



UPDATED 4.25.24
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CATONSVILLE ARTS DISTRICT
PUBLIC ARTS CONSULTANT SERVICES

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Link – [Map of the Catonsville Arts District boundary](#)

1. Introduction

The Baltimore County Arts Guild/Catonsville Arts District seeks proposals from qualified arts and culture consultants/facilitators with extensive experience in leading interactive community engagement. The consultant/facilitator will facilitate visioning sessions with key cultural partners and community stakeholders, as well as create and circulate a community survey. These community engagement efforts will ultimately help inform the design concepts and recommendations for the implementation of the Arts District's first public art/wayfinding project. The consultant/facilitator will collect the data gathered from the visioning sessions and community survey, analyze the data, and provide a final report. The overall objective is to enhance the Catonsville Arts District's placemaking efforts and continue to establish a destination-grade cultural district. The work of the consultant/facilitator will need to be completed by August 2024.

History

Baltimore County Arts Guild (BCAG)

Established in 2012, the Baltimore County Arts Guild is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Catonsville, MD, dedicated to fostering all aspects of the arts for Baltimore County citizens. From its inception, the Guild has actively supported local artists by providing affordable studio space in a collaborative and nurturing environment, and by promoting the work of artists through a rotating schedule of Gallery 1101 exhibits, Arts on Tour, public art installations, and other programs, both at Gallery 1101 in Arbutus and at The Clubhouse in Catonsville. BCAG inspires and supports emerging and established artists of all ages through classes, exhibits, and special events. In 2020, the Guild entered an exciting new phase as the managing entity of Arts & Entertainment (A&E) Districts in Baltimore County. In 2022, the Guild worked with [Art Builds Community](#) to develop a comprehensive Public Art Plan that includes recommendations for the Catonsville Arts District. In partnership with Baltimore County Government and the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC), BCAG promotes community involvement, tourism, and revitalization through tax-related incentives that attract artists, arts organizations, and other creative enterprises to neighborhoods across the County.

Catonsville Arts District

The Catonsville Arts District – Baltimore County’s first A&E District – was designated by MSAC on July 1, 2020, as Maryland’s 29th A&E District. Baltimore County Government serves as the lead sponsor and funder and has engaged BCAG to serve as the managing entity of this and future A&E Districts in the County. In 2023, the Catonsville Arts District (CAD) approved its first comprehensive public art master plan, Catonsville Public Art Vision 2023.

Maryland’s A&E Districts help develop and promote community involvement, tourism, and revitalization through tax-related incentives. Each of Maryland’s 29 A&E Districts is a unique destination, attracting audiences, artists, arts organizations, and other creative enterprises to specific neighborhoods. Each reflects the traditions and evolving culture of its community and invites residents and visitors to experience the best that Maryland has to offer.

MSAC’s goal for the A&E Districts program is to develop, promote, and support diverse artistic and cultural centers in communities across Maryland that preserve a sense of place, provide unique local experiences, attract tourism, and spur economic revitalization and neighborhood pride.

Strategies supported by the A&E Districts program include:

- creating accessible, unique arts destinations;
- leveraging the State’s regional identities, natural resources, and heritage;
- facilitating opportunities for dynamic arts experiences that actively engage community members and attract visitors;
- enabling artists of all disciplines to live, work, and prosper;
- creating an economically prosperous future; and
- investing in the power of place.

Creative enterprises are the backbone of the Catonsville Arts District, with a variety of artist-run businesses, businesses catering to artists, and creative entrepreneurs that have been successfully operating and building an arts community for over 50 years. Catonsville’s identity as “Music City, Maryland” (a title declared by the Maryland General Assembly in 2002) and a robust community of musicians have attracted businesses that construct instruments, repair instruments, offer instrument sales, and provide lessons to the community. Catonsville’s successful main street, known as Frederick Road, is supported by the local community but also attracts tourists from around the state and surrounding states to its specialty shops and arts enterprises, artist-run bakeries and restaurants with live entertainment, quaint historic atmosphere, and community-organized events.

Catonsville is a unique historic residential community that is traversed by several major commercial corridors and contains an eclectic mix of shops and restaurants. Historically, Catonsville has always been an important crossroads for travelers commuting from Baltimore along the Frederick Turnpike (now Frederick Road) to Ellicott City and points further west. Frederick Road was the first federally planned and funded highway in the United States, is a designated “All American Road,” and is part of The Maryland National Road Scenic Byway. The Catonsville community established itself along Frederick Road and spurred the development of several historically prominent Baltimore neighborhoods.

In its first year of operation, CAD engaged a local design firm, Public Mechanics, to create brand standards for the District. This community-engaged process further refined the message of the town’s musical heritage.

“Discover the sound of creativity and community in Catonsville. This central Maryland destination boasts a charming small-town atmosphere, just minutes from the big city. Arts, culture, dining, shopping, and entertainment along Catonsville’s walkable Frederick Road attract families, creative professionals, college students, and regional tourists alike. The town’s musical reputation is also a metaphor for Catonsville’s authentic and eclectic spirit — a familiar rhythm of local shops and friendly neighbors; harmonies of historic and contemporary; artistic melodies hidden around every corner.”

The resulting brand uses music as a metaphor and focuses on keywords and ideas from the community, including “contemporary, kinetic and energetic, fun and playful, vibrant, bold, colorful, adaptable and evolving, and making room for the art and the message.” The brand incorporates varying sound waves as a primary design concept and uses a vibrant color palette and contemporary and playful fonts. Final brand assets included a style guide and colors, full logos, design elements, social media graphics, type and fonts, and designs for collateral materials. The CAD [website](#) demonstrates many of these features.

2. Scope of Work:

Scope of Services

- Engage cultural partners and community stakeholders in 5-6 visioning sessions to identify themes that are representative of Catonsville’s diverse communities and their needs/desires, and that will be provided to the artist or artist team selected to create the public art/wayfinding project in the Catonsville Arts District (CAD).
- Organize and facilitate visioning sessions in a manner that is inclusive of all community members, in keeping with the [Guild’s core value of inclusivity](#) with regard to race, familial status, national origin, physical or mental disability, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, class, and age. This outreach will include intentional efforts to reach underserved and underrecognized communities, identifying specific public art/wayfinding opportunities and themes that are representative of and beneficial for these communities.
- In partnership with staff, develop a survey to gather community input on public art/wayfinding themes and potential ideas that will support the artist or artist team that will create the work. Ensure the survey is accessible, allowing for greater inclusivity and engagement from all participants. Language and online availability will need to be considered when dispersing the survey.
- Analyze survey data and incorporate feedback into the final report. These collected data will later inform the design concepts and recommendations for implementation. The final report should include the following: a list of visioning sessions, including location, date, and number of attendees; a copy of the survey; a qualitative summary and quantitative analysis of the input from visioning sessions and results of the survey; and a conclusion identifying the most prominent ideas, based on collected feedback and data, that will help inform CAD’s public art/wayfinding project.

Budget

Consultant shall provide a proposed budget, itemized by task, as well as the total project cost proposed, with the total project cost desired not to exceed the amount of \$10,000. Labor and direct costs should be identified by task. Hourly rates for project staff shall also be provided.

Timeline

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| RFP Release Date | April 17, 2024 |
| Updated RFP Release Date | April 26, 2024 |
| Proposal Questions Due | May 1, 2024 |
| Proposal Submission Deadline | May 15, 2024, 11pm |
| Interviews of shortlisted Consultants/Facilitators | May 20 – May 22, 2024 (tentative) |
| Consultant/Facilitator Selection Announced/Award of Contract | May 24, 2024 (tentative) |
| Completion date | August, 2024 |

General Requirements of the Selected Consultant/Facilitator

Potential proposers are advised to become familiar with all conditions, instructions, and specifications of this RFP. By submitting a proposal, the consultant/facilitator represents and warrants that they have thoroughly examined and are familiar with the work required under this RFP, that the consultant/facilitator has conducted such additional investigation as they deem necessary and convenient, that the consultant/facilitator is capable of providing the services requested by BCAG/CAD in a manner that meets BCAG's/CAD's objectives and specifications as outlined in this RFP, and that the consultant/facilitator has reviewed and inspected all materials submitted in response to this RFP. Once the consultant/facilitator has been selected, a failure to have read the conditions, instructions, and specifications herein shall not cause the contract for a consultant/facilitator to request additional compensation.

In addition, by submitting a response to the RFP, the consultant/facilitator shall comply with the following:

- The consultant/facilitator shall be located in the state of Maryland.
- Consultant/facilitator shall be prohibited from assigning or subcontracting the whole or any part of the contract without the prior written consent of BCAG.
- Consultant/facilitator shall not hire, discharge, promote, demote, or otherwise discriminate in matters of compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment against any person otherwise qualified solely because of race, creed, sex, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy or pregnancy-related condition, political affiliations or opinions, color or age. The consultant/facilitator also represents that they and their subsidiaries do not and will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment based on the preceding.
- Consultant/facilitator shall comply with the applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as enacted and from time to time amended, and any other applicable federal, state, or local laws and regulations. A signed, written certificate stating compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act may be requested at any time during the life of this Agreement or any renewal thereof.
- Consultant/facilitator shall operate as an independent contractor and will not be considered employee(s) of BCAG.
- The successful consultant/facilitator will be paid on actual invoices as work is completed, as provided in the written contract.

3. Evaluation Criteria

Project Approach/Knowledge and Understanding (33%)

Demonstrated understanding of the RFP objectives and scope-of-work requirements. Identification of key issues. Methods of approach and experience with similar projects.

Public Engagement Approach (33%)

Experience facilitating community-engaged, information-gathering events; knowledge of best practices in community engagement, especially with regard to inclusivity.

Qualification of the Proposer (33%)

Experience with similar projects; technical experience in performing work related to the type of services; capabilities of developing innovative strategies; technical experience; demonstrated communications quality and success; experience in maintaining schedules.

4. Vendor Submissions

Proposals must be submitted electronically before 11p.m. on or before May 15, 2024, to Director@bcartsguild.org. The proposal format is required to be presented in the following order:

a. Statement of Understanding

A description of the consultant's/facilitator's approach to the performance of the work requested that illustrates their understanding of the nature of the work being requested and the total cost of services presented in the proposal. Include a brief statement of how the applicant learned of this opportunity.

b. Scope of Work

Provide a detailed project scope of work based on the RFP. Describe the methodological plan for accomplishing the work listed herein.

c. Qualifications

A brief description of the consultant's/facilitator's qualifications and those of the sub-consultants (if any) along with an organization chart of the project team (if applicable). Identify the project manager. Designation of a single point of contact for the project is required. Provide the role and relevant background experience of the primary individual(s) involved in the project—e.g., a brief description of the qualifications of the key personnel and responsibilities should be included. (Include resumes and links to project portfolio or accomplishments as Addenda.)

d. Past project examples (3)

e. Schedule

Specify project outcomes and deliverables anticipated. Provide a schedule itemized by task, including any start-up meetings; CAD Committee meetings; community visioning sessions/outreach meetings; creation of survey; analysis of survey data; submittal of the draft report; turnaround time needed after receiving final comments on the draft; and anticipated delivery of the comprehensive final report.

Contact Information

Monica Herber

Director, Baltimore County Arts Guild 1101 Maiden Choice Lane

Baltimore, MD 21229

Phone: 410-740-8555

Email: Director@bcartsguild.org