

ura

**Urban
Redevelopment
Authority
of Pittsburgh**



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

**Issue Date:
Monday, November 13, 2023**

**Qualifications Due Date:
Friday, November 30, 2023, at 12:00 PM EDT**

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF PITTSBURGH
REQUEST FOR Qualifications (RFQ)
200 Ross Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Issued on November 13, 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 seeking qualifications packages from developers who have interest in submitting a qualifications package for 200 Ross. Firms with experience in the redevelopment of mid-rise office buildings, adaptive reuse, historic preservation, and/or mixed income/affordable housing development are encourage to submit. Qualifications packages should also demonstrate success utilizing public financing tools such as Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), the Redevelopment Assistance Capitalization Program (RACP), Historic Tax Credits (HTC), and other applicable sources.

Qualified firms will be selected by a Review Committee and invited to submit full proposals for redevelopment at a future date. Submission of a qualifications package in response to this RFQ is required to submit a proposal.

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 “C”*). 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 eventual 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 RFQ.

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 D: 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 RFQ 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 RFQ	Thursday, November 9, 2023
RFQ Issue Date	Monday, November 13, 2023
Qualifications Package Due Date	Thursday, November 30, 2023
URA to review qualifications and short list respondents	December 7, 2023
URA solicits developer shortlist for proposals	December 8, 2023

4. **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 future proposal to discuss how the proposed project relates to the community plan.

5. **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Each RFQ response should include the following:

1) **RFQ Summary Sheet**

This is the cover page and should include the Developer's name, contact person, and contact information.

2) **Table of Contents**

3) **Statement of Developer Interest**

4) **Development Team Profile and Statement of Qualifications**

- a. Provide a description of the development team, including but not limited to the developer, architect, engineer, etc.
- b. Provide a statement of qualification demonstrating your teams' capacity and experience to undertake a complex substantial historic rehabilitation housing development project. Include relevant projects.
- c. Experience with M/WBE firms as part of the development team.
- d. Three years of financial statements

5) **Other Information**

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

If you have more detailed qualifications than required, please feel free to include this as supplemental information. If your firm is selected to proceed, you will be invited to submit a full proposal that will include more detailed information, including but not limited to: drawings, schematics, and project financials.

6. RESPONSE SUBMISSION

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

The qualifications submissions and questions concerning the content of this RFQ 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 RFQ 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 RFQ. If you have any technical issues with using IonWave Technologies, please contact:

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

7. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Developer(s) will be evaluated based on, but not limited to, the criteria listed below:

- a. Qualifications
- b. Developer's experience in completing similar projects
- c. Ability to assemble a diverse team with the appropriate specialties
- d. Demonstration of experience to advance a mixed income residential development

The URA shall be the sole judge as to which Developer(s) meet the evaluation criteria and reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject any or all responses received, to waive any submission requirements contained within this RFQ, and to waive any irregularities in any submitted response. The URA reserves the right to verify the accuracy of all information submitted.

One or more Developers may be asked to present their responses to the community for input. As stated in Section 8 below, the URA Board must approve all Developers who purchase URA land. One or more Developers may be recommended to the URA Board based on the overall quality of the responses to this RFQ.

The evaluation of the respondent's qualifications, experience and capacity will be based upon information in the qualifications package submitted by the respondent, interviews,

investigation of projects completed by the respondent, assessment of performance in previous undertakings (if applicable), and other pertinent factors. The URA will follow its Disposition Process (see Section 8 below) which includes significant design review and construction oversight.

8. 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 “B”** 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 RFQ at its sole discretion.

9. 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.