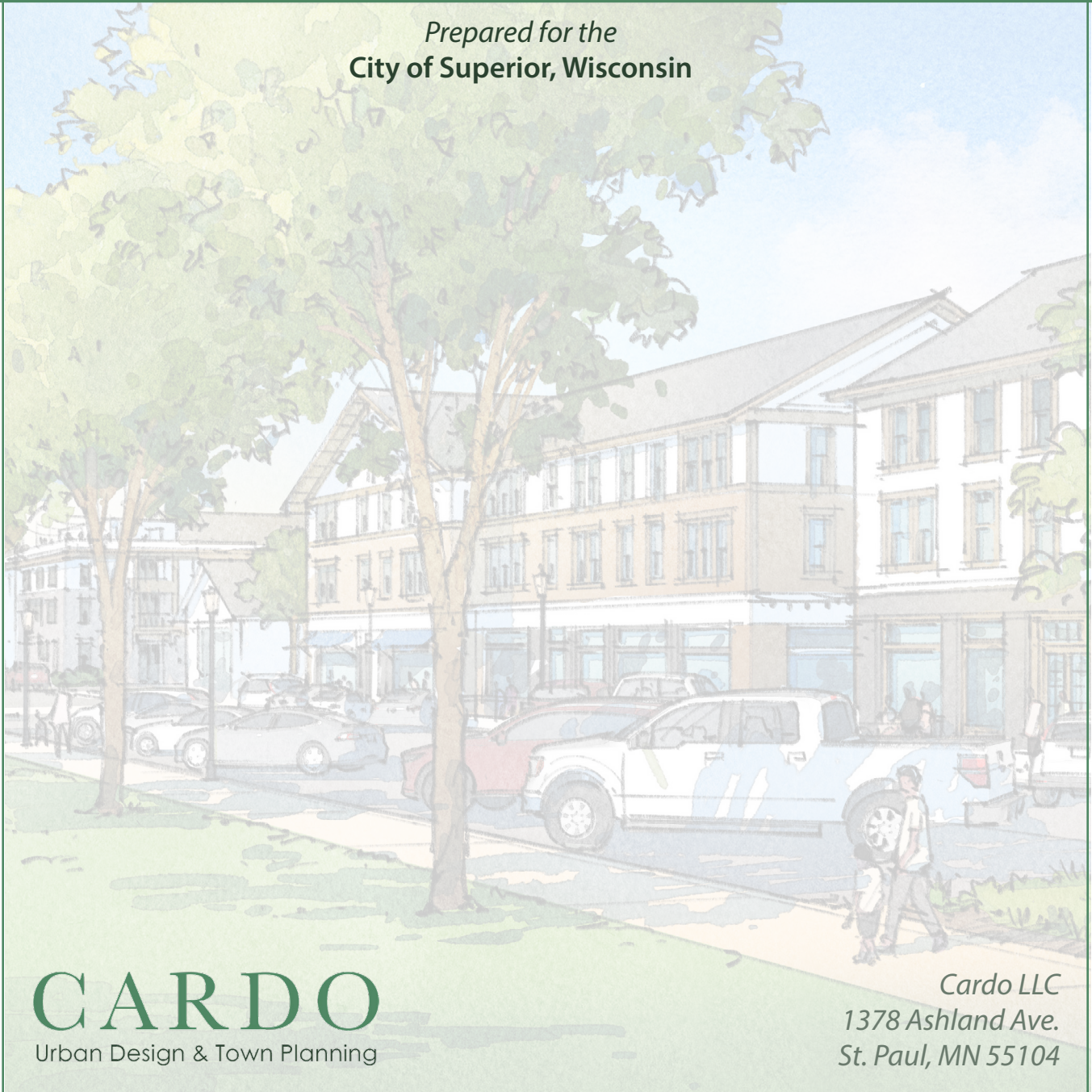


SUPERIOR DOWNTOWN DESIGN BEST PRACTICES

CARDO PROPOSAL

*Prepared for the
City of Superior, Wisconsin*



CARDO
Urban Design & Town Planning

*Cardo LLC
1378 Ashland Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55104*

CARDO LLC

URBAN DESIGN & TOWN PLANNING

FIRM PROFILE

Cardo LLC is an urban design and town planning firm based in Saint Paul, Minnesota. As the founder of the firm, Patrick Brunner brings experience creating and implementing master plans, mixed-use neighborhoods, mixed-income communities, design guidelines, and housing strategies across 30 states. As a small team of less than 5 urban designers, we bridge the gap between architecture and planning. Since 2022, our focus has been the intersection of community, architecture, planning, and landscape architecture to understand how neighborhoods are created, evolve, and function over time. Our clients include municipalities, developers, builders, housing authorities, non-profits, and faith-based institutions on sites and neighborhoods ranging from a half-acre parcel to over 500 acres. Our interest is the long-term health of a community and the marriage of a vision with a strategy that will help bring it to fruition.

PURPOSE

Many adjectives attempt to describe what our neighborhoods, communities, and cities should look and feel like—vibrant, walkable, diverse, beautiful, resilient, and safe. Often these words approach a valid sentiment of the places we aspire to help create and foster. As urban designers we strive to not only meet these principles, but to exceed them and create places that inspire for generations.

Ancient Romans were brilliant urban designers and town planners. The timeless system they utilized was repeatable, yet each town was still unique. Most were planned around two primary streets that people used to travel in and out of the city. The east-west street was the decumanus and the north-south street, the *cardo*. It is not a coincidence that *cardo* is the root of so many words that mean heart. The *cardo* was the heart of Roman towns. It was mixed-use, an artery for economic activity, and the street that gave places a pulse.

We help our clients create places that have heart, something that is sorely missing in the development world. These are the places where we live, send our children to school, and establish friendships— it is more than a collection of building products. Our goal is to help you shape and illustrate a vision, and then work with municipalities, builders, architects, engineers, developers, and the community to build a successful place that stands the test of time.

SERVICES

The services listed below are often integrated into a single process and we enjoy working collaboratively with other companies and communities. Plans are most likely to succeed when they are genuinely based on community vision and need.

- Urban Design
- Pattern Books & Design Guidelines
- Form-based Zoning Code Writing
- Neighborhood Planning



PROJECT APPROACH

October 19, 2026

We are thrilled to share our approach to work with Superior and its community on design best practices for downtown. This proposal outlines our process, scope, and fee for the work. We understand this concise guide is intended to not only support the existing business owners by harnessing the adaptive reuse potential in downtown, but also should be written in a way to potentially dovetail with the City's zoning ordinances. Both the public and private sector will benefit from these recommendations so that the area in and around Tower Avenue will be strengthened as a cohesive neighborhood. We are experienced at navigating and balancing multiple stakeholders, economic realities, and the design principles that create vibrant communities. Our goal is to help foster a place that is loved and harmonious with its surroundings.

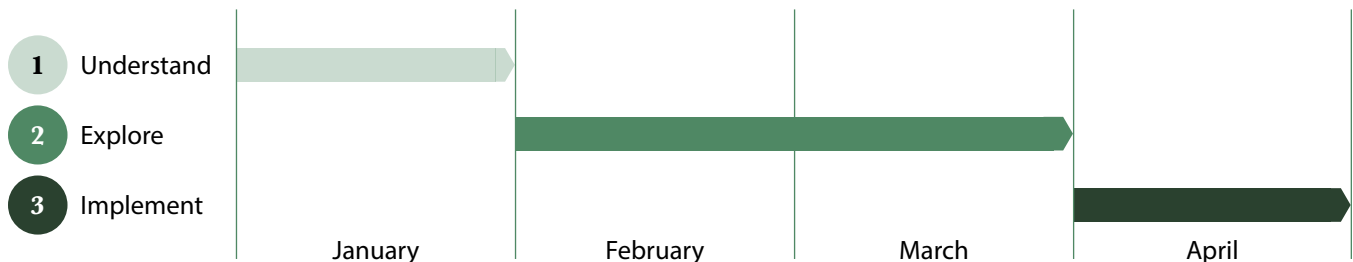


OUR APPROACH

While every city and neighborhood is unique, the principles that define a well-loved place are not. These places are mixed-use, human-scaled, resilient, and contextual. Many of our most cherished downtowns could be described using these principles, and downtown Superior is no different. We believe every place should follow these principles and we collaborate with communities, such as yours, that embrace these ideals. This ideology is our starting point. Then we work with the community, planning departments, neighborhood leaders, business owners, and many others to ignite change. Implementation is easier with a strong vision, and a vision is strong when it is rooted in an authentic understanding of a place and its constraints, which is why the process will be transparent and iterative.

PROPOSED PROCESS

Our process will follow 3 steps over a roughly 4-month time frame. This work can commence immediately once the client team is ready and be completed by April 30, 2027. For the purposes of this proposal our team will assume a January 1, 2027 start date. Patrick Brunner will be the lead and point of contact for this project.



STEP 1: UNDERSTAND

We recognize that we are not the experts of your community. The residents, business owners, and local leaders have a wealth of knowledge to share with us. We will take the time, with the help of the client team, to identify the key stakeholders and listen to them. Our goal is to understand your community first in order to chart the best path forward. This strong foundation, built on the experiences of the downtown community, will help us create a stronger set of best practices.

1.1 Review Existing Plans

We will review these plans and any others identified by the client team.

- City of Superior 2040 Comprehensive Plan
- City of Superior Zoning Code

1.2 Kick-off Listening Trip

We will travel to Superior to gain a better understanding of the area and host stakeholder meetings. The trip could follow this agenda and would likely be 1-2 days.

- Kick-off with Client Team: Review scope, schedule, and project goals
- Tour: Walk downtown and Tower Avenue area
- Focused Stakeholder Sessions: We will meet with business owners, City Departments, Superior BID, Chamber of Commerce, and other groups we collectively find key to the process. We will work together to identify them and host 60-90 minute sessions in person, with zoom optional for those that can't attend in person.
- Joint Plan Commission & Council Work Session: We will meet with the City Council and Plan Commission in an open or closed session to outline the process and desired outcomes. This element is critical to build trust and demonstrate transparency with these groups.
- 2 Public Sessions: This visit will include two open house sessions at a time and place to be determined by the client team to maximize input from the community. These events might include visual preference surveys, interactive mapping activities, or a presentation.
- Documentation: Our team will photograph key buildings and areas within downtown.

STEP 2: EXPLORE

During this step, we will produce a draft set of best practices for downtown buildings, streetscapes, and facade recommendations for up to 15 buildings in the downtown area.

2.1 Prepare Best Practices for Downtown Buildings

Based on the information gathered in Step 1, we will create a draft set of guidelines for architecture in the downtown area. These guidelines will include criteria for the following elements:

- Massing, Composition, and Articulation
- Storefronts
- Lighting
- Materials
- Signage
- Site Design

2.2 Prepare Best Practices for Streetscapes

Based on the information gathered in Step 1, we will create a draft set of guidelines for the public realm or streetscape in the downtown area. These guidelines will include criteria for the following elements:

- Streetscape
- Lighting
- Signage

2.3 Prepare Draft Facade Recommendations

Our team will identify 15 buildings and provide facade recommendations for each of them. The client team will help obtain the permission of the individual landowners before commencing on this task. This will be highly visual, providing a before and after image for each building, as well as a series of bullets briefly explaining the graphic and next steps.

2.4 Explore Trip

After completing the draft best practices and the draft facade recommendations, our team will travel to Superior to share these with the client team and stakeholder groups from Step 1. The trip could follow this agenda.

- Client Team Meeting: Review draft best practices and facade recommendations
- Focused Stakeholder Sessions: We will once again meet with business owners, City Departments, Superior BID, Chamber of Commerce, and other groups we collectively find key to the process and review the draft best practices and facade recommendations with them.
- Individual Facade Meetings: We will meet with each of the 15 owners and review the facade recommendations with each of them. These will likely be 15-minute meetings.

STEP 3: IMPLEMENT

Using the feedback gathered in Step 2, our team will build consensus by revising the best practices and the facade recommendations for incorporation into the final document.

3.1 Refine Best Practices and Facade Recommendations

Both elements of the final document will be formatted into a single .pdf with clear graphics, detailed recommendations, and highly compelling visuals. The document will be no longer than 25 pages on 11x17 in. paper.

3.2 Share Final Document

Our team will share the final guidelines with the City Council via zoom. An additional trip will be considered an additional service.



Two examples of work from the region

PATRICK BRUNNER

AICP, CNU-A, PRINCIPAL, PROJECT LEAD

EXPERIENCE

Cardo LLC

Principal & Founder

St. Paul, Minnesota

2022 - Current

- Leads an urban design and town planning firm focused on designing and implementing vibrant, walkable, diverse, and beautiful communities
- Collaborates with municipalities, developers, housing authorities, non-profits, and faith-based institutions throughout the United States
- Creates form-based codes, design guidelines, and mixed-income housing strategies

Urban Design Associates

Project Manager

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

2018 - 2022

- Led a small team of designers on various urban design projects as well as managed the schedule, budget, and process with the principal-in-charge
- Worked with public housing authorities across the nation to study mixed-income redevelopment strategies and Choice Neighborhoods Implementation grants
- Coordinated with municipalities, like Hershey, Pennsylvania and Riverhead, New York to develop design and form-based guidelines for their downtowns
- Designed and implemented greenfield and infill developments ranging in scale from a few acres to brownfield development sites within existing neighborhoods
- Created transit-oriented station master plans and light rail alignments in Charlotte, North Carolina
- Helped lead our team to the final round of an international design competition for an undisclosed 5,500-acre site

Michael Watkins Architect, LLC

Designer

Gaithersburg, Maryland

2015 - 2018

- Designed walkable neighborhoods for sites varying from 17 acres to over 300 acres
- Served as Town Architect in 4 states, including performing architectural reviews, schematic architectural design, conceptual design of open spaces, review of civil drawings, and updating Pattern Books and Design Codes
- Prepared transect/form-based codes and worked with developers and the corresponding jurisdiction toward approval

Cooper, Robertson & Partners

Junior Architect

New York, New York

2014

- Produced construction documents and gained approval of architectural review boards for a range of buildings in New York City, Long Island, and Virginia

EDUCATION

University of Notre Dame

Bachelor of Architecture

Notre Dame, Indiana

Spring 2014

ACCREDITATIONS

American Institute of Certified Planners, AICP
CNU-Accredited (Lifetime Member)

Spring 2019

Fall 2015

PATRICK BRUNNER, AICP, CNU-A

PROJECT EXPERIENCE & QUALIFICATIONS

MIXED-USE & MIXED-INCOME NEIGHBORHOODS

Barber Yard <i>Chico, CA</i>	Blythe Oldfield Master Plan <i>Cleveland, TN</i>	West End Choice Neighborhood Plan <i>Johnstown, PA</i>
Johnson Square <i>Johnson, AR</i>	Gateway Master Plan <i>Hershey, PA</i>	The Plaza at Evans Towne Center <i>Evans, GA</i>
Tuckahoe Neighborhood Center <i>Henrico, VA</i>	Union Village <i>Lebanon, OH</i>	Creighton Court Redevelopment <i>Richmond, VA</i>
Heritage Village <i>Fort Smith, AR</i>	Cattail Run <i>Leesburg, VA</i>	Cleveland Avenue Homes CNI Grant <i>Winston-Salem, NC</i>
Baton Rouge Medical Corridor Plan <i>Baton Rouge, LA</i>	RRHA Big 6 Planning Study <i>Richmond, VA</i>	Baton Rouge CNI Grant Refinement <i>Baton Rouge, LA</i>
Lake Street Alignment Process <i>Minneapolis, MN</i>	Dayton Neighborhoods Vision <i>Dayton, OH</i>	Downtown Daybreak Planning <i>South Jordan, UT</i>
Brooklyn Park EDA Site <i>Brooklyn Park, MN</i>	Northfield Cooperative <i>Northfield, MN</i>	Rodeo Dunes Master Plan <i>Weld County, CO</i>
Rome Town Center Master Plan <i>Rome, WI</i>	Brattleboro Neighborhood Plan <i>Brattleboro, VT</i>	Broad Creek Neighborhood Vision <i>Norfolk, VA</i>
Jack Pines Guesthouse Site Plan <i>Rome, WI</i>	Twin Lakes Master Plan <i>Cary, NC</i>	Calvert & Young Master Plan <i>Norfolk, VA</i>
Rogers Main Street Master Plan <i>Rogers, MN</i>	New Leaf Master Plan <i>St. Peter, MN</i>	St. Paul's Neighborhood Vision <i>Norfolk, VA</i>
Forest Park Diggs Community Plan <i>Detroit, MI</i>	Nativity Episcopal Master Plan <i>Burnsville, MN</i>	Minneapolis Cottage Court <i>Minneapolis, MN</i>

DESIGN GUIDELINES, FORM-BASED CODES, & PATTERN BOOKS

Downtown Hershey Design Standards <i>Hershey, PA</i>	Leander Smart Code Update <i>Leander, TX</i>	ACHE Neighborhood PZD <i>Fort Smith, AR</i>
Johnson Square PUD <i>Johnson, AR</i>	Barber Yard Specific Plan <i>Chico, CA</i>	Downtown Riverhead Pattern Book <i>Riverhead, NY</i>
Downtown Form-Based Code Review <i>Fontana, CA</i>	UTA Design Guidelines <i>Salt Lake City, UT</i>	Brookline Form-Based Code <i>Brookline, MA</i>
Capitol Area Rules Update <i>St. Paul, MN</i>	Wild Spring Dunes Guidelines <i>Rusk County, TX</i>	

ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN REVIEW

Norton Commons Town Architect Review <i>Prospect, KY</i>	Whitehall Design Review <i>Whitehall, DE</i>	Farmington Country Club Addition <i>Charlottesville, VA</i>
Utah City Design Review <i>Vineyard, UT</i>	Hammond's Ferry Design Review Committee <i>North Augusta, GA</i>	

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENTS

Silver Line Station Area Planning <i>Charlotte, NC</i>	T.O.D. Zoning Initiative <i>Pittsburgh, PA</i>	UTA Central Station Area Plan <i>Salt Lake City, UT</i>
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Projects listed were performed while Patrick Brunner was a project manager, lead designer, or owner at UDA, Michael Watkins Architect, or Cardo LLC.

CAPITOL AREA RULES UPDATE

RELATED EXPERIENCE

The Minnesota State Capitol, located just north of downtown Saint Paul, is an iconic landmark on the city's skyline. The Capitol, its grounds, and surrounding neighborhoods are more than a place for visitors, they are also a vibrant community where residents work and live. The Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board (CAAPB) is tasked with regulating the zoning, planning, development, and design of the 60-block, 330-acre area. While the neighborhood is part of the City of Saint Paul, CAAPB plays a unique role in regulating and protecting this cherished district. Cardo, in collaboration with Opticos, was hired to write the updated Zoning and Design Rules for the Minnesota Capitol Area.

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan for the Capitol Area encapsulated the community's goals and was the guiding document for the process. The update provides an opportunity to create a more cohesive and vibrant Capitol area experience. The updated Rules help connect the Capitol to downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods, provide best practices for the design of its buildings, and ensure its public spaces work in harmony with the broader community.

[Click here](#) to download the proposed Rules.

SIZE

Roughly 333 acres

LOCATION

Saint Paul, MN

TIME FRAME

2025

CLIENT

Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board & Opticos Design, Inc.

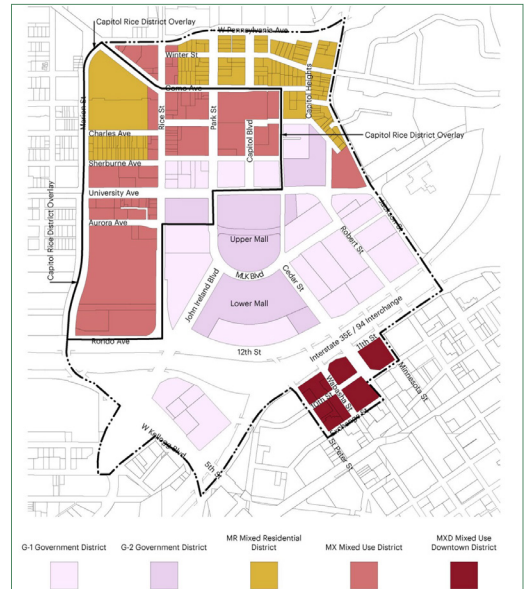
REFERENCE

Peter Musty
Principal Planner and Zoning Administrator
peter.musty@state.mn.us
651.757.1501

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The majority of the former Ford Building block is owned by the State of Minnesota, with the exception of the historic Christ Lutheran Church on the southeast corner. This study illustrates how the form of development is not significantly altered between the existing and proposed Rules. The increased flexibility with the new parking requirements allows for the State to better utilize the site while still respecting the surrounding neighborhood and architectural context.

EXISTING RULES		PROPOSED RULES	
Key Metric	Shown	Key Metric	Shown
Use	State of MN. Offices General Com.	Use	State of MN. Offices General Com.
Number	133,500 SF	Number	185,500 SF
Parking Required	388	Parking Required	388
Front Yard Setback	40'	Front Yard Setback	40'
Side Yard Setback	5'	Side Yard Setback	5'
Rear Yard Setback	14'	Rear Yard Setback	14'
Maximum Impervious Coverage	82.2%	Maximum Impervious Coverage	82.2%
Maximum Building Height	44' (14)	Maximum Building Height	58' (18)



BROOKLINE FORM-BASED CODE

RELATED EXPERIENCE

In 2021, Massachusetts passed the MBTA Communities Act, a law that required communities near transit lines to rewrite zoning codes to provide more multi-family housing by right. The Village of Brookline, located immediately west of Boston, and just a few stops from downtown on the MBTA Green Line, needed to act quickly to rewrite their zoning code to permit this new density.

Cardo, with Opticos acting as a project lead, helped write a new form-based code for the Harvard Street corridor, a vibrant street in the heart of the community. In November of 2023, the overwhelming majority of the Town's Meeting, a legislative body in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, voted to approve the new zoning code for the corridor.

This code allows for more density, helping numerous families find a home, while preserving the varied and distinct characters found from one end of Harvard Street to the other. Given the sensitive historic context, the code prioritized creating architecture that fit with the existing neighborhood character. Cardo not only helped write the code, but also tested it as it was written, constantly checking and verifying it would produce the development patterns that met the MBTA Communities Act and reflected larger community visions.

[Click here](#) to download the code.

SIZE

1.25-mile long corridor

LOCATION

Brookline, MA

TIME FRAME

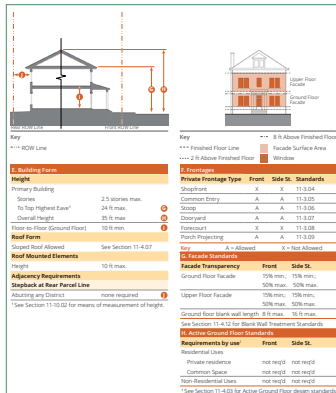
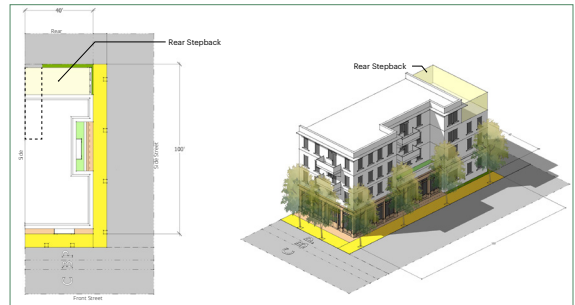
2023

CLIENT

Town of Brookline &
Opticos Design, Inc.

REFERENCE

Jennifer Settle
Principal
jennifer.settle@opticosdesign.com
510.558.6957 ext. 201



FEE PROPOSAL

FEE PROPOSAL

We are proposing a fixed fee of \$34,100. This section outlines the proposed fee for both the project labor and expenses. Please note the estimated fee by task includes not only the task, but preparation, project management, travel expenses, supplies, permits, and travel time. Work not listed in this proposal shall be considered an additional service.

TASK		FEE
1	1.1 Review Existing Plans	\$1,400
	1.2 Kick-off Listening Trip	\$5,000
Total Fee for Step 1: Understand		\$6,400
2	2.1 Prepare Best Practices for Downtown Buildings	\$6,500
	2.2 Prepare Best Practices for Streetscapes	\$3,500
	2.3 Prepare Draft Facade Recommendations	\$10,000
	2.4 Explore Trip	\$3,500
Total Fee for Step 2: Explore		\$23,500
3	3.1 Refine Design Guidelines and Facade Recommendations	\$3,500
	3.2 Share Final Document	\$700
Total Fee for Step 3: Implement		\$4,200
TOTAL FEE		\$34,100

HOURLY RATES BY TEAM MEMBER

The table below outlines the hourly rates of Cardo team members.

TEAM MEMBER	RATE
Patrick Brunner, Principal	\$175/Hour
Tyler Milam, Urban Designer	\$115/Hour

FEE FOR ADDITIONAL FACADE RECOMMENDATIONS

If the City elects to complete more than 15 facade recommendations, each additional recommendation will cost \$900. This includes an in-person owner meeting of up to 30 minutes, a before and after image, and a brief written description.

STATEMENT

Cardo made their own examination, investigation and research regarding the method of doing the work, all conditions affecting the work to be done, the labor, equipment and materials, and the quantity of the work to be performed. Cardo agrees that it has satisfied itself by our own investigation and research regarding all of such conditions, and that our conclusion to enter into the Service Agreement and based upon such investigation and research, and that we shall make no claim against the City because of any of the estimates, statements or interpretations made by any officer or agent of the City which may prove to be erroneous in any respect.