not the installation will maintain its overall integrity while withstanding some vandalism and severe weather conditions.

Prior to install, MDI will work with a firm to assess and survey the viaducts and develop engineering documents for each location that can be used by all applicants. MDI will also make basic and/or cosmetic improvements to each viaduct within reason before each project is installed.

**TIMELINE:**

Week of February 17, 2014  
Announcement of RFP

April 30, 2014, 11:59 PM  
Deadline for proposal submission

Week of May 12, 2014  
Selection of winning proposal

May 19, 2014  
Announcement of winning proposal

September 2014  
Project completion

**SELECTION PROCESS:**

MDI will convene an art selection committee, representing diverse interests and expertise, to review the proposals of applicants who respond to this call. The committee will select up to two (2) winning proposals based on artistic excellence, credentials, prior work experience and overall capacity to complete the project.



The winning team will be required to create a site-specific design proposal that will be reviewed by the selection committee and MDI staff. The proposal should include an architectural rendering of the planned use of the space. Once the design is approved, the artist or team will then enter into an agreement with MDI for fabrication and installation of artwork.

**QUESTIONS:**

Please feel free to contact the following MDI staff members with questions:

Ashlee Arder, Viaduct Public Art Manager, [aarder@midtowndetroitinc.org](mailto:aarder@midtowndetroitinc.org), 313-420-6017

Annmarie Borucki, Special Projects Manager, [aborucki@midtowndetroitinc.org](mailto:aborucki@midtowndetroitinc.org), 313-420-6003

**SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:**

A very specific set of criteria for applications will be used to ensure that all submissions will be reviewed and assessed effectively and fairly.

Applications for the Midtown Viaducts project can only be submitted through SlideRoom, an online application management system at <https://midtowndetroitinc.slideroom.com>.

**SlideRoom Application Requirements:**

1. Letter of interest describing past work and approach to Midtown Viaducts project. This should not exceed two (2) pages, and needs to be uploaded as a PDF.
2. Name, organization, mailing address, phone number, email address and website of primary contact for project
3. Biographies, affiliations, roles, and history of work with collaborators or team members.
4. Indication of viaduct(s) being applied for.
5. The following project information: title, brief description, lighting plan, budget, installation plan, and maintenance plan.
6. Applicants can include a maximum of five attachments. This includes a letter of interest, all supporting drawings, elevations, a section view of the artwork, and other images, videos or audio you wish to submit to supplement your application. Though not required, these types of attachments are highly recommended.

Images: Submitting an image is highly recommended. Ideally, you should submit an artist rendering or elevation of your proposed project. Images can be in .JPG or .PDF format at a maximum resolution of 300 dpi. You may include more than one image in each file if needed. All images must be named following the model:

[Number]\_[artist/team name name]\_[title of work].jpg

For example: 01\_Artist\_TitleofWork.jpg



Video and Audio: Open Call Applications can also submit video or audio works to supplement their application. All video must be in .MOV, .MPEG, .WMV or .AVI format only. All audio must be in .MP3 or .WAV format only. Video and audio work must follow the same rules for naming as images.

7. List of at least three Professional References. Please include name, address, phone number and email address for each individual.

**OTHER REQUIREMENTS:**

The selected artist/team shall be required to enter into contract with MDI for the duration of the project. Throughout the duration of contract, the artist/team and subcontractors will be required to maintain license and carry professional liability insurance.

**DEADLINE:**

Submissions must be received by **11:59 PM EST on Wednesday, April 30, 2014.**

**HOW TO APPLY:**

Applications must be submitted online through SlideRoom. Please follow the link <https://midtowntetroitinc.slideroom.com> and select "Midtown Viaducts Public Art + Light Project" to upload all requisite application materials. In order to access the application portal, all applicants will first be prompted to create a SlideRoom account, at no cost. Once logged into the newly created account, applicants will be able to submit all materials outlined above. SlideRoom will allow applicants to save incomplete applications and return to them for completion until 11:59 PM EST on the Wednesday, April 30 deadline. Any incomplete submissions at the time will be disqualified.

MIDTOWN VIADUCTS SITE MAP:



SECOND AVE.



CASS AVE.

