



Request for Proposals for a Cohesive Vision Plan for Snelling and University

RFP Released:

RFP Responses Due:

Introduction

The Snelling & University Alliance (SUA) is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a single consultant or team to develop a Cohesive Vision Plan for the neighborhood surrounding the intersection of Snelling and University Avenues in Saint Paul, MN. The Cohesive Vision plan will focus on community vision for the public realm, placemaking, and future development.

Project Background

In May 2025, Union Park District Council, applying on behalf of the Snelling and University Alliance, received a [Ramsey County Critical Corridors](#) planning grant of \$50,000. This funding is to be used to hire a consultant to conduct community engagement, undertake research, and create a cohesive vision plan for the neighborhoods surrounding the intersection of Snelling and University Avenues in Saint Paul.

Creating a cohesive vision plan for the Snelling and University corridors will:

- Be an opportunity for local residents and business owners to share their community values and vision for the neighborhood.
- Bring together existing plans including neighborhood, district, city, county, and state transportation, climate resilience, equitable development, comprehensive, and other plans.

- Provide the neighborhood with a tool for catalyzing revitalization and inspiring and managing future development.
- Guide and inform the future work of community, city, county, state organizations.

The Neighborhood

The intersection of Snelling and University has been a major commercial node since the early 20th century. It is one of the busiest intersections in the city for car traffic, with connections to highway I-94 and two major thoroughfares. It is also at the intersection of major light rail transit and bus rapid transit routes.

The Cohesive Vision Plan will encompass an approximately one square mile portion of the surrounding neighborhoods, extending ½ mile in each direction from the Snelling & University intersection.



Neighborhoods around the intersection are represented by two city council members, two county commissioners, three state senators, and three state representatives. Snelling Avenue is a state-owned highway; University Avenue is a county road; Green Line and A Line Metro Transit infrastructure is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Council; other infrastructure and maintenance tasks belong to the city of Saint Paul.

The area surrounding this intersection is covered by many overlapping plans, some of which are out of date, and some only covering parts of the area. A new, cohesive plan for the area as a whole—approximately one square mile centered on the intersection of Snelling and University—would address changes that have arisen since plans were put in place, bring overlapping plans into alignment, and address gaps in planning.

The Snelling & University Alliance

SUA (snellinganduniversity.org) is a collaborative group made up of a diverse range of partners, including local businesses and community organizations.

The mission of the SUA is to help make connections and bring stakeholders together to work collaboratively to support the commercial corridors and residential neighborhoods surrounding the intersection of Snelling Ave and University Ave.

Our vision for the Snelling & University area is to create a vibrant and sustainable community through collective action. We are dedicated to fostering a thriving environment where our entire community can flourish together.

Our values are:

- Community revitalization without displacement of current residents and businesses
- A multimodal corridor that is pedestrian-friendly and accessible to all
- Environmental sustainability and resilience
- Keeping the neighborhood clean, safe, and inviting
- Supporting community engagement and connectedness
- Celebrating the diversity, heritage, creativity, and variety of experiences within the community
- Using art and creative placemaking to promote and reflect neighborhood identity

Scope of Work

The consultants will work with the SUA steering group, community members, local officials, business owners, and other stakeholders to develop a cohesive vision plan for the area of approximately one square mile centered around the intersection of Snelling and University Avenues in St. Paul.

The consultants will:

- Design and implement a community outreach effort that reaches a diverse set of stakeholders, including underrepresented communities and unhoused neighbors.
- Work with stakeholders to identify community vision, priorities, resources, and opportunities in areas including:
 - Business and community development without displacement
 - Advancing racial equity and investment in diverse communities and businesses
 - Increasing overall density and increase housing, specifically including affordable housing
 - Public safety
 - Pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation access
 - Accessibility and ADA improvements
 - Climate and environmental sustainability and resilience
 - Public art and placemaking
 - Other public realm improvements
- Ensure alignment with previous planning by compiling and synthesizing relevant components of existing plans:
 - Small area plans that include or intersect with the neighborhood
 - City and County plans, including bicycle and pedestrian plans, equitable development plans, climate resilience plans
 - Current planning taking place in the Little Africa Cultural District
 - Plans for private development at the “United Village” and MLS stadium site
 - More details and examples from existing plans available here:
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1vuE7ry5j49w-U1ykg90h6jYGnaikOpKK_Wk09b84hGA/edit?usp=sharing
- Create a cohesive vision plan that will:
 - address the need for a holistic vision for the Snelling & University area as a whole
 - articulate the community’s shared vision for the neighborhood and be useful as a tool to help encourage economic investment and guide future development
 - identify specific locations for potential redevelopment
 - include specific short- and long-term implementation strategies to work toward the identified vision

Project Timeline

Expected project timeline	
Proposals due	August 4th 2025
Consultant selected	August 19th 2025
Project work begins	September 2025
Majority completion of assessment, stakeholder engagement, research, data gathering and analysis processes	March/April 2026
Draft cohesive vision plan submitted for review by SUA stakeholders	May 2026
Final Project completion	June 2026

Deliverables

The consultant is expected to provide the following deliverables:

- Community outreach plan: A plan for performing community outreach, with the assistance of Snelling and University Alliance and other stakeholders, to gather community input for the vision plan.
- Draft cohesive vision plan: A comprehensive report detailing all components outlined in the Scope of Work.
- Final cohesive vision plan: Incorporating feedback from SUA and its planning partners and stakeholders, the final report should be professionally formatted and ready for dissemination.
- Presentation Materials: Slide decks and summary materials suitable for presenting findings to community members and stakeholders.
- Data Sets: Any data collected and analyzed during the study, provided in accessible formats.

Fee Proposal and Compensation

SUA is requesting a proposal with a fixed budget **not to exceed \$50,000**. Your fee should take into account and be inclusive of all ancillary charges (e.g. software and computer use, mileage, etc.).

Reporting and Invoicing

Consultants will prepare monthly progress reports to accompany their invoices by the 5th of every month, or on another schedule to be mutually agreed upon.

Proposal Guidelines and Requirements

Interested consultants must submit a proposal that includes:

- Cover Letter: Introduction and expression of interest.
- Qualifications: Overview of relevant experience including engaging neighborhoods and residents, experience with similar projects and creating similar plans, and experience in engaging with diverse communities.
- Portfolio: Examples of previous similar or relevant projects.
- Project Team: Resumes and roles of key personnel assigned to the project.
- Methodology: Narrative confirming your understanding of the proposed scope of services and outlining a proposed approach and proposed schedule for completing the Scope of Work.
- Budget: Detailed cost proposal, including a breakdown of expenses
- References: Contact information for at least three clients for whom similar work has been performed

Evaluation Criteria

Consultant selection will be determined by the criteria listed below:

- Qualifications, relevant experience, and external references
- Understanding of the scope and goals of this project
- Proposal presentation, including clarity, logic, and organization
- Responsiveness of proposal to the specifications set forth in this RFP
- Reasonableness and transparency of the budget
- Availability and ability to meet project deadlines

Preference will be given to consultants with ability and experience in engaging with diverse communities.

Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employment: Women, minorities, people with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply.