

Council Letter
City of Knoxville
February 6, 2023

Agenda Item: Hiring Curtis Architecture to undertake Preliminary Design & Costing Work for the City of Knoxville's CDBG-DTR application

Background:

On December 5, 2022, City Staff discussed the CDBG-DTR application process with City Council.

City Staff are now proposing the hiring of Curtis Architecture and Design to undertake preliminary design and costing work for a minimum of 8 buildings and up to 10 facades.

Curtis Architecture was hired by the City of Knoxville to undertake similar work for our Elite Dance CBDG-CV application in 2022. That work led to the IEDA award for the project. Curtis Architecture is now serving as the Project Architect on the work.

Curtis Architecture has undertaken 10 CDBG-DTR multi-building projects in Iowa, including: 3 in Oskaloosa; 2 in Ottumwa, and 2 in Indianola. In addition, the firm has undertaken 5 single-building CDBG façade projects, including Elite Dance in Knoxville.

Curtis Architecture's work was instrumental in obtaining the CDBG-CV award for Elite Dance, which for various reasons was considered to be a challenging application.

The proposed contract is for \$14,000. This includes 10 façade improvement preliminary designs and costings at \$1,300 each, plus as much as \$1,000 in associated expenses and disbursements (i.e., approximately \$100 per façade).

As described in the December 5 meeting: Downtown owners of buildings which meet the HUD definition of blight, will be given an opportunity to participate in the municipally sponsored application to IEDA. Curtis Architecture will undertake a preliminary design and costing for the most suitable buildings. The preliminary design and cost estimates will be used to confirm building owner's participation (including their willingness to contribute 25% of the improvement costs). The candidate building design and cost estimates will then be used by City Staff to prepare and submit the CBDG-DTR Application.

The application period is expected to be open in the Fall of 2023, with decisions early in 2024. The detailed design, procurement, and construction period will likely take 18 months or more, resulting in Municipal Spending in FY 2024 and FY 25.

The currently proposed \$14,000 contract with Curtis Architecture will be completed in FY 24; and funds are available in the current Economic Development budget to complete the work.

Policy Question: Should City Council award the Predesign and Costing contract to Curtis Architecture and Design, which will allow City Staff to begin the CDBG-DTR recruitment process?

Budget Impact: The \$14,000 in proposed expenditures would be drawn from the current FY 24 Economic Development budget.

Recommendations: That City Council approve the \$14,000 proposed contract as described in this report with Curtis Architecture and Design.

Supporting Documents: Proposed Architectural Services Agreement