

City of Frankfort

Capital of Kentucky

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Where History Is Made Every Day!

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September 27, 2017

City of Frankfort, KY
Request for Qualifications
Community Engagement and Master Planning Project

Request Summary

The City of Frankfort and Franklin County have been asked by the State to develop a public input strategy for the approximately 8 – 16 acres of property where the Capital Plaza Complex exists. This complex includes a multi-story office building, a Convention Center and retail space commonly referred to as the Fountain Place Shops. As partners, the City and County are committed to working with the Finance Cabinet to develop a community engagement process that not only involves the Capital Plaza campus, but one that also includes building upon our historic downtown and our vibrant riverfront. We believe this opportunity is much bigger than the 8 – 16 acres and that the engagement process should include a community vision and plan that integrate these special spaces.

As part of this process it is critical that the selected consultant(s) has a comprehensive background in 1) community engagement; 2) master planning, particularly a master plan for an urban community that has a river that runs adjacent to a historic downtown; 3) economic analysis; 4) regulatory and legislative review; and 5) grant analysis and other funding opportunities to ensure we will have a plan and product that is implementable.

Firms submitting competitive qualifications may be invited to meet with the Community Engagement Advisory Committee sometime between October 20 - 27, 2017 to discuss your background and qualifications.

Background Information

City of Frankfort, KY

Frankfort, Kentucky's Capital City, is located in the central region of the state in proximity to both the Louisville and Lexington metropolitan areas. Frankfort is located just minutes from Interstates 64 and 75, making it easily accessible to a majority of the U.S. population. The Capital city covers 14.7 square miles and has approximately 2,600 registered businesses. Since the seat of state naturally maintains a large number of commuting employees, the work day population increases in significant numbers above Frankfort's 25,830 (2015 Census Data) residents.

Frankfort is the heart of Kentucky politics with the Capitol Building located in the heart of its downtown. The Capital City has a historic downtown with a multitude of buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. A lush tree canopy accents the beauty of this city and recent lock openings on the Kentucky River allow boat traffic from Frankfort to the Ohio River.

The Bourbon industry is thriving in Frankfort with three of our top four business employers being Beam, Inc., Beam Suntory and Buffalo Trace Distillery.

Earlier this summer the Finance Cabinet announced its plan to build a new, and much needed, office building and parking structure to house 1,500 state jobs in the core downtown Frankfort area. To do so will require taking down the Capital Plaza Tower, an inefficient, outdated and structurally unsound building that dominates the horizon of our beautiful capital city. It will also require removal of the Civic Center, an equally outdated facility that requires millions of dollars to separate the mechanical systems from the Tower building and tens of millions of dollars to bring the facility up to code.

Capital Plaza Complex

The following are key milestones related to this project:

In 1964, under “urban renewal” the Capital Plaza Complex rose from what was then Crawfish Bottom, a primarily African American working class neighborhood segregated by social and economic challenges. The original proposal for the Capital Tower Complex included a 28 story office tower with the city and county sharing in the cost of a convention center and basketball arena. The first proposal was a 12,000 seat convention center with an estimated cost of \$6-\$7 million. After several meetings between the Frankfort City Commission, Franklin County Fiscal Court and the Frankfort Plant Board, local officials agreed to pay \$90,000 per year for five years and \$75,000 per year thereafter to retire the construction debt. A contract was awarded in 1967 for the design of the “sports and convention center” that would seat 6,000. The estimated cost for the facility was \$2 million. Two attempts were made to acquire a bid for the project. On March 9, 1969, Struck Construction submitted a \$3.2 million bid for a slightly expanded center which would seat 6,888. The complex was completed and occupied in 1971. During construction, the utilities for all buildings in the complex were housed in the mechanical spaces of the Capital Plaza Tower.

In 2003, the Design Program Civic Center Enhancement Study was completed by Greystone Architects, Inc. The study was commissioned by the Kentucky Finance and Administration Cabinet to provide facility expansion and enhancements that will facilitate and support existing convention activities. It was requested that the recommendations “meet the market needs of new ‘destination’ conventions and some ‘gate’ events, car and boat shows, concerts and athletic events.” It was also requested that “a well-defined entrance, covered access from the adjacent hotel, new kitchen facilities and expanded storage areas” be a part of the design program. The cost of the re-design program was estimated at \$8.9 million.

In 2004, a short feasibility study was requested by local government to determine facility enhancements necessary to make the center more competitive to the market. It was determined that the center could not be used to meet its potential due to inadequate space and the building’s isolation within the complex.

In 2006-07 the Commonwealth contracted for an investigation of the complex that included an extensive facility survey and analysis of all the structures. It was determined that all would require major renovations.

In 2009-11, feasibility studies determined that actions were needed to correct the findings of the 2006-07 study. Cost estimates further refined as design details emerged. The studies proposed that the Capital Plaza Tower be replaced with a new office building to accommodate approximately 850

employees at a cost of \$86.7 million; that the existing parking garage and plaza be replaced with a new 520 vehicle parking structure at a cost of \$13.1 million; that the existing convention center be renovated to current code compliance at a cost of \$16.1 million plus \$2.8 million to relocate utilities necessary for CPT demolition; demolition of existing Fountain Place Shops and construction of an open-air plaza area and renovation of the convention center garage at a cost of \$13.9 million; renovation of the YMCA parking garage and replacement of elevated plaza with another level of parking at a cost of \$7.7 million; and demolition of Mero Street and Clinton Street overpass elevated plazas at a cost of \$1.8 million.

In 2013-14, design development studies were completed to further define a remedy to the findings of previous studies. Also in 2013-14, internal discussions (based on the 2004 information) were conducted about the renovation/ expansion of the Convention Center. Frankfort Tourism presented the State with the 2004 Convention Center Study indicating that without renovation and expansion, the Convention Center was no longer marketable or viable.

In 2013 – 2015, numerous discussions were held between the state and local officials, local legislative leaders, Frankfort Tourism, Frankfort Chamber of Commerce, and concerned citizens to discuss the plans and to determine the best course of action for the entire complex. No consensus was reached among the various groups about the future direction for the entire Capital Plaza Complex. The State determined that the Capital Plaza Tower and associated garages must be vacated and razed.

In October 2016, a Request for Information (RFI) was issued, seeking development/ demolition ideas and discussing obstacles to success. Four responses were received by the December 2016 cut-off date. Interviews with respondents were conducted January-February 2017.

Findings were that a Build-to-suit Project to develop a new office building and parking garage is still viable with inclusion of demolition of CPT and associated parking structures as part of the package. The site will support an office building and parking garage to accommodate up to 1,500 employees. In December 2016, the City of Frankfort, Franklin County Fiscal Court, CVB, KCDC, DFI, Chamber, other civic organizations and individuals participated in a letter writing campaign asking the Commonwealth of Kentucky to raze the tower and provide a true convention center to the downtown area.

In 2017, it was determined that a new office building located on the Capital Plaza site adjacent to downtown and the riverfront and housing 1,500 employees would allow consolidation of several cabinets, and that a new parking garage to accommodate the office building and demolition of Mero and Clinton Overpasses would be attractive. Notice was posted May 2017 for a built-to-suit project and on May 31, 2017 forty-four interested entities responded, were deemed certified and declared eligible to participate in the project if they so choose. On June 2, 2017 the State posted notice for a Request for Proposals for demolition and redevelopment of the Capital Plaza site with initial proposals due September 12, 2017. This deadline has since been revised to September 19, 2017. In June 2017 the Secretary of the Finance Cabinet requested the community provide a plan to obtain public input for a plan for development of the Parcel B site described in the State RFP no later than December 2017. The Chamber of Commerce hosted a meeting of a variety of community entities where the topic was discussed at length. It was unanimously determined that local leadership and staff did not have the ability to provide a strategic development plan for the area affected. At that point, a small group of representatives from the City of Frankfort, Franklin County Fiscal Court, Tourism, Downtown Frankfort Inc. and Kentucky Community Development Corporation established a project team to develop a Request for Qualifications to hire a consultant to lead a multi-phase redevelopment strategy that includes the Capital Plaza area, Greater Downtown and adjacent corridors including the riverfront.

Requirements for Qualifications

- 1) **Submission Process.** One loose-bound master and ten (10) bound copies of all submittals shall be delivered in a sealed envelope with the subject title Capital Plaza Community Engagement Proposal on the outside of the envelope to the City of Frankfort, 315 W. Second Street, Frankfort, KY 40602 by mail or hand delivery. The submittal should include a cover page and should not exceed 20 pages, excluding the cover page. Hand-delivered submittals are **due by close of business day (4:30 p.m.) on Monday, October 9, 2017, and mailed submittals must be postmarked by this date.** Any submittals hand-delivered after 4:30 PM on October 9, 2017 or mailed with a postmark after October 9, 2017 will be disqualified. Proposals will not be accepted by facsimile or email.

- 2) **Firm Details and Scope of Services.** To be considered a qualified consultant for this project, the following must be included in the submitted qualifications:
 - Cover letter serving as an executive summary of your firm and intent to submit your firm’s qualifications and understanding of what the City of Frankfort is requesting as a part of this document;
 - Firm profile including a description of the firm, number of professional personnel, years in business, office location(s), organizational structure (i.e., corporation, partnership, sole practitioner, etc), and areas of expertise. Please provide the same for any sub-consultants;
 - Key personnel who will be involved in this project, including project manager, and their experience in similar past projects;
 - A description of your firm’s ability to undertake a **community engagement strategy** to generate a diverse pool of participants and ideas while building on the many citizen-based plans that have been completed in the past. The successful firm will have demonstrated their ability to go beyond the traditional approach to engagement foray (i.e. public meetings) into other public engagement techniques that have successfully been used in other transformative communities.
 - A description of your firm’s ability to take the ideas generated from a diverse community engagement strategy and translate them into a **master plan** that considers the following: capitalizing on Frankfort’s relationship to the Kentucky river; balancing the urban core circulation system for both pedestrians and vehicular traffic; creating a range of economic and housing opportunities; creating a connected public realm; reinforcing our historical and cultural identity; capitalizing on the arts and artistic expression; and integrating a parking/transportation strategy.
 - A description of your firm’s ability to undertake an **economic assessment**, specifically the marketability and financial feasibility related to the redevelopment of the proposed areas. This assessment should be based upon the vision developed by the community for the proposed areas and may include an evaluation of local demographics and associated trends, tourism trends, retail market trends including regional and sector-specific pull factors, evaluation of office market indicators, an assessment of existing characteristics and the demand for future urban housing including a lifestyle segmentation analysis, office and retail and anticipated absorption rates, an understanding of core financial drivers, a phasing plan driven by lease rates,

operating expenses, construction/renovation costs, etc., hurdles to ROI, and infrastructure investment requirements to support economic viability.

- A description of your firm’s ability to undertake **regulatory and legislative review** to identify barriers to and requirements for development or redevelopment at the local, state and federal level of the proposed areas.
 - A description of your firm’s ability to assess opportunities for **grant funding, financial incentives or resources and other private funding** to assist in the development or redevelopment of the proposed areas.
 - Submit the name of a minimum of three (3) comparable communities in the last five years where you undertook a similar process that led to a positive impact for the community as a result of your efforts. Comparable communities are not limited to community size but may also relate to scope and scale of previous project. Comparable communities preferably have a river that runs adjacent to a historic downtown. Please provide the name of the community and contact information for lead staff from the community.
 - Any additional information, exceptions, or suggestions that will aid in the Committee’s selection process.
- 3) **Costs.** This request for qualifications does not commit the City of Frankfort to pay any costs incurred by the submitting organization in the submission of their qualifications. The submitting organization is responsible for all costs associated with response to this request.
- 4) **Disposition.** All materials submitted in response to this request for information shall become the property of the City of Frankfort upon delivery.

Review Process

Please see attached timeline for the proposed review process schedule. The timeline is subject to amendment as needed.

The City of Frankfort reserves the right to reject any and all submittals at any time with no penalty and to waive immaterial defects and minor irregularities in submittals.

Additional Information

All questions and inquiries regarding this RFQ must be submitted in writing. Please submit all inquiries to csteinhauser@frankfort.ky.gov.

PROPOSED TIMELINE

October 9, 2017	RFQ responses due
October 10, 2017	Verify RFQ response compliance
October 11 – 16, 2017	Review submittals
October 17 – 20, 2017	Rank submittals and select firms to interview
October 26 – 27, 2017	Interview and recommendation
November 2, 2017	Fiscal Court approval of Committee recommendation for consultant selection and to authorize City Manager to negotiate a contract
November 13, 2017	Board of Commissioner approval of Committee recommendation for consultant selection and to authorize City Manager to negotiate a contract