



To: CCDC Board of Directors
From: DMC Staff
Date: February 15, 2017
RE: North Main & I-40 Underpass Public Art + Lighting Project

Background

Over the past year, the Downtown Memphis Commission (DMC) has partnered with the City of Memphis and Shelby County to host a series of three public visioning meetings focused on the future of the Pinch district. Development potential in the district provides a unique opportunity to create a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood that will help connect major assets including St. Jude Children’s Hospital, Bass Pro Shops, and the Cook Convention Center.

Concept

While full redevelopment of the Pinch district will likely be a multi-year undertaking, work can begin immediately to improve walkability and pedestrian connections within the area. A key finding from the recent public input sessions is that the underpass at I-40 remains a significant physical and psychological barrier to pedestrians entering the Pinch from the south. Potential exists to leverage the placemaking ability of public art and enhanced artistic lighting to improve the quality of the pedestrian experience along North Main Street beneath the interstate. Lessening the negative impact of this perceived barrier will help reconnect Uptown and the Pinch District with the heart of the Downtown Core. Furthermore, improving the pedestrian experience in this area will increase the likelihood that Downtown residents and visitors enter the neighborhood and patronize its businesses.

Recommended Approach

Staff requests that CCDC authorize funding to install public art and enhanced lighting at the North Main Street & I-40 underpass. Moreover, staff proposes that the CCDC contract with the Urban Art Commission (UAC) to provide direct project management services given the size, cost, and complexity associated with this permanent public art project.

Budget

Public art and lighting	\$150,000
UAC Project Management Fee (18%)	\$27,000
Design Honorarium (3 @ \$1,500 each)	\$4,500
Total Budget	\$181,500

The recommended approach is to issue a nationwide Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to identify artists and designers capable of delivering a first-class public art and lighting project. UAC will take affirmative

steps to ensure that women and minority artists are aware of the RFQ opportunity in keeping with the DMC's Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) requirements.

Following the RFQ, 2-3 respondents will be provided with an honorarium (\$1,500) and tasked with developing a site-specific design through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process. Staff suggests forming a 5-member volunteer selection committee comprised of the CCDC Chair, DMC President, HCD Director, Pinch neighborhood representative, and a Downtown architect. DMC and UAC staff will provide administrative support to the committee. The selection committee will choose the winning project following an opportunity for public feedback and input about each proposal.

Estimated Timeline:

While the overall project timeline will be heavily influenced by the specific type of public art proposed and the associated requirements to seek approval from various agencies, the following is an outline of the major steps in the process and key milestones.

March 6, 2017	Release RFQ
April 20, 2017	RFQ deadline
May 10, 2017	Notify finalist artists
May 24, 2017	Release RFP
July 12, 2017	RFP deadline
Late July	Interview finalists
August	Commission artist
Sept. 2017 – Sept. 2018	Approvals, fabrication & installation

Request

Staff requests that CCDC authorize up to \$181,500 to commission and install public art and lighting at the North Main Street & I-40 underpass.