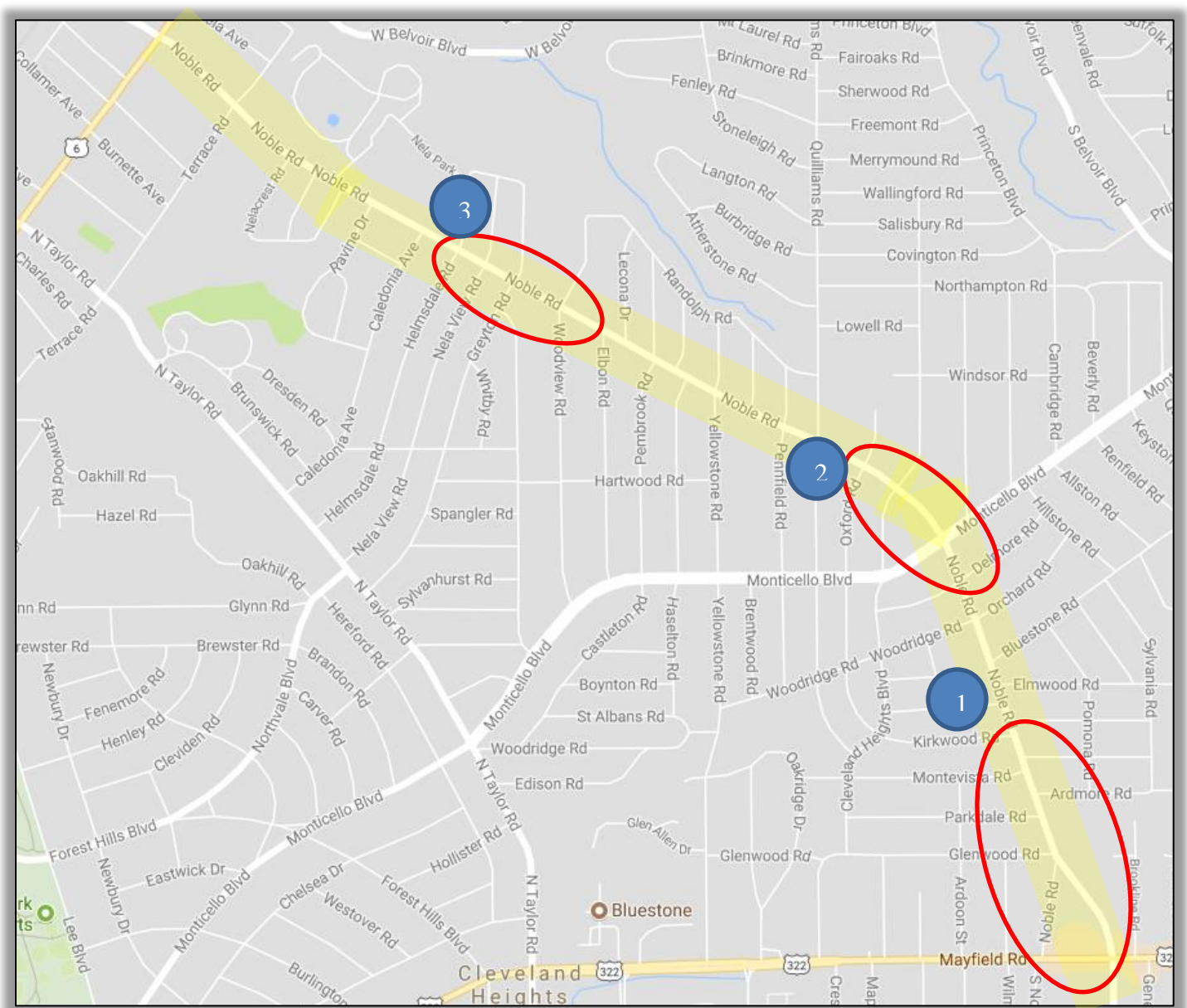


# NOBLE CORRIDOR PLAN

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)



ISSUE DATE: May 22, 2018

CLOSING DATE: June 29, 2018

# FutureHeights

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# NOBLE CORRIDOR PLAN

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

*FutureHeights, Inc., in cooperation with Noble Neighbors and Northeast Ohio Alliance for Hope (NOAH), is seeking proposals by professional consultants to prepare a development and revitalization plan focusing on three commercial/mixed-use districts along Noble Road between Mayfield Road and Euclid Avenue.*

### **A. BACKGROUND**

#### **The Noble Road Corridor**

Noble Road is the most significant street in the northeast section of Cleveland Heights, giving its name to an area known as the “Noble Neighborhood.” The proposed study area extends along Noble Road several blocks to the west of Cleveland Heights into the city of East Cleveland. Specifically, the Noble Road study area extends approximately 27 blocks from Mayfield Road at the southeast end of the corridor to Euclid Avenue at the northwest end of the corridor. The most significant cross street is Monticello Road (which becomes Wilson Mills to the east).

At its southeast end, the study area includes one block of Warrensville Center Road, which splits off of Noble Road just north of Mayfield Road, forming what is termed the “Mayfield-Noble-Warrensville Triangle.” The city of South Euclid is located immediately to the east. Toward the northwest end of the Noble Road study area is the historic General Electric Nela Park complex, built in 1912 and considered the nation’s first industrial park.

Although most of the Noble Road corridor is made up of apartment buildings, churches and other institutional uses, the corridor includes three significant commercial/mixed-use concentrations, which are highlighted on the study area map and are described as follows.

- 1. Mayfield-Warrensville.** The southerly- and easterly-most area, adjacent to the City of South Euclid, is located just north of Mayfield Road and includes a sub-area dubbed the Mayfield-Noble-Warrensville Triangle. This area includes a 1.7-acre vacant site, which was until recently occupied by the historic Center-Mayfield Theater complex and was recently proposed for redevelopment as a gas station, which failed to win zoning approval.

Municipal facilities occupy a number of sites in this area, including the former Hillside Dairy building, which is now used by the Cleveland Heights Police, a new salt storage building and associated public works uses, and a motor vehicle impound lot. To the north is a city-owned vacant lot that once housed a drug store building. Other parcels are occupied by retail stores, restaurants, auto repair shops, a large self-storage facility and other commercial services businesses.

- 2. Monticello.** A second commercial node on Noble Road is located on either side of the intersection with Monticello Boulevard, and is anchored by a stand-alone CVS and a former Rite Aid that is now a beauty supply store.

- 3. Nela.** The northerly- and westerly-most commercial node on Noble Road is located near GE’s historic Nela Park campus, straddling the Cleveland Heights/East Cleveland city border.

### **FutureHeights, Noble Neighbors and NOAH**

*FutureHeights* is a 501(c) 3, nonprofit community development corporation serving the residents of Cleveland Heights and University Heights, two cities that share a school district and library system. Created in 2002, it is governed by an active board, managed by a full time executive director and has more than 700 dues-paying members. FutureHeights leads local efforts to advocate for a vibrant and sustainable future for city neighborhoods by empowering community members and facilitating collaboration across public, private, and non-profit community sectors.

*Noble Neighbors* is a grassroots organization composed of residents and business owners in northeast Cleveland Heights working to make its neighborhood a safe, friendly, beautiful and thriving community. The organization was established in 2014 and now has 560 members.

The *Northeast Ohio Alliance for Hope (NOAH)* addresses issues of social and racial equity through community engagement and through the empowerment of local residents to shape and re-shape their neighborhoods. NOAH currently focuses its activities on the neighborhoods of the city of East Cleveland.

## **B. Goals and Issues**

**Goals.** The project sponsors seek a market analysis and revitalization plan for the Noble Road Corridor that will accomplish, among others, the following goals:

- enhancing the image of the Noble Neighborhood by improving the commercial and mixed-use development at the neighborhood’s “front doors” along the Noble Corridor;
- improving the quality of life for residents of the Noble Neighborhood by providing higher quality retail and service businesses along the Noble Corridor;
- providing additional jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities for local residents;
- promoting “placemaking” and the resulting strengthening of community life;
- making productive use of sites that are currently vacant or under-utilized;
- promoting walking, bicycling and transit use along the corridor;
- increasing safety by facilitating development and revitalization that puts more eyes and ears on the street;
- increasing property and income tax revenues to the cities and school districts;
- ensuring that development is sustainable environmentally, socially and economically;
- other goals identified in the community engagement process.

**Issues.** The project sponsors have identified the following issues, among others, to be addressed in the proposed plan for the Noble Road Corridor:

*Perception vs. Reality.* Housing conditions in the Noble Neighborhood are relatively good, but the perception of the neighborhood by many prospective residents is relatively poor –

resulting in a relatively weak housing market. One cause of the perception problem is the condition and appearance of the Noble Road commercial districts, which are the front doors to the adjacent residential areas, particularly for motorists traveling on Noble Road. Revitalization and redevelopment of these commercial districts is critical to improving the attractiveness of the Noble Neighborhood to current and prospective residents.

*District Identity and Placemaking.* The visual identity and character of Noble Road’s commercial/mixed-use districts is relatively weak and fails to draw customers and businesses to the districts. Little attention has been paid in recent years to contemporary placemaking techniques that could add identity, character and vitality to the districts.

*The Gateway.* Vacant and under-utilized land greets those entering the Noble Neighborhood from Mayfield Road in Cleveland Heights. Most prominent is the site of the recently demolished Center-Mayfield Theater complex, which is being actively marketed for commercial development. Nearby, some of the Cleveland Heights city-owned land in this Mayfield-Noble-Warrensville Triangle district is under-utilized and unattractive, detracting from the viability of nearby commercial and residential uses. Relocation of these facilities at the current time, however, has been deemed infeasible by the city.

*Optimal Mix of Uses.* The current mix of retail and commercial uses in the identified commercial/mixed-use districts has changed little in recent years and may not be optimal in providing the best services to residents, maximizing employment and tax revenues, and capitalizing on new market opportunities.

*Innovation Corridor.* A recently completed citywide master plan for Cleveland Heights suggests that the Mayfield Road corridor be repositioned and marketed as a technology-oriented “innovation corridor,” attracting start-up companies and entrepreneurs to under-utilized buildings, including those in the Mayfield-Noble-Warrensville Triangle district.

*Safety.* Widely reported incidents of crime in the Noble commercial districts have contributed to a negative image of the area for residents and visitors.

### ***C. Community Engagement***

The consultant will work with a stakeholder committee organized by the project sponsors. It is anticipated that the committee will be made up of representatives from the city government, FutureHeights, Noble Neighbors, NOAH, residents and business/property owners. The committee will meet with the consultant approximately twice a month during the course of the project.

The consultant will also participate in two community meetings plus one meeting with the Cleveland Heights City Planning Commission and one meeting with the city of East Cleveland.

### ***D. Scope of Services***

The proposed plan for the Noble Corridor should include the following elements, as well as any modifications recommended by the consultant to achieve the project’s goals more effectively or more efficiently:

**Market Analysis.** The consultant shall evaluate current uses of buildings and properties, economic activity (investment levels and vacancy rates) and trends, and shall prepare an analysis of the market for retail businesses, offices, housing and artisan/”maker” uses in the three identified commercial/mixed-use districts along the Noble Corridor. What types of businesses can these locations support – are these locations capable of supporting neighborhood retail, and/or retail that would draw from a larger area? Would the existing buildings and storefront configuration/square footage support the proposed retail/office/services?

**Building and Site Analysis.** The consultant shall evaluate the condition and appropriateness of current buildings and sites in the identified districts, with respect to the stated goals of this project. Specifically, the consultant’s evaluation shall include, among other elements, building conditions, building placement, signage, lighting, parking, curb cuts, sidewalks, street trees, landscaping, pedestrian/bicycle access and amenities, and features to address safety issues. With respect to the Mayfield-Noble Warrensville district, it has been noted that the city of Cleveland Heights has determined that relocation of existing public service and police facilities is infeasible at the current time. Given this fact, the consultant shall analyze the suitability of the various city-owned facilities for adaptive re-use or redevelopment as a guide for use by the city in its long-term capital planning and short-term plans for visual enhancements to the site.

**Recommendations.** On the basis of the analysis of existing conditions and the market for future uses, as well as input from the community and stakeholders, the consultant shall make recommendations, consistent with this project’s stated goals, for building renovation, adaptive re-use, new development, site reconfiguration, streetscape improvements, visual image enhancements, safety enhancements, the potential layering of incentives, and placemaking opportunities in each of the three identified districts. In addition, the consultant shall prepare recommendations to improve pedestrian, bicycle and transit access, as well as environmental sustainability, along the length of the Noble Corridor. (NOTE: Cleveland Heights will provide a recently completed bicycle plan for Noble Road).

**Community Engagement.** Following its initial analysis of market and building conditions, the consultant shall participate in a community meeting, set up by the project sponsors. The consultant shall share its preliminary findings and take input from the community on desired improvements to the districts. Following its formulation of recommendations regarding uses, development and related issues, the consultant shall participate in a second community meeting to present recommendations and take input from the community on those recommendations and related issues.

**Design Guidelines.** On the basis of its analyses and recommendations, as well as community input, the consultant shall prepare a set of design guidelines, with illustrations, that the city can use to facilitate the development recommended in the plan. The design guidelines should address such issues as building setbacks and massing, parking location, landscaping, pedestrian and bicycle circulation, compatibility with nearby residential uses, and environmental sustainability. The design guidelines should be written in a manner that allows them to be used by the Cleveland Heights Architectural Review Board in evaluating future development proposals.

**Proposed Land Use and Development Map.** The consultant shall prepare maps of the identified districts showing recommendations for the future land uses and for the possible placement of new buildings in the context of those existing buildings to be retained.

## ***E. Contents of Response***

Each response to this Request for Proposals shall include the following elements.

- 1. Identification.** Name of firm(s), address, telephone number, fax number, name of chief official, name of contact person (if different than chief official).
- 2. Scope of Services and Schedule.** A description of each work task to be performed, by schedule and by number of hours to be devoted to the task, and a discussion of methodologies and source materials for each task, including suggestions to meet the project's objectives more effectively or more efficiently.
- 3. Personnel Plan/ Sub-Contracting.** A table or chart listing the firms and individuals to be assigned to each task and the anticipated number of hours to be worked by each individual.
- 4. Qualifications of Firm.** Qualifications and experience of the firm(s), including a list of relevant projects by date and client, with a notation of any project conducted in or near the study area.
- 5. Qualifications of Personnel.** Qualifications and experience of each individual to be assigned to the project.
- 6. Equal Opportunity Data.** Identification of Minority Business and Female Business ownership of the consultant firm and of any subcontractors.
- 7. Cost.** Total cost for the project, with sub-totals for each task. Total project cost, with sub-totals for salary/fringes, materials, printing, travel, overhead, profit, etc. *The cost estimate shall be submitted as a file that is separate from the proposal document.*

## ***F. Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process***

All proposals received in response to this request will be evaluated by a working group composed of neighborhood, civic and governmental representatives. In its final evaluation of proposals, the working group will consider the following criteria and base its selection upon:

1. relevant experience and capabilities of the consultant;
2. relevant experience and qualifications of individuals to be assigned to the project;
3. office capacity to complete required work on schedule;
4. responsiveness of the proposal to the RFP and identification of additional or alternate tasks to better meet the study's goals;
5. technical appropriateness of proposed methodologies;
6. familiarity of the firm with conditions in the study area, based upon prior work experience;
7. cost of proposal.

## ***G. Schedule***

The following schedule provides anticipated dates for the selection process and the services to be performed:

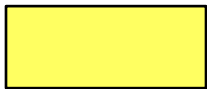
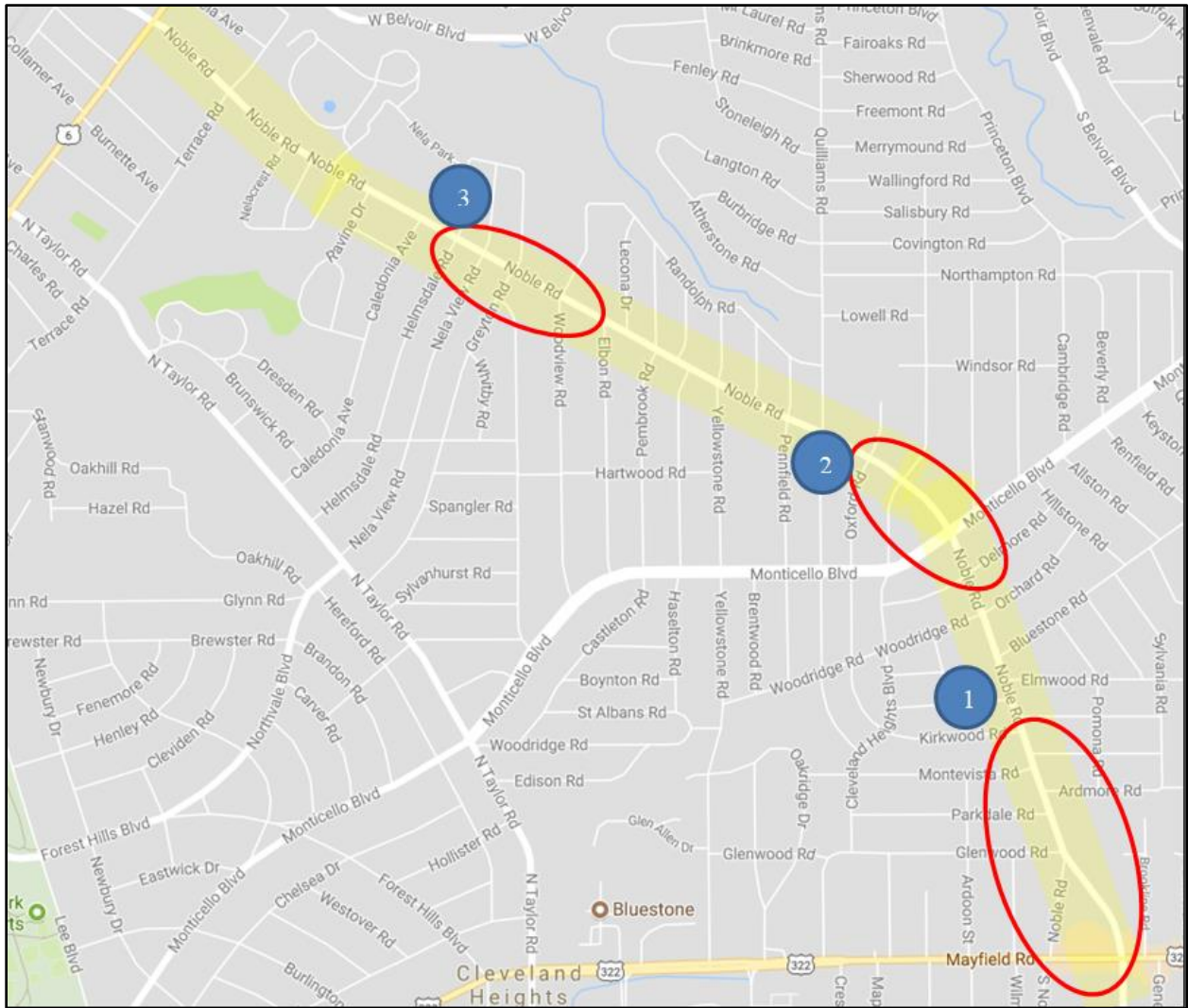
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date/ Completion</b>
<b>Release RFP</b>	May 22, 2018
<b>Deadline for proposals</b>	June 29, 2018
<b>Review proposals and finalize funding</b>	July 31, 2018
<b>Notify finalists selected for interview</b>	August 7, 2018
<b>Interview finalists</b>	August 15, 2018
<b>Select contractor(s)</b>	August 29, 2018
<b>Finalize contract</b>	September 14, 2018
<b>Begin work</b>	October 1, 2018
<b>Conclude work</b>	May 30, 2019

## ***I. Compensation for Service***

A budget of \$40,000 to \$70,000 is expected to be available for this project. Cost will be considered as a factor in competitively evaluating proposals.

## ***I. Submission***

Responses to the RFP shall be e-mailed to FutureHeights Executive Director Deanna Bremer Fisher at [dbfisher@futureheights.org](mailto:dbfisher@futureheights.org) by the end of the day (before midnight) on Friday, June 29, 2018.



Noble Road Corridor



Retail/Mixed-Use Nodes