

ura

**Urban
Redevelopment
Authority
of Pittsburgh**



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
200 Ross Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219**

**Issue Date:
Friday, August 11, 2023**

**Building Tour and Q&A Sessions:
Thursday, August 17, 2023, at 9:00 AM
Monday, August 28, 2023, at 9:00 AM**

**Proposal Due Date:
September 29, 2023, at 12:00 PM EDT**

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF PITTSBURGH
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
200 Ross Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Issued on August 11, 2023

1. OBJECTIVE

The City of Pittsburgh (the “City”) and the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (the “URA”) have new office space located at 412 Boulevard of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15219 and have vacated their former office space at 200 Ross Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219 (“200 Ross”). In cooperation with the City, the URA is requesting proposals from developers to acquire, renovate and re-use 200 Ross, with a strong preference for affordable housing.

2. BACKGROUND

A. Property Description

Constructed in 1908 as the headquarters of Jones & Laughlin Steel (“J&L”), 200 Ross was designed by MacClure and Spahr Architects as an eight-story structure. In 1917, additional floors were added to the top of 200 Ross, creating the 13-floor structure that exists today. John P. Robin, the Executive Director of URA from 1948 to 1954, led the effort for the Elizabethan-styled building to be purchased and converted to public use, making it possible for J&L to move its headquarters to Gateway Center. In 1952, the building was donated to the Community Chest of Allegheny County, forerunner of the United Way, who co-owned it with the URA. Across its ownership tenure, the URA has shared ownership with other entities, including the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh (“HACP”) and the City. As a result of the shared ownership between these government entities, 200 Ross was rededicated as the John P. Robin Civic Building on July 11, 1983.

200 Ross (Block 2-J, Lot 164-0-2) contains **104,920 square feet** of gross building area comprised of 13 floors and two unfinished basement levels (*See floor plans attached as Exhibit “F”*). Its steel frame is in good condition. Heating is provided by gas-fired boilers which were replaced in 2006, and windows which were replaced in 1980. 200 Ross has **no sprinkler system**. Air conditioning is mostly in the form of electric window units with some floors cooled by roof-mounted compressors. There are **four total elevators**, with **three passenger elevators** serving all 13 floors and **one freight elevator** serving all floors plus the two basement levels. To the immediate rear of the building is a parking lot with eleven striped spaces, seven of which are partially covered. The URA and City will consider conveying the parking lot if the URA and the City determine that the proposal submission includes a plan for effective use of the parking lot, but will retain air rights over the parking lot. A surface parking lot located nearby at 610 Third Avenue that is presently operated by ALCO Parking is separately owned by the URA and is not part of this RFP.

200 Ross is located within zoning district GT-B, Golden Triangle District B. It is centrally located within two blocks of all City and Allegheny County (“County”) governmental offices, including the City County Building, Allegheny County Recorder of Deeds Office, Allegheny County

Jail and the First Avenue Port Authority T-Station. The property contains historic interiors in the ground floor lobby, ground floor hallways, thirteenth floor conference room, and thirteenth floor hallways and thirteenth floor executive offices. These features are subject to one of three of the following methods of historic preservation based on the chosen developer's preference:

- i. Historic covenant running with the land;
- ii. A preservation easement; or
- iii. A Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives.

Due to age, inefficient floor layout and dated mechanical systems, the gutting of the unprotected interior finishes and installation of a building-wide central air conditioning system is anticipated. The building was listed on the National Register of Historical Buildings on November 4, 2021, and qualifies for Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives. The property will be sold with the requirement that historically significant façade and interiors are preserved using one of the three methods listed above. A list of historically significant, protected elements can be found in **Exhibit G: Character Defining Features**.

Sale of the building to the developer is contingent on the successful completion of an environmental review pursuant to 24 CFR Part 58. The developer should anticipate taking necessary environmental mediation actions, which may include, but are not limited to, noise mitigation, cleanup of certain environmental conditions identified in any site assessments, and acquisition of flood insurance.

In its condition as of October 2022, **200 Ross is appraised at \$3.975 million** for office or residential conversion.

B. URA Information

Established and existing under the Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law, 35 P.S. §§ 1701, *et seq.*, the URA, is the City of Pittsburgh's economic development enterprise. The URA is committed to building a prosperous and equitable economy for all of Pittsburgh. It helps to bridge public and private interests to invest in financially viable equitable developments that promote housing affordability, economic mobility, entrepreneurship, and neighborhood revitalization. The URA's work creates and sustains quality jobs, thriving neighborhoods, healthy communities and sustainable businesses for the benefit of all Pittsburghers. Incorporated in 1946 as one of the first redevelopment authorities in the United States, the URA achieves its mission by assembling, preparing, and conveying sites for major mixed-use developments and by providing a portfolio of programs that include financing for business location, relocation, and expansion; housing construction and rehabilitation; and home purchases and improvements. The URA conducts these activities using unique powers granted by the Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law to deploy and attach conditions to the use of public subsidies and the disposition of publicly owned land.

The URA is a legal entity separate and distinct from the City of Pittsburgh. The URA works closely with the City in fulfilling its redevelopment mission.

Additional information regarding the URA may be found on the URA’s website at www.ura.org. Questions about the RFP should be directed to Brandon Wilson, Project Manager, at (412) 255-6416 or bwilson@ura.org.

3. **TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

A tentative schedule for the selection process is below. This schedule is subject to change. **If there is a schedule change, it will be posted as an addendum on IonWave Technologies, the URA’s online bidding platform.**

Developers must be able to meet the deadlines in the schedule below:

URA Board Announcement to release RFP	Thursday, August 10, 2023
RFP Issue Date	Friday, August 11, 2023
Site Tours	Thursday, August 17, 2023 at 9:00 am
	Monday, August 28, 2023 at 9:00 am
Proposal Due Date	Friday, September 29, 2023
Review Committee and URA to review proposal	October 13, 2023
Review Committee & URA conduct interviews w/ finalists	October 18, 2023
URA Board Authorization to select Developer and award Exclusive Negotiations	November 9, 2023

4. **PROPOSAL SCOPE**

Each proposal must include the following:

- A. Description of the proposed renovation and re-use of 200 Ross as well as how your firm and project team intend to preserve the “character defining features” (as referenced in Section 7). For proposals incorporating a residential conversion in whole or in part, the provision of affordable housing is strongly preferred. Proposals including the provision of an affordable housing component should clearly state such intention along with the number/percentage of affordable units and proposed income levels to enable the URA and the City to fully evaluate and consider.
- B. Schematic drawings including site plan with elevations.
- C. Timetable assuming closing on or about June 1, 2024, without utilizing Low Income Housing Tax Credits (“LIHTC”), or July 1, 2024, with LIHTC.

- D. Preliminary development pro forma, including acquisition of 200 Ross at or above the \$3,975,000 appraised value.
- E. Financing plan and statement on ability to obtain loans, e.g., bank letter of interest, along with a statement representing availability of equity.
- F. Subsidy requested, if any. There is no commitment by the URA to provide subsidy for this project and proposals must take this into consideration. The URA acknowledges that the provision of affordable housing may require public subsidy. *Note: City Tax Abatement Programs and Housing Opportunity Fund (HOF) Programs are detailed in the exhibits (see `Exhibit I`).*

5. **STAKEHOLDER OVERVIEW**

The community groups that represent Downtown include the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership (“PDP”) and the Downtown Neighbors Alliance (“DNA”).

The PDP is a non-profit corporation composed of Downtown businesses, professionals, civic organizations, foundations, and residents to develop and implement programs and initiatives to enhance Downtown Pittsburgh. PDP also promotes and markets Downtown as the region’s premier destination for business, living, shopping, dining and entertainment. The PDP also stands as a staunch advocate for all those who make Downtown part of their lives—from businesses to workers to residents. To learn more about PDP [click here](#).

DNA, is a community-based non-profit organization that serves Downtown. The organization partners with Councilman R. Daniel Lavelle, Mayor Ed Gainey and supportive community leaders through innovative programs and events that encourage residential development, assist small businesses, and promote the arts and entertainment. Through this work, DNA strives to make the Golden Triangle a better place to live, work and play. To learn more about DNA, [click here](#).

The City of Pittsburgh, including the Department of City Planning, is also a community stakeholder.

Interested redevelopers are encouraged to meet with the community stakeholders prior to submitting a proposal to discuss how the proposed project relates to the community plan.

6. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Each submission should include the following:

- 1) RFP Summary Sheet
This should include the firm's name, main point of contact, and contact information.
(see 'Exhibit A')
- 2) Table of Contents
- 3) Primary Qualification
 - Provide a brief narrative that explains why your firm is well qualified to work on the project.
 - Biographies of key personnel.
- 4) Sources & Uses Budget
See 'Exhibit B'
- 5) Firm or Company Profile
Provide a brief profile of your firm.
- 6) Experience
 - a. Briefly describe relevant experience.
 - b. List any projects with public entities similar to the URA that your firm is currently working on or has recently completed.
 - c. Describe the scope and success of similar projects where your firm or company acquired, renovated, and re-used an existing structure, particularly the adaptive reuse of historic structures into mixed-income and residential uses.
- 7) Historic Preservation Strategy
Provide a description of your historic preservation strategy for protecting character defining features (See 'Exhibit G') utilizing one of the following methods:
 - i. Historic covenant running with the land;
 - ii. A preservation easement; or
 - iii. Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives.
- 8) Sustainability Narrative
Provide a sustainability narrative that addresses strategies to promote sustainability through the renovation of the building. (See 'Exhibit H')
- 9) Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise ("MWBE") Requirements
The URA has a long history of diversity and inclusion within all of its programs and other activities. The URA encourages the full participation of minority and women business owners and professionals in this effort. The URA requires that all applicants demonstrate a good faith effort to obtain minority and women-owned business

participation in work performed in connection with URA initiatives. The URA acknowledges and makes a good faith effort to adhere to the City's goal of eighteen percent 18% minority and 7% women participation.

An MWBE narrative needs to be included with the respondent's proposal. See **'Exhibit C'** for MWBE Narrative Requirement. MWBE participation can be satisfied by:

- a. Ownership/Partnership of respondent;
- b. Employment level of minorities and/or women in the respondent;
- c. Staffing of minorities and/or women on URA matters;
- d. Use of minority or women-owned businesses as vendors;
- e. Subcontracting with firms owned and controlled by minorities and/or women.
If this is to be done, that fact, and the name of the proposed subcontracting firms, must be clearly identified in the proposal.

Any questions about MWBE requirements should be directed to Jazmine Derico, Labor Compliance Manager, at (412) 255-6625 or jderico@ura.org.

10) Minority Workforce Inclusion ("MWI") Requirements

The URA requires that all respondents demonstrate and document a good faith effort to meet or exceed the City's 12% minority workforce inclusion goal for all URA projects with total project costs of \$500,000 or more. As a matter of policy, all proposal packages submitted to the URA must include a MWI Narrative detailing how the respondent plans to meet the URA's expressed MWI goal of 12%. If awarded the project, the respondent will be asked to submit a MWI plan evidencing that 12% of the labor hours are fulfilled by minority workers.

A MWI narrative needs to be included with the respondent's proposal. See **'Exhibit E'** for MWI Narrative Requirement.

11) References

Provide three client references related to the applicable experience described in Section 6.6 above. Where possible, provide references from public entities similar to the URA. Include the reference's name, title, address, and direct telephone number.

12) Other Information

Please provide any other information you believe is pertinent to the URA's consideration of your firm.

7. **RESPONSE SUBMISSION**

All responses should include the RFP Summary Page, which can be found at the end of this document (**Exhibit "C"**), as the cover page of the proposal package. Respondents should submit their proposal package using IonWave Technologies, the URA's RFP response program. The proposal should be combined into one file in bookmarked PDF format. Do not send hard copies to the URA.

The proposal submissions and questions concerning the content of this RFP must be submitted via IonWave Technologies only.

ALL RESPONSES MUST BE SUBMITTED VIA IONWAVE TECHNOLOGIES BY THE RESPONSE DUE DATE AND TIME AS STATED IN THE RFP TIMELINE FOR CONSIDERATION. Any late responses or responses received outside of IonWave Technologies will not be reviewed.

ALL RESPONDENT QUESTIONS WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTED AND ANSWERED THROUGH IONWAVE TECHNOLOGIES SUBMISSION, WHERE THE RESPONSE WILL BE MADE PUBLIC.

The URA will not reimburse firms for any expenses incurred in preparing responses to this RFP. If you have any technical issues with using IonWave Technologies, please contact:

Ivy Coleman
412-255-6691
icoleman@ura.org

8. SELECTION CRITERIA

- A. Process: The selection of any responsive firm(s) will be made by the URA Board of Directors and its co-owners after receiving the recommendations of URA staff and/or any applicable review committee. Such selection will be based on the nature and quality of the responding firm's responses to the Proposal Scope and Submission Requirements described above. The URA reserves the right to request that any respondent meet with URA staff and/or a review committee in a formal interview. Submissions must conform to the historic preservation requirements referenced in Section 7. The selected submission is subject to approval by Pittsburgh City Council as a property within the Inner Triangle Redevelopment Area.
- B. Preferences: The URA, in recommending proposals to the URA Board of Directors, shall show preference toward proposals that include the following: local development partners, local MWBE partners, mixed income housing, and innovative strategies to attain housing affordability.
- C. Conflicts of Interest: Responsive firms and their team members must have no conflicts of interest with regard to any other work performed by the respondent for the URA, the City of Pittsburgh, or any related entity.
- D. RFP Compliance: All responsive firms must adhere to the instructions contained in this RFP in preparing the submitted proposal.
- E. Waiver of Defects: The URA shall be the sole judge as to which respondent(s) best meet the selection criteria. The URA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted. The URA reserves the right to reject any proposal for failure to comply with the requirements of this RFP. The URA further reserves the right, in its sole discretion,

to waive any such defect(s) or failure(s). Submission of a response indicates acceptance by the firm of the conditions contained in this RFP.

- F. Nondiscrimination: Each responsive firm agrees not to discriminate, whether in employment, contracting or otherwise, in violation of any federal, state, or local law and/or on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression.

9. DISPOSITION PROCESS

- A. URA Disposition Process – Should the URA Board of Directors select a respondent as a Developer, such Developer will be required to comply with the URA’s Disposition Process. As part of this process, the Developer must show that all funds needed for the fully realized project are available at the time of closing. In order to ensure that the site will be responsibly redeveloped, the URA will review the Opinion of Probable Cost and construction plans against the evidence of financing to determine if the information presented is reasonable and corresponds. The URA will not close on a property until all the terms of the disposition process are fulfilled. See **Exhibit “D”** for Disposition Process Overview.

The selected development is subject to Pittsburgh City Council approval as a property within the Inner Triangle Redevelopment Area.

The Developer must be willing to enter into a written Disposition Contract with the URA. The Disposition Contract is the binding document that details the Developer’s plan to design, finance, purchase, and construct the redevelopment project. Taxes, liability insurance, site security, historic preservation, and all aspects of owning and redeveloping the property shall be the full responsibility of the Developer at the time of sale, as specified in the Disposition Contract.

The URA Board must approve any and all developers who purchase URA property. Upon URA Board approval, the Developer’s purchase of the property will occur after execution of a Disposition Contract, approval of the final construction documents and issuance of a building permit. The purchase of the property will occur simultaneously with the closing on the Developer’s construction financing. The URA reserves the right to select, reject, and/or make no selection through this RFP at its sole discretion.

10. LEGAL INFORMATION

- A. The URA shall have the right to verify the accuracy of all information submitted and to make such investigation as it deems necessary to determine the ability of each Applicant to perform the obligations in the response. The URA in its discretion reserves the right to reject any response when the available evidence or information does not satisfy the URA that the Applicant is qualified to carry out properly the obligations of the response.

- B. The selected Applicant shall be given an opportunity to inspect the property. If the Applicant is selected and elects to proceed after exercising its due diligence, it shall acquire or take possession of the property in "AS-IS" CONDITION.
- C. The sale of the property in no way guarantees or warrants grading permits, building permits, zoning variances or financial viability. The URA reserves the right to refuse to sell the property until an Applicant is able to obtain all necessary permits.
- D. The selected Applicant will be required to demonstrate a good faith effort to incorporate environmentally sustainable features and practices into their development plan.
- E. The URA reserves the right to accept an offer or proposal other than the highest offer and will determine awards at its sole discretion.
- F. The URA shall be the sole judge as to which, if any, Applicant best meets the selection criteria. The URA reserves the right to reject any or all responses, to waive any submission requirements contained within this response, and to waive any irregularities in any submitted response.
- G. This form is submitted subject to errors, omissions, and/or withdrawal without notice by the URA at any time.
- H. All responses, including attachments, supplementary materials, addenda, etc. shall become the property of the URA and will not be returned.
- I. Applicant and team members must disclose any conflict of interest with regards to any other work performed by the Applicant for the URA, the City of Pittsburgh, or any related entity.