

**Marketing & Branding Services:**  
**BID Expansion Rebranding Initiatives**

**Vendor Inquiries**

*Due to the high volume of submitted questions, the Partnership has consolidated its Q&A responses to best address common and important RFP topics.*

**Budget**

**1) What is the anticipated budget for this project?**

The Partnership is still formulating its total budget for this engagement. When crafting a proposed budget for this BID Expansion Rebranding initiative scope of work, respondents should take into account the Partnership's current organizational budget of \$3.25M and the annual marketing department\* budget of approximately \$600K. Respondents should also consider the Partnership's anticipated future organization budget of \$6M when the expansion is implemented (CY 2021).

**Proposals submitted in the \$100K-\$200K range for the full scope seem appropriate at this time.** The Partnership may also consider proposals outside of this range to a reasonable degree based on the submittal.

Note, we are not breaking down this budget per component, as we would like to leave room for respondents to allocate as they deem appropriate and necessary for each component along with any recommendations therein.

**If possible and appropriate, please include an estimated fee for an ongoing design retainer and/or ongoing website maintenance, to be discussed outside of the scope of this RFP.**

\*The initial release of the RFP erroneously mentioned a streetscape budget, where it should have referred to the total annual marketing department budget. An amended RFP is on the Partnership's website.

**RFP Process / Requirements**

**2) How many firms were invited to participate?**

This is a public-facing RFP hosted on our website. The Partnership shared the RFP with a number of firms both referred by other BIDs and community-based organizations of similar size and budget, as well as other firms discovered through research.

Other public RFPs released by the Partnership have yielded anywhere from 5-20 submittals for different projects. 30+ respondents submitted questions and we anticipate fewer will formally submit responses to the RFP.

**3) Were any incumbent agencies invited to submit? If not, is it possible to know why?**

The Partnership did invite firms that we are currently working with or have worked with in the past for design and website services to submit on this RFP. For additional brand history, see question 23.

**4) Is there a design team at the Partnership that would be responsible for implementing the visual design for collateral pieces (brochures, banners, etc.) in the future? Or does the Partnership typically look for this work to be completed under separate contracts or RFPs?**

The Partnership currently works with an external design team for production of visual design and collateral. We are open to exploring a retainer agreement following the rebrand for ongoing design services and brand implementation of the selected firm should that be the best course of action. See also Question 1.

**5) How important is the location of the agency to this project? Will preference be given to agencies within the district boundaries [Manhattan/New York City]? How important is experience with similar location-based projects or organizations?**

A firm located in the Flatiron District specifically, or greater Manhattan/NYC more generally, would be seen as a benefit, but not a requirement. Experience working with BIDs specifically, non-profits, and/or community-based organizations/destination experience is also preferred but not required.

**6) Can proposals be hand delivered or are you accepting via mail only?**

Proposals can be hand delivered to the Partnership's office (27 West 24th Street, Suite 800B, New York, NY 10010), and all submissions must be received by 5PM EST on February 12, 2020.

**7) Is there a limit to the submission length or a preferred format for the physical copies?**

No, there is no limit to the submission length, though full color, double-sided physical copies are preferred.

**8) Is there flexibility on the dates for the interviews?**

The dates of the interviews are February 20-28, 2020 and the Partnership will work with selected firms to schedule interviews to best accommodate all parties.

**9) Does the partnership have a preference for teams that are all-inclusive or addressing a portion of the scope in this RFP?**

Our preference is for submittals to include a complete team to address all components of the RFP, whether completed fully in-house or with strategically selected partners based on workflow compatibility and qualifications. Firms can, however, submit for just one portion of the RFP if they choose with the possibility of being paired with another submitting firm if all parties agree. The Partnership recommends respondents self-identify as open to outside partnerships in this manner. (See also “Selection” on page 5 of the RFP.)

**10) If the Partnership chooses multiple firms independent of one another to fulfill different portions of the RFP, is the lead firm expected to assume full responsibility for the complete effort?**

See page 6 of the RFP under “Contract” that details requirements of the respondent team and particularly the lead firm.

**11) How many relevant case studies are you looking to review?**

Respondents should include the number of studies necessary to showcase the firm’s experience and capabilities.

**12) The scope of work is not clearly defined for the Market Research and Website Development phases, and potentially quite variable depending on your budget and strategy. In some areas, we can only make informed recommendations on approach when we get into the project – for example, based on the new brand strategy and learnings from user research, we may recommend a very different type of website than the current. Do you have any additional scoping guidance for these phases that you would like used for estimating purposes, or would you like preliminary recommendations and price ranges in the proposal?**

The Partnership would like submitting firms to base the scope of both Market Research and Website Development on the needs of the Partnership, including recommendations on what is necessary for success in this project, within the budget parameters. This can be a specific set of recommendations or preliminary recommendations and budget ranges. This Q&A should provide plenty of additional detail for guidance. For specific info on website scope, see questions 44 and 45.

**13) Are there any key milestones in The Partnership's calendar that should be noted? Any promotional moments that are very important to the organization?**

The timeline included in the RFP is a top-line overview. The expansion timing may be somewhat fluid depending on when it enters the legislative phase. For planning purposes we’re anticipating expansion services to commence in early 2021. The Partnership will work with the selected firm to refine the timeline based on both our needs and firm recommendations as we draft a contract and scope of work agreement.

One key milestone for this project would be the Partnership's Annual Meeting, Spring 2021. The Annual Meeting attracts 180-200 attendees and might serve as a nice venue for recapping or unveiling rebrand efforts, depending on timing.

## **Selection & Decision-Making**

### **14) What is the makeup of the proposal review committee? How will The Partnership "Grade" or "Scale" to compare proposals?**

Proposals will be reviewed internally by Partnership staff. For selection criteria, see page 5 of the RFP. The Partnership's Marketing Committee and Board of Directors will also review and approve staff recommendations for team selection.

### **15) How is your organization structured? Who, from your organization, will be a part of the project team? How many members of the marketing team are there?**

The Partnership is currently comprised of 6 full time staff members. There are two members of the marketing team. The Director of Marketing & Outreach will be the point person on this project in collaboration with the Executive Director, and will provide approvals and feedback in a timely manner.

The size of our organization and marketing team as well as the resources available to a small non-profit staff (time, bandwidth, and budget) should be taken into consideration while crafting proposals.

### **16) Who manages the FlatironNY social accounts?**

The Partnership marketing team.

### **17) How does Board approval work? Is there a set number of reviews? How does approval from other stakeholder's work? Can you provide a listing of the key stakeholder groups who would need to be part of the organizational consensus on the new brand?**

See Question 14. Day-to-day management of this project and approvals will be handled by the Director of Marketing and the Executive Director. Approvals from the Marketing Committee and the Board of Directors will be a part of the firm selection process, and necessary for new branding.

The Partnership's Board of Directors is comprised of members representing all key stakeholder groups including property owners, business owners, non-profits and institutions, and residents.

## Scope:

### **18) What would success look like for a successful delivery of each scope? What does a successful rebrand look like?**

The Partnership envisions the rollout of a name and visual identity to coincide with the start of our expanded services that connects with New Yorkers, the NoMad & Flatiron neighborhoods, and those who live and work here. The new brand identity for the organization should feel in-step with both Flatiron and NoMad neighborhoods, and the general vibe and values of both the current BID boundaries and the expansion areas. The specific elements included in this rollout should be dictated by the strategy of the selected firm, taking advantage of current Partnership resources strategically and recommending new elements as budget allows.

This should be accompanied by a user-friendly, easy-to-manage, visually appealing, accessible and functional website.

See also question 21.

### **19) What would constitute this project being considered a failure? What's the nightmare scenario you're trying to avoid?**

A worst-case scenario would be a brand that misses the mark in terms of connecting with the larger expanded BID boundaries and that proves unappealing and is mocked or otherwise not embraced. Also of concern is differentiation with other key neighborhood organizations, such as Madison Square Park Conservancy.

### **20) The RFP defines one of the goals as "build/retain stakeholder trust". From The Partnership's opinion, what influences this trust?**

Since 2006, the Partnership has served as a steward of the Flatiron District providing consistent and a growing array of services under six general program areas: cleaning and maintenance, public safety, social services and homeless outreach, streetscape beautification, and marketing and events. Each of these programs are rated highly in our annual community survey and we enjoy a reputation for doing good work in the current district.

It is important that throughout the expansion process those already within the BID boundaries continue to feel we are a valuable partner and resource for business owners and stakeholders in Flatiron and in touch with those who live and work within its boundaries, and that we're laying the foundation to earn this reputation with new stakeholders in the expansion area.

**21) It doesn't appear that there's any creative production included in this RFP - video, photography, or layouts for any outdoor or other promotional advertising or social media referenced in the RFP. Website strategy and development are included, but there's nothing that directly addresses the need for content. Can you confirm that that is intentional, do you have a partner already for creative execution or will you handle in house?**

See answers to questions 32 and 42 regarding collateral, advertising, and public relations.

Website content, basic photography, reporting, copywriting, and social media are all handled in house by the marketing team.

We're open to recommendations for additional creation of video, advertising, additional social media assets, or anything else respondents feel would be beneficial as part of the guidance of brand strategy and implementation. Required components are spelled out in the RFP but both Brand Strategy/Implementation and the Brand Creative/Design leave room for additional recommendations as the budget can accommodate.

**22) If you had to rank the goals mentioned in the RFP in order of importance, which goals would be most important? The RFP mentions the following goals:**

1. Build/retain stakeholder trust in both new and current BID boundaries
2. Implement highly visible and memorable branding elements throughout the new BID
3. Communicate effectively with current and new stakeholders as well as tout businesses, amenities, and events to consumer audiences including residents, workforce, visitors, and tourists

These three goals are of equal importance.

## **Market Research**

**23) Under Marketing Research, the RFP references audits of existing materials. Can you provide access to these materials?**

Yes. Appendix B of the RFP (on the final page) provides our brand standards, created in 2006. This includes current logo, typography, and primary brand colors, which is the extent of the brand development/brand strategy prior to this RFP. In recent years the Partnership's color pallet expanded to a range of [secondary colors](#).

More information about the initial launch of the Partnership's logo and branding are on page 5 of the [2007 Annual Report](#). The logo was inspired by the intersection of Fifth Avenue, Broadway, and 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, reflecting the area generally seen as the heart of the current district boundaries (this was even prior to the implementation of the Flatiron Public Plazas).

Research and reporting since the Partnership's inception are available on the website on the [Reports and Data page](#). Of particular interest to this project might be previous year's Annual Reports and Flatiron Market Data, (e.g., "Trending in Flatiron" reports) The Partnership also conducts an

annual community survey that is written internally and shared through our website, email newsletter, door-to-door outreach to business owners, and on social media.

Other important areas to review include “Programs”, “About Us”, and “BID Expansion” sections of [FlatironDistrict.nyc](https://flatirondistrict.nyc). The marketing program page also includes a link to our [2019 Sponsorship Catalog](#).

**24) In addition to existing material review, is original primary research a requirement for the project?**

Our preference would be to include primary research; however, we defer to each respondent to make strategic recommendations for each component of the RFP in order to maximize budget to achieve project goals.

**25) If we would like to conduct in-person interviews with residents/business owners, would the Partnership facilitate recruitment? How many stakeholders would you envision for participation?**

The Partnership can help facilitate these but ask the respondent to advise on the number of interviewees necessary for a satisfactory result.

## **Brand Strategy**

**26) Is the potential brand renaming in reference to the BID organization name, or the name of the neighborhood as a whole?**

Much of this is discussed in depth on page 2 of the RFP, and in the first few bullet points of the Brand Strategy component on Page 3.. The Flatiron/23<sup>rd</sup> Street Partnership is open to a name change of the organization. Any attempt to change neighborhood names of Flatiron, NoMad and others near our borders is counter to our goals of authenticity and trust building. We’d prefer any name change take into account that this organization is tied directly to these prominent and established neighborhoods and lean into that.

**27) What is the history of the current name? Can you explain the dynamics between Flatiron & NoMad?**

The current name was intentional in including a nod to the Flatiron Building and embracing the Flatiron District as the designated name for the area.

When the BID was formed it was preceded by the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Association, and it was important to members of that group that 23<sup>rd</sup> Street was prominently acknowledged in addition to the greater Flatiron neighborhood.

Current BID boundaries encompass a portion of the broader NoMad neighborhood, and our current positioning often refers to that area of the district as the “NoMad area of the Flatiron District”, or similar.

Our original mission statement referred to enhancing “the reputation of Flatiron as one of New York’s most vital and exciting neighborhoods.” Early last year, in anticipation of our expansion proposal moving forward, we chose to add NoMad by name into the [mission statement](#) to further position the Partnership as a resource in that neighborhood as well.

**28) What do you like about your current branding? Are there any particular elements or activations that wish to carry through or evolve with this rebranding process?**

A key element of our current branding that has been successful is the name “Flatiron” and leaning into the association with the Flatiron Building. This helps drive discoverability of our digital platforms and positions the neighborhood as a world-class destination. There is a consensus that “Flatiron” should still be a significant component of any new brand. See Page 3 of the RFP.

See also question 23. We feel our current “intersection” logo has been successful for the current iteration of the Partnership but we remain open to reviewing new logo possibilities.

**29) Can you elaborate on your vision for the Brand Strategy deliverable “development of a comprehensive brand architecture that addresses the relationships between demographics, events/programs, location and umbrella organization?”**

This refers to our current management of two distinct components of our brand: our organization, “The Flatiron/23<sup>rd</sup> Street Partnership”, and Partnership specific messaging, and “The Flatiron District”, the community and area which we serve and act as stewards.

We are looking for guidance on how best to navigate this as we encompass a greater area of NoMad along with the current Flatiron District, in relation to any new potential organizational names we consider.. Extra consideration should be given to the strength of our current social media channels (Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter), all branded as “@FlatironNY”, and the website URL, FlatironDistrict.NYC.

Additionally, many of our current events are branded around “Flatiron” as a shorthand for the area (Flatiron Summer Series, 23 Days of Flatiron Cheer, etc.). Any changes to the name should come with recommendations for titling events and programming.

See also question 30.

**30) Can you confirm that your top-line goals found in the RFP are to bring light to The Partnership's initiatives directly or to ultimately benefit the property owners, businesses and residents found in the new BID area?**

Essentially, the Partnership’s marketing goals are always both. For this particular RFP, the goal is to refresh and rebrand the organization, (i.e., the Flatiron/23<sup>rd</sup> Street Partnership), to better reflect a stewardship of the entirety of the new BID boundaries, along with strategic recommendations on how to best facilitate our continued marketing of the entire district, comprised of two established neighborhoods, after expansion.

**31) Under Brand Strategy, how detailed a communications plan is expected? Also, what time period do you expect the communications plan to cover?**

It is up to each agency or firm to recommend an appropriate level of detail in terms of communications plan for brand implantation given the budget and Partnership resources.

**32) Do you have execution teams / vendors in place for ongoing communications creative, media buying and placement, printing and production where needed?**

See answers to questions 4 & 22. We currently work with an external PR firm to facilitate communication campaigns and media inquiries, and they would be available to carry out PR components. The Partnership currently does not utilize advertising on a large enough scale to warrant a partner for media buying and placement. Beyond small digital media buys, promoted posts on social media, and an occasional ad in hyperlocal print, advertising is not a routine component of Partnership marketing strategies.

Printing, production, and photography services vary depending on project, but we have a variety of vendors and partners we work closely with throughout the year. We also work with an external graphic design firm to create print materials, collateral, and all branded marketing pieces, and plan to continue to outsource graphic design services.

Please see question 1 regarding the budget.

**33) What marketing and communications efforts do you currently employ? What channels are you using? What is working? What is not working?**

Typically, awareness campaigns, marketing, and promotions are created and executed internally by the current Marketing team of two staff members and a part-time staff writer.

Tactics typically used include the Partnership website (FlatironDistrict.NYC), email blasts, weekly email newsletters, rack cards distributed at events and to district businesses, direct mail postcards, Flatiron Plaza signage, LinkNYC, and on social media via @FlatironNY on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter.

**34) How are you currently monitoring and measuring brand performance? Can you be more specific about what you mean about “monitoring and measuring brand performance”?**

Current brand performance is monitored via annual community surveys, social media engagement and growth, email newsletter open and click through rates, Google analytics, and event registration/attendance.

As mentioned on page 3 of this RFP, the Partnership is looking for respondents to develop and provide guidance on brand performance on more strategic means of monitoring and measuring best practices, setting KPIs, etc.

**35) What (if any) mandatories do you have around third-party licensing (for fonts, etc.)? What will be the agency's responsibility for ensuring trademark and/or copyright availability of a new name?**

We would leave recommendations for licensing of fonts, etc., to the selected firm. The cost of any recommended fonts should be considered as part of the RFP budget, particularly if they need to be purchased for each staff computer (currently we have eight).

The Partnership will be responsible for securing the trademark and copyright of any new assets where needed, but the selected agencies should vet availability before presenting options.

**36) Who is the key audience that the Flatiron 23rd Street Partnership needs to positively impact with this rebrand? According to RFP, target audience are residents, workforce, property owners, visitors, consumer audiences for events, correct?**

A helpful way to think about our target audiences is thinking of these groups in terms of "client" audience (includes stakeholders, i.e., property owners, business owners/managers, etc.) and "consumer" audiences, i.e., workforce, Flatiron residents, and visitors (both locals and tourists).

Our goal is to keep our "client" audiences apprised of the work of the Partnership and encourage them to utilize us as a resource.

Our goal is to keep "consumer" audiences informed of all the district has to offer in terms of retail, restaurants, services, amenities, events, commercial real estate opportunities, etc.

**37) How would you describe the mission and values of The Partnership? Tell us a little about the history of The Partnership. Is there any important context we should have or milestones we should know about?**

Please see answers to questions 23, 27, 28, and 29.

**38) You state your mission as being to 'enhance the reputation of Flatiron and NoMad'. What is your POV on the current reputation of these areas? Is there a specific deficit that needs to be addressed, or do you consider your work to be building on a strong existing foundation?**

See questions 20, 41, 74, and 75.

**39) Do you have any specific results for the services you offer the area?**

Please review our Annual Reports and Community Surveys in the [Reports & Data](#) section of our website, as well as individual program pages. Also relevant are the Pre-Clean Team Assessments on the same page, which includes before and after benchmarks for our first five years in operation (2006-2011).

**40) Have you ever featured the people who work at BID in your communications? For example the great services that are offered (cleaning, homeless outreach, public safety etc.) will of course be executed by individuals. Is this a channel we could lean into?**

We have on occasion, and we are open to similar features.

**41) What are some of the pain points the current stakeholders have, that the BID (and/or the expansion) seeks to solve?**

From a brand perspective, one pain point is a struggle to differentiate our work from that of the Madison Square Park Conservancy. While the brands themselves aren't generally confused, it's sometimes unclear that the Partnership does not manage or maintain Madison Square Park as that is the mission of the Madison Square Park Conservancy. Adding to the confusion, the Conservancy manages Worth Square, between Broadway, Fifth Avenue, 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Streets, and stakeholders understandably mistakenly assume events and commercial activations on Worth Square are managed by the Partnership.

Additionally, general awareness of the organization and our services can be a challenge from a brand perspective, despite the recognizability of our logo and branded elements throughout the district. Some of this is a common BID challenge due to the general public's lack of understanding and familiarity of Business Improvement Districts.

The top priorities for neighborhood stakeholders that the Partnership seeks to support include maintaining low commercial vacancy rates, both ground floor retail and commercial office tenants, ensuring high-occupancy for the hospitality industry, and a vibrant business/sales landscape for retailers, services, bars, and restaurants.

For more on expansion goals, see questions 74 and 75.

## **Design**

**42) Aside from the website and social platforms, where do you anticipate neighborhood branding being used? The RFP references "inventory and assess current brand and collateral materials," and we are certain they will need updating. Would that be handled by the agency that wins the bid or will we simply supply a few examples and brand standards and you'll take it from there? Do you have an idea of the list of collaterals needed?**

We anticipate some collateral and branding elements needing immediate updating, while other elements will be updated as new iterations are created, and streetscape elements will need to be strategically rolled out in phases to accommodate budget feasibility during the expansion implementation.

We are open to recommendations but it seems likely that most of these branded updates and collateral pieces would be outside of the scope of this RFP, and updated either by our existing design firm or as a component of a design retainer with the selected firm, whichever is in place.

It may make sense for a few pieces to be immediately prepared for implementation, including business cards, letterhead/envelopes, and any suggested materials to support expansion implementation, and we will look to the selected firm for guidance.

Below is an initial list of collateral to be considered, though this list is not meant to be exhaustive:

Evergreen collateral to be updated:

- Expansion specific collateral
- Business cards
- Letterhead
- Envelopes
- Welcome Packet folders
- Newsletter design
- General Information rack cards

Frequently updated collateral to integrate the new branding as created (Partnership staff to implement with the design team):

- Flatiron Maps
- Event Print Materials & Rack Cards
- Streetlamp Banners
- Annual Report

Streetscape Elements updated as part of a longer, phased roll out based on strategy and budget restrictions (Partnership staff to implement based on selected firm guidance)

- Plaza Furniture Umbrellas
- Bollard Covers
- Tree Pits Guard Decals
- Info Cart
- Plaza Signage
- Trash Receptacle Wraps/Decals
- Park Avenue South Median Mall Signage

See also questions 4, 21, and 32.

**43) The existing visual identity guidelines for the Flatiron/23rd Street Partnership primarily focus on the logo elements (colors, fonts, logo mark, and proper use included). Would a more comprehensive brand guideline that factors in an expansive approach to graphics and iconography, photography, video, and other visual elements, as well as application standards for various channels including signage, social media, email and direct mail, etc., be ideal—or would you consider those elements unnecessary?**

We're open to a more comprehensive brand guideline.

## Website

**44) Can you confirm that the scope for the “Website Development” portion would include all of the following phases (loosely, as these are to be define fully in the proposal):**

- **Website Strategy & Feature Requirements**
- **User Experience Design**
- **Visual Design**
- **Development and QA**

That is correct. See also question 45.

**45) Is the website development component of this RFP a reskin or a completely new website?**

See question 44.

The website component includes strategy, development, and implementation for a new website. Because overarching brand strategy is included in the RFP scope, and may be developed in tandem with the other components, we won't be able to provide a list of functionalities. Respondents should make recommendations and/or propose a range of possibilities and estimate accordingly.

Two important elements to consider:

- The website should be responsive for mobile devices and various screen sizes.
- The website should also [follow accessibility guidelines](#), including the possibility of a third party integrations for enhanced accessibility for all visitors.

In terms of content, our current website content can be used as a guide (some will likely be migrated to the new site) along with recommendations for additions or removals based on the brand strategy, content creation capabilities, and user experience. Partnership staff will handle copywriting and general content creation.

One new content feature to consider would be a press room for press releases and media that is separate from our current “newsroom” section of the site.

See also question 49, 51 and 59.

**46) What are the key requirements for the website (indicate the importance of each):**

- **Responsive**
- **SEO**
- **Speed of loading**
- **Accessibility (any particular requirements beyond standard ADA compliance?)**
- **Ease of content management by non-technical users**
- **Third-party integrations**
- **Ease of maintenance**

All of the above should be considered. We're open to respondent's guidance on prioritization, if needed.

**47) What is the platform you currently use for your website? Do you have a preference for a platform for the new site?**

Our current site is a custom-built CMS. It has been challenging when it comes to maintenance, updates, third party integrations, content management, and training.

For these reasons, our preference would be a WordPress based website. If a compelling case can be made for a different platform (i.e. Squarespace or the like) we'd be open to it.

**48) Should we anticipate the future site to have the same content types/volume and functionality as the current site? Are there specific desires/plans/ideas/needs for future content and/or functionality not included in the current site?**

See question 44, 45 and 50. Our current content can be used as a baseline for what should be included on the new website, but given a new or updated brand identity, we're also open to recommendations for additional content or ideas and/or other changes.

**49) Are there further defined technical expectations/requirements for the website (e.g. technical stack, backend and data handling requirements)?**

Requirements are tied solely to desired functionality.

**50) There seems to be Business Owners Portal available to members of the Partnership. Can we access to that or receive from you a description of the current functionality and an outline of any future needs?**

The Business Owners Portal can be logged into by [creating a username and password here](#). The business listing feature used to integrate into a Flatiron Guide built on the site, but more recently the guide is managed by a third-party integration through LiveXYZ. Business owners and marketing managers can still log in to the portal to add events and deals directly to the website. Staff views and approves each submission for relevance, errors, formatting issues and images before posts go live.

While we like having this feature on our website to showcase local events and deals within the district, the UX for our partners is cumbersome and confusing, leading to our staff spending too much time editing and formatting each post to go live. We welcome recommendations to streamline or enhance this feature for a new website to make it more user friendly on all sides.

We are also open to other suggested solutions to implement district event calendars, deals, etc. in a more automated way, and other options for business guides.

**51) In addition to the portal, are there currently any other password protected areas of the site, and should we anticipate any new ones in the future?**

No.

**52) Are there any third-party integrations we should consider?**

Currently third party integrations include our Flatiron Guide provided by Live XYZ, our Retail Opportunity Map provided by Citiesense, Google Maps, and widgets for Twitter and Instagram. There could be the possibility of other third-party integrations in the future.

Other digital tools currently used by the Partnership include CoStar, Eventbrite, PBID Manager CRM, and various social media channels.

**53) Newsletter subscription currently goes to ConstantContact. Is the District open to another list management / marketing platform?**

We have no issue with our current platform, but are open to recommendations.

**54) Do you know what your analytics platform will be? Are there reporting requirements beyond standard Google Analytics integration?**

We currently use Google Analytics. We have no additional reporting requirements.

**55) Can we get traffic reports from Google Analytics to understand what the current traffic is to the site, how people behave on the site, and which content resonates most? If possible, we'd like to look at the last 6 to 12 months. Ideally, you can grant us access to your Google Analytics and we can pull all this ourselves.**

The selected firm will have access to our Google Analytics. See also questions 56 and 57.

**56) What is the most popular content on the site currently?**

In the past 12 months: Homepage, events calendar, seasonal event pages (Summer Series, Holiday), walking tour page, Flatiron Guide, and newsroom. These vary somewhat seasonally based on our programming.

**One challenge with analytics for us currently:** The strategy utilized to incorporate responsiveness into our current website, means most articles can be read in full directly from both the homepage and/or their parent page with no click through (i.e. newsroom, events, Flatiron Faces, Discover Flatiron, etc.) This makes it very challenging to track the popularity of articles found via our homepage or website navigation. Analytics on articles themselves reflect those that find the article via permalink posts (via our newsletter, social media, etc.) which may not accurately tell the full story of views. This issue should be addressed on the new site.

**57) What is the breakout of mobile vs. tablet vs. desktop users currently?**

Past 12 Months: 44.1 % Mobile / 3.5% Tablet / 52.3% Desktop

**58) Assuming English only for this RFP?**

The website should be considered English based for the purposes of this RFP, however we welcome suggestions regarding content translation integrations.

**59) Will all current content on the website need to be migrated over to the current site? if yes, about how many pages will there be?**

We are open to the guidance of the selected firm, some sections will likely be migrated in their entirety while other content heavy sections could be limited to recent years.

**60) How will the site be maintained? What is the skill set of your in-house team in terms of design and content creation?**

Partnership staff maintains the website and creates all of the content on it. The skill set of the team includes copywriting, formatting, image editing, and basic design and html skills. The team utilizes Adobe tools such as Photoshop and Illustrator. **The CMS for this website should be geared towards an in-house content team made up of mostly non-technical users with basic web maintenance skills.**

**61) Ads: Is there an existing media plan in place or are you looking for us to make recommendations in terms of placement, size, type? Do you have specifications for what digital ad units should be available on the site? Are these general banners or Outbrain-style content blocks?**

The Partnership does not run ads on our website.

**62) If local businesses will be promoted, what criteria is there for their inclusion?**

Businesses are featured based on relevant news, openings, events or happenings, district collaborations, notable people, etc. We try to showcase as many businesses and amenities as possible, rotating categories of business type and geography within the district to cover the most ground.

**63) Is there a monetization aspect (pay to be featured)?**

We created a small business amplification sponsorship for 2019, which include a set amount of website articles. We are discontinuing the program for 2020.

**64) Will you take care of the hosting and provide access to the server, or should hosting be a part of the response proposal?**

The Partnership can take care of this.

**65) Will the current technical team involved with the website remain involved in the project?**

We have an external agency that we work with for office IT support, and we envision the developer of the new site to work with the Partnership for ongoing maintenance and support outside the scope of this RFP. Please see question 1.

**66) Will there be a payment feature in the project and, if so, do you have a payment provider in mind?**

No.

**67) What are the main expected milestones of the website's delivery: deadline for the first version to be live, for a second version to be live, specific features to be live by.**

We are open to the selected firms recommendation based on the rollout strategy of the full organizational rebrand and the BID expansion timeline. There are a few possibilities in terms of possible launch timing.

**68) What are the ultimate goals of the website? Drive awareness of the neighborhood for potential visitors/possible residents/new residents; showcase local businesses; let business owners/potential business owners about resources available to them?**

All of the above. We seek to be positioned as a resource for information for the district showcasing businesses, events, amenities and information relevant to the workforce, residents and visitors, while also showcasing our services and resources for property and business owners.

**69) Is there a desire to capture user information for future CRM efforts?**

Only as subscribers to our email newsletter list, or as part of a Business Owners' Portal.

**70) Who will be the Flatiron/23rd Street Partnership team members involved in the day-to-day work on the website project? Will there be a main decision-maker interacting with the website development team? Will there be any Flatiron/23rd Street Partnership team members with technical skills involved in the project?**

See question 17. The Director of Marketing will be the point of contact and main decision-maker for this project in partnership with the Executive Director. Team technical skills are limited to a general understanding of basic website content management of a variety of platforms, familiarity with WordPress and others, basic HTML, etc. No current members of the Partnership staff have a web development background. We also work closely with an external IT team that can lend support to the project.

**71) How much time per week will this person be able to dedicate to the project?**

The project will be a priority.

## **Expansion**

**72) What would happen to this RFP/Contract if the expansion was not approved?**

In the unlikely event of the expansion not proceeding, the Partnership plans to move forward with the website development portion of the RFP.

**73) Is there any impetus for change in addition to the expansion?**

The rebrand necessitated by the expansion and the full inclusion of the NoMad neighborhood. That said, the Partnership is approaching its 15-year anniversary in 2021, and the brand hasn't been reexamined since the Partnership's inception. With a new Executive Director joining the team in 2019 and an in-house marketing team to help guide the process and implementation, it is a particularly good time to explore a strategic marketing plan and brand refresh.

**74) Does this proposed expansion have any impact on neighboring BID jurisdictions for organizations such as the 34<sup>th</sup> Street BID and the Union Square Partnership? What is the catalyst for the BID expansion proposal, and what does The Partnership hope to achieve or gain through the expansion?**

The expansion does not have a direct impact on neighboring BIDs. One of the main goals of expansion is closing the gap between the BIDs to bring vital services to areas currently without support. Specifically, clean team services, safety support, and social outreach are particularly of

interest. The proposed expansion boundaries were developed with input from our nearby BIDs, Community Boards, and other neighboring community organizations, as well as our City Council Representatives.

**75) What are the motivations behind the expansion? What do you feel are the main values that will be brought to the combined neighborhoods through this expansion?**

See Question 74. There is a very complementary office use and retail mix in both the new and expanded BID boundaries. Office tenants in both neighborhoods are clustered around TAMI and Finance sectors as well as a variety of non-profits and corporate headquarters. Key consumer sectors in both areas include hospitality, fine and fast-casual dining, fitness studios and wellness/health services, cultural amenities, and an array of retail options that are increasingly unique, specific, and experiential.

**76) Will the current BID team manage the newly expanded BID or do you anticipate your team growing with additional stakeholders?**

We anticipate some growth in terms of organizational staff, but timing will depend on need, budget, and expansion timeline.