



125TH STREET BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT BANNER PROJECT

REQUEST FOR DESIGNS *A CONNECT THE DOTS EXPERIENCE*

REQUEST FOR DESIGN OVERVIEW: The 125th Street Business Improvement District (BID) is requesting designs for its banner project. Our new theme for 2016, “Fashion and Music Explosion” connects Harlem’s expressions of style, sounds, and business through the eyes of local artists. The 2016 banner program is sponsored by Burlington Stores and their new location on 125th & Lenox, opening Spring 2016.

The BID’s prioritized Streetscape improvement program is an ongoing initiative of 125th Street that includes banners to showcase the cultural vitality of Harlem along its primary commercial thoroughfare. Its objective is to promote recognition, understanding of Harlem’s unique and authentic heritage, its role as a vibrant center of culture, and to help promote the continued revitalization of 125th Street as the economic and artistic heart of Harlem.

This year’s winning banners will hang from the newly installed City Light poles (image attached). City Light is New York’s City’s “*latest milestone in street lighting. The City Light is a distinctive street fixture that provides crisper light through light-emitting diodes (LED). The new pole has a slim, elegant design and the LED lamp uses light, with better color and less upward light pollution than older technology lamps, all of which make for a safer and more pleasant street environment*”.

125th Street is the first commercial district to receive the LED lights. Poles will be installed between Fifth and Morningside Avenues, replacing the existing 1960s-era design and improving the quality of life for thousands of residents, visitors, and business owners. The *BID* will install selected images from the RFD on 64 doubled faced banners. The banners will be displayed starting in April 2016 for a minimum of one year. Banner designs selected through this RFD process will help to further brand and celebrate 125th Street as the center of culture in Harlem, a community that enjoys worldwide name recognition and has an unparalleled history of contribution to the nation in all fields of human endeavor.

A total of 10 (ten) banner designs will be selected through this RFD process. The banners will remain on display for a minimum of one year.

Eligibility: This RFD is open to professional visual artists who are at least 21 years of age and have an interest in Harlem. Special consideration will be given to artists currently living and/or working in Harlem.

Designs MUST BE SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL TO: tgathers@125thstreetbid.com

CONTACT: Tasemere Gathers, Director of Programs and Economic Development, 125th Street BID – 212-662-8999

BACKGROUND:

Harlem is a vibrant and dynamic community boasting major, world-class cultural institutions as well as a great diversity of smaller arts organizations and a wealth of emerging and established artists. Harlem's reputation as a world renowned cultural center is unparalleled and its mystique has served as a magnet for both artists and audiences for decades.

For the past decade or so Harlem has experienced a period of significant revitalization, a phenomenon often described as the second Harlem Renaissance. Harlem's cultural and economic landscape continues to be reshaped by new investments, residents, businesses, creative initiatives by performing and visual artists, and by a dramatic increase in the number of visitors to the community.

125th Street has long been known as the social, cultural and economic backbone of Harlem. The important role played by arts and culture in urban revitalization is well established and the presence of arts and cultural activities and organizations serve to increase commercial activity and to enhance the vitality of the community. This relationship is documented in the study, *Creating a Cultural Destination*, commissioned by the BID in 2007.

Over the past 10-15 years, 125th Street has emerged as a major cultural and commercial destination anchored by local and national chain retail outlets as well as major cultural institutions such as the Studio Museum in Harlem and the Apollo Theater. The 125th Street Business Improvement District seeks to maximize the value of the 125th Street corridor by initiating efforts that solidify its identity as Harlem's primary cultural district. Enhancing the streetscape of 125th Street through the banner project represents a major part of these efforts.

Banner 2016 Theme

Harlem Culture: Fashion and Music Explosion

The Fifth Banner Competition will explore and showcase the unique, stylish trends, and vibrant sounds from two historical cultural assets – Fashion & Music.

Harlem's culture and pride continues to be expressed today since the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920's and through the creativity of the wearer and makers of music and fashion. These images are drivers of excitement and attractions in themselves. Those who visit, work, live and invest in Harlem continue to be inspired in many ways. The completion will "Connect the Dots" with artists and businesses and the viewer along 125th Street and invite them to seek out the offerings and explore Harlem. Below are inspirational suggestions/topics but you are not limited to the list.

125th Street Fashion inspiration includes:

- Street Styles
- Hair
- Hats
- Futuristic
- Makeup
- Clothing
- Shoes and Sneakers
- Only on 125th Street
- African Chic

125th Street Music inspirations includes:

- Sounds of Harlem

- Drumming
- Jazz
- Hip Hop
- DJ's, spinning
- Gospel
- Karaoke
- Spoken word
- Festivals
- Soul
- Blues
- R&B
- Marching bands

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

- Artist design submissions should effectively reflect the general theme Fashion & Music Explosion
- Images must be clear and distinct, transfer well to a banner and be easily read from a distance of 20-25 feet
- Artwork must meet the mechanical design requirements outlined below
- Each artist may submit up to three designs for consideration
- Submissions may depict well known individuals, venues, a combination of Fashion & Music expressions or images, and/or significant events or issues reflecting the creativity in Fashion & Music

Review Criteria

- Quality and originality of Artwork
- The degree to which the design reflect the BID ON CULTURE 2012 theme
- Distinctiveness and clarity of images and their legibility from the distance at which the banners will be hung
- Artwork submission meets all technical requirements
- The appropriateness of the design for public display
- Degree to which design offers an engaging visual presence and a positive reflection of the Harlem community

MECHANICAL DESIGN DETAILS:

- Design must be reproducible in up to four colors
- Submissions will only be accepted in an electronic format (accepted file type: png, jpeg, bmp, gif) at the following specifications: CMYK
 - At least 72 dpi at actual size
 - Banner dimensions are 36" W x 96" L
 - Image field is 36" W x 65" L
 - Will accept submissions that are 8" wide x 16.25" high, with 1 inch perimeter bleed at 300 dpi

The 125th Street BID, reserve the right not to accept any submissions that do not follow these mechanical design guidelines.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS REQUIRED:

- Artist résumé/CV and/or biography in PDF or Word format
- Artist statement

DESIGN RIGHTS:

- Intellectual Property Rights: All rights to all intellectual property contained in the winning entries including , without limitation, the right to register such property in the name of the 125th Street BID, the right to alter such intellectual property and to own any intellectual property thus derived, the right to display and make copies of or otherwise publish such intellectual property in any form, and the right to otherwise deal in and with such intellectual property, shall be vested in the 125th Street BID. Each entrant, by the submission of such entry, represents and warrants that the entrant is the creator of such intellectual property.
- Modification of Winning Designs: The 125th Street BID reserve the right to suggest modifications to the winning design as may be necessary to meet municipal specifications and regulations for street banners.
- No party shall use any name, logo, symbols and other identification marks of the other without prior written consent of the other.

DESIGN SELECTION PROCESS:

- Artist submissions to the banner design competition will be subject to review by a panel generally comprised of artists, local residents, BID representatives, and banner sponsors.
- Winning submissions will be selected based on their artistic merit and quality and responsiveness to the RFD THEME – Fashion & Music.
- The panel will submit their recommendations to the Board of Directors of the 125th Street BID for final approval of selected designs
- All final selected designs become the property of the 125th Street BID

COMPENSATION: **\$1,000** will be awarded for each banner design selected.

SCHEDULE OF BANNER DESIGN EVENTS:

March 2016	Winning submissions announced
April 2016	Public unveiling and installation of winning designs