

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)  
FORMER BELTZHOOVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
IN THE BELTZHOOVER NEIGHBORHOOD OF THE CITY OF PITTSBURGH**



**RFP Issue Date: March 8, 2021**

**Proposal Response Due Date: May 14, 2021**

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## II. Introduction

### **Background & Goal of the RFP**

The Beltzhoover Consensus Group (BCG) is seeking proposals from a redevelopment partner for the former Beltzhoover Elementary School. The School is located at 320 Cedarhurst St. in the Beltzhoover neighborhood of the City of Pittsburgh. It was operational for over 100 years, and many alumni and former staff still reside in the neighborhood. The School is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is also a Local Historic Landmark. The Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA) has agreed to release this RFP on behalf of BGC, but is not otherwise associated with the project.

The School was one of 10 facilities closed by Pittsburgh Public Schools in 2004. A community effort to preserve and facilitate the re-use of the building led to the purchase by BCG in 2017. Support for the purchase and initial planning activities was provided by Councilman Bruce Kraus, Office of Mayor William Peduto, the URA, the Heinz Endowments, Neighborhood Allies and the Birmingham Foundation.

The goal of the Request for Proposals (RFP) is to secure a redevelopment partner that will work collaboratively with the BCG and other partners to complete a high-quality redevelopment of the School as housing and community space. The redevelopment of the property should meet local requirements and the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, as well as meet the current needs of the community and region. Special attention should be paid to the history of this community asset while renovating it.

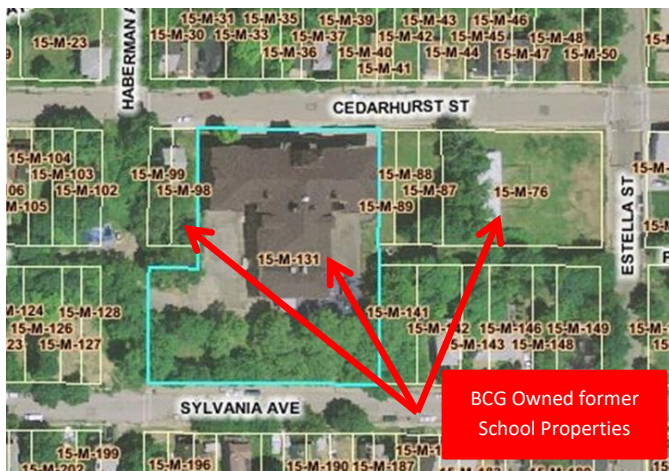
BCG has taken the lead in engaging the community around the future of the building, and through this RFP seeks to find a redevelopment partner that is committed to continuing this community engagement. Additionally, the redevelopment partner will bring technical expertise and financial capacity to advance the development process.

The redevelopment of the School should help catalyze additional community-driven development in Beltzhoover. There are several City-owned vacant lots proximate to the School that should be evaluated for inclusion in this project or in a subsequent phase of development.

## **Property Information**

Address: 320 Cedarhurst St., Pittsburgh, PA 15210  
Neighborhood: Beltzhoover  
Council District: 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Councilperson: Bruce Kraus  
Parcel IDs: 15-M-076; 15-M-098; 15-M-131  
Size of Parcels: ~1.89 acres (see Appendix A—Property Survey)  
Size of Building: ~60,000 (see Appendix B—Floor Plan)  
Historic Designation: Listed on National Register of Historic Places and is a City Designated Historic Structure  
Previous Use: Beltzhoover Elementary School (closed in 2004)  
District Zoning: R2-H High Density Residential

The three subject parcels are located in the block bound by Cedarhurst St., Sylvania Ave., Haberman St., and Delmont Ave. A parcel map is below and a Google Map is available [here](#).



The School was designed by architects William Shaw and Thomas Lloyd and constructed between 1905 and 1909. Designed in a classical style, Beltzhoover Elementary School was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986. More information regarding this listing is available [here](#). The National Register listing provides eligibility for the federal rehabilitation tax credit, in which certified rehabilitations are eligible for a 20% tax credit on qualified rehabilitation expenses. In addition, Pennsylvania has a state historic tax incentive program that is detailed [here](#).



Looking west on Cedarhurst St. from Estella Ave.



Front view from Cedarhurst St.



Hallway

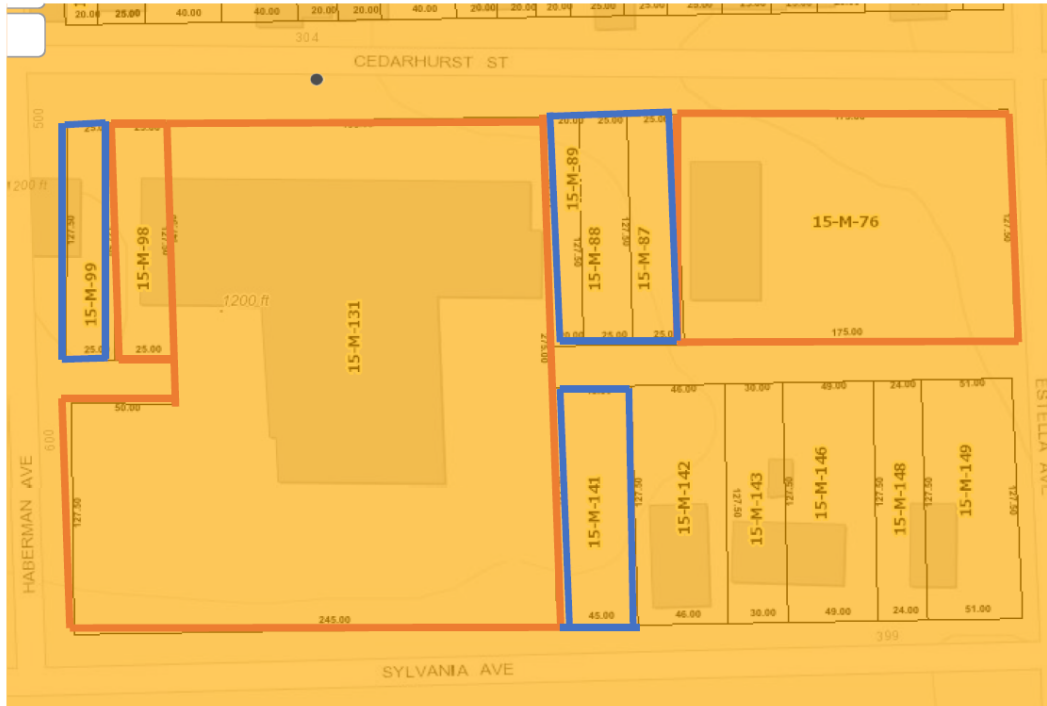




Stairwell



Classroom

There are additional City-owned parcels within the subject block that are not included in the RFP. However, it is the intent of the BCG to work with selected redeveloper to determine if any additional publicly owned land should be pursued for development.



-  BCG Owned Properties
-  City Owned Properties

Source: Project Base Map is from City of Pittsburgh GIS

### **Background on Beltzhoover Consensus Group**

Beltzhoover Consensus Group incorporated in 2017 by consensus of a group of residents and community-based organizations that recognized the value of collective voices to:

- Provide and promote a unified voice and vision for the neighborhood;
- Bring residents and stakeholders together to improve the quality of life in our neighborhood through community programs, and partnerships with other organizations;
- Serve as a community resource;
- Revitalize the neighborhood, its properties, and structures.



BCG's mission is "to enhance the quality of life in our neighborhood through community outreach with partnerships with other organizations." BCG hosts a monthly Community Forum and has three programmatic committees: Youth Development Committee, Housing Committee, and School Committee.

BCG intends to support the development process by providing guidance and technical assistance through the planning, land assembly, zoning, permitting approval, and financing process. BCG has formed a committee of the Board of Directors, the School Committee, which will manage this process.

### **About the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh**

The Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA) is the City of Pittsburgh's economic development authority, supporting the City's economic development goals, which are designed to create a city of inclusive opportunity for residents, stakeholders, and communities. The URA is committed to creating more housing that is affordable to the average Pittsburgher; encouraging more entrepreneurship and small business development; promoting inclusive growth and quality job creation; expanding neighborhood and main streets revitalization efforts; and developing a talented workforce that is equipped with the skills of the future. Housing activities include the administration of the Housing Opportunity Fund and providing financing for housing construction, rehabilitation, and a variety of consumer programs.

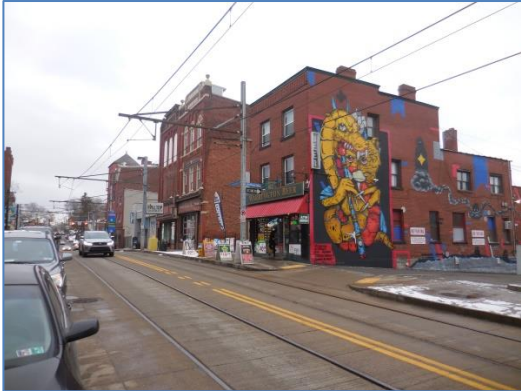
The URA is not directly involved in this project and is releasing this RFP on behalf of BCG. No subsidy or in-kind contributions of any kind are implied.

### **Neighborhood & Market Conditions**

Beltzhoover is a primarily residential neighborhood situated 2 miles south of downtown Pittsburgh. Beltzhoover, along with the neighboring communities of Allentown, Knoxville, and Mt. Oliver, makes up Pittsburgh's southern hilltop. Beltzhoover Avenue is the main north/south arterial through the neighborhood. Warrington Avenue runs along Beltzhoover's northern boundary and connects to Route 51.

The South Pittsburgh Hilltop communities share a neighborhood business district on E. Warrington Ave. The [Hilltop Alliance](#), a partner organization, operates a business district revitalization program that has leveraged \$8.4M in private investment over the past six years. Forty new businesses have opened since 2014 and the vacancy rate has fallen from 40% to 8%. During this period, more than 55 renovation projects and 63 loans and grants were provided to new and existing businesses driven by a public-private partnership known as the Neighborhood Partnership Program. The E. Warrington Avenue business district is home to unique destination businesses and restaurants such as Work Hard Pittsburgh, Onion Maiden,

and Alla Famiglia. The recent investment in the business district and the neighborhood’s attractively priced homes position the South Pittsburgh Hilltop to attract new businesses and residents.



E. Warrington Avenue business district looking east

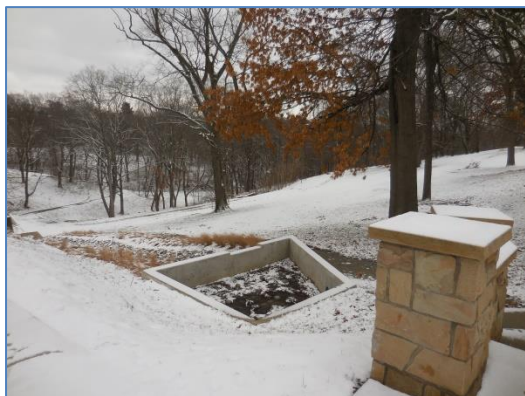


E. Warrington Avenue business district looking west

The Mt. Washington neighborhood borders Beltzhoover to the north. Mt. Washington is well known for its views of Downtown and a strong residential market. The neighborhood is home to a former school building, South Hills High School, which was successfully renovated into senior housing. Mt. Washington’s residential market momentum has begun to push farther south along Beltzhoover Avenue.

One of Beltzhoover’s assets is its proximity to Downtown and the transit connections that serve the neighborhood. Pittsburgh’s light rail system is accessible to Beltzhoover and provides convenient access to Downtown as well as points south. The South Hills Junction Station is located on Beltzhoover’s northern edge. The Port Authority’s 44 bus route has stops that are two blocks from Beltzhoover School.

Beltzhoover is also home to one of Pittsburgh’s largest neighborhood parks – McKinley Park. This 79-acre park was created prior to 1898 when Beltzhoover Borough was annexed by the City of Pittsburgh. The park features woodlands, trails, and ravines and a new shelter house. Over \$2M of recent improvements to the park’s entrance along Delmont Avenue included the addition of a shelter located a few blocks from Beltzhoover School. The Warrington Recreation Center is a well utilized asset within the neighborhood that provides a full gym and recreational programming.





In addition to McKinley Park, there are other nearby amenities including the Hilltop Urban Farm. This 23-acre farm offers two core programs: 1) youth-centered education and 2) a workforce development program for new adult farmers. The farm is one of the larger urban farms in the country and provides a source of produce for the South Pittsburgh Hilltop area that has limited grocery options.

### **RFP Timeline**

RFP Issue Date	March 8, 2021
1 <sup>st</sup> Site Tour (See Note 1)	March 24, 2021 (12 p.m. – 2 p.m.)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Site Tour (See Note 1)	April 21, 2021 (12 p.m. – 2 p.m.)
Proposals Due	May 14, 2021
Interviews with Potential Developers	TBD but anticipated within a month of proposal due date.

1) Tour participants will need to register in advance and sign a waiver and release of liability to enter the building

### **Community Process**

BCG recently received a Neighborhood Initiatives Fund grant from the URA to continue the community engagement process. As the current COVID-19 pandemic limits in-person interactions, other opportunities for meaningful engagement will be pursued. The redeveloper's response should include information on the proposed team's experience with community engagement.

### **Property Disposition.**

BCG is open to a variety of disposition approaches, from a joint venture to an eventual sale of the property, provided that the community's objectives are protected long-term. The redeveloper should propose a property disposition approach that the redeveloper feels is appropriate for the project. BCG understands that negotiations with the redeveloper will be subject to a variety of factors, including the value of BCG's contributions and the economics of the project.

BCG is currently working with the local property taxing bodies to resolve the issue of back taxes and the assessed value of the school building. BCG anticipates this issue will be resolved by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter.

### III. Proposal Requirements

Proposals should demonstrate the capacity and creativity of the redeveloper to complete a development on this site that is consistent with the goals of the Beltzhoover community and financially feasible. The preferred redevelopment of the property includes both housing and community space.

The redeveloper should submit the package using Ion Wave, the URA's RFP program. The proposal should be combined into one file in PDF format. The PDF should be under 10MB in size. Do not send hard copies. The proposal should be addressed to:

Jennifer Cash Wade  
Beltzhoover Consensus Group  
610 Delmont Ave.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15210  
[cashwadej@aol.com](mailto:cashwadej@aol.com)

With a copy to:

Nick Fedorek, Assistant Director of Policy and Development  
Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh  
412 Boulevard of the Allies, Suite 901  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
[nfedorek@ura.org](mailto:nfedorek@ura.org)

Questions and comments should be submitted on the Ion Wave website, not through email.

All responses should include an RFP Summary Page as the cover page of the proposal package. This page should be fully completed by the redeveloper. All responses must be received by the response due date for consideration.

The following Proposal Requirements will serve to establish a redeveloper's overall capacity to complete this project.

1. Project Narrative
  - a) Statement of project vision and objectives.
  - b) Detailed description of how the redeveloper intends to engage the community in the development process.
  - c) Description of development plan including use, number of units (for residential) and/or rentable square feet for community or commercial use including any conceptual designs if available.

- d) Prospective development timeline, including major milestones.
  - e) Discussion of parking needs including the parking required by the zoning code and parking necessary to meet the project demands.
  - f) Identification of the redeveloper's design, engineering, and construction team. If those relationships have yet to be finalized for the project than provide a detailed description of how those firms will be selected.
  - g) Statement of commitment to the inclusion of Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBE) and local hiring.
2. Capacity & Relevant Development Experience
- a) Identify the experience of redeveloper's staff and the role they will play on this project.
  - b) Project portfolio including brief description of similar or otherwise relevant projects (project portfolio).
3. Budget & Financial Capacity
- a) Preliminary financing projections including:
    - Sources and Uses statement
    - Operating Proforma

The financial projections should include discussion of any assumptions.
  - b) Identification of any funding gap that cannot be supported by traditional debt or equity.
  - c) Explanation of the redeveloper's previous experience securing the types of sources identified in the development budget.

#### **IV. Selection Process**

The BCG and URA will review the proposal submissions and may verify the accuracy of the information submitted. The URA is providing technical expertise only, and no further involvement or subsidy from the URA is given or implied as a result of URA staff involvement. After the initial proposal evaluation is complete, a redeveloper who is placed on the short-list may be asked to interview with the BCG and its partners. The following criteria will be part of the selection consideration:

1. Experience completing similar redevelopment projects in an urban neighborhood.
2. Capacity to attract and secure financing, with a minimum amount of public subsidy.
3. Ability to assemble a team with the appropriate specialties.
4. Appropriateness of proposed plan with RFP goals and scale of development.
5. Experience with community engagement.
6. Willingness to structure a partnership or sales agreement with BCG that is commensurate with BCG's contributions to the project.
7. Commitment to sustainable design standards.
8. Commitment to M/WBE participation and local hiring.

Based on the results of the evaluation process, the BCG may select a redeveloper to enter exclusive negotiations with regarding the sale and / or ownership structure of the proposed redevelopment relative to the contributions of BCG.

## **V. General Terms & Conditions**

1. Prior to submitting a proposal, a redeveloper is encouraged to attend one of the scheduled site tours.
2. The BCG shall be the sole judge as to which proposal best meets the selection criteria. The BCG reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received, to waive any informalities or irregularities in any submitted proposal, and to negotiate scope and proposal prices.
3. Responses to the RFP will not be opened publicly.
4. This RFP is submitted subject to errors, omissions, and/or withdrawal without notice by the BCG at any time. Addendums to this RFP may be forthcoming.
5. No representation or warranty is provided regarding the accuracy of the third-party information the RFP and its appendices.
6. All proposals, including attachments, supplementary materials, addenda, etc. shall become the property of the BCG.

RFP SUMMARY PAGE FOLLOWS

**RFP Summary**

Project Name	
Redeveloper (Legal Entity Name)	
Primary Contact Name for Proposal	
Primary Contact Mailing Address	
Contact Phone	
Contact E-mail Address	
Complete all fields that apply to this proposal	
Total Estimated Project Cost	
Estimated Full Time Construction Jobs	
Estimated Full Time Jobs (Operational)	
Total Market Rate Residential Units	
Total Affordable Residential Units	
Total Community Space (in SF)	
Total Commercial Space (in SF)	
Total Parking Spaces on Site	



**Appendix A: Property Survey**

Please refer to separate PDF for the Property Survey.

**Appendix B: Existing Conditions Plans**

Please refer to separate PDF for the Existing Conditions Plans.

**Appendix C: Previous Hazardous Materials Inspection**

Please refer to separate PDF for the Hazardous Materials Inspection.