

Request for Interest

Rockland Trust Plaza Operations



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ROCKLAND TRUST PLAZA OVERVIEW

Located at 45 Green Street, Rockland Trust Plaza is an 18,500 square foot parcel that connects Worcester's Downtown and Canal District neighborhoods. The parcel is adjacent to Polar Park, home to the Triple-A affiliate of the Boston Red Sox and the planned mixed-use development of more than 1,000 units of housing, 200,000 square feet of office space, 150,000 square feet of retail space, and a hotel.

The site of the Plaza was formerly utilized as a municipal parking lot with 47 off-street parking spaces. The Worcester Redevelopment Authority (WRA) constructed a new public green space that serves as the connection between the two contiguous neighborhoods and the northern gateway to Polar Park. Envisioned and planned as a flexible outdoor venue and gateway, designs called for the vitality, social life, and character of Green Street to carry into the Plaza with opportunities for pre-game meetups, entertainment, food options, pop-up retail, community, and arts events within the space. The WRA site preparation and construction activities included the removal of the existing pavement, installation of concrete sidewalks with granite curbs, installation of various streetscapes and appurtenances for placemaking, and ADA accessibility. The WRA also installed new landscaping, lighting, utilities including irrigation, electrical and plumbing, a water feature, and infrastructure to support outdoor programming. The Plaza contributes toward the safety, economic vitality, and quality of life in Worcester by facilitating access to neighborhoods and commercial areas, as well as improving universal access for all users.

This Request For Interest seeks to identify an operator to execute on the vision, management, programming, and place making of Rockland Trust Plaza.

SECTION I. GENERAL INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS

1. INVITATION FOR REQUEST FOR INTEREST

The City of Worcester (“City”), through the City Manager’s Executive Office of Economic Development, is issuing this Request for Interest (“RFI”) for Rockland Trust Plaza, located at 45 Green Street.

The purpose of this RFI is to provide all interested parties an opportunity to submit a Letter of Interest for the day-to-day operations, management, and programming of Rockland Trust Plaza, and allow the City to identify a preferred individual, company or organization with a commitment and operation proposition that is most satisfactory to the City. The City is seeking operation proposals complementary to the City’s goals outlined in Subsection 3: Goals and Visions for Rockland Trust Plaza Operations below.

Note: This is not a Request for Proposals (“RFP”), but an invitation to participate in a future RFP or direct negotiation process. The City reserves the right to forgo an RFP process and commence direct negotiations based on the responses received as a result of this RFI.

2. GENERAL PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The property was formerly known as the General Pickett Municipal Parking Lot, providing metered parking to the public. As part of the overall Polar Park plan to create neighborhood connectivity and a gateway from this part of the Canal District into the Polar Park area, the municipal parking lot was transformed into a public space known as Rockland Trust Plaza. The lot contains approximately 18,500 square feet and is bound by Green Street to the north, Canal Street to the east, Polar Park to the south, and the CSX Railroad to the west.

3. GOALS AND VISION FOR ROCKLAND TRUST PLAZA OPERATIONS

The City has the following goals and visions for Rockland Trust Plaza:

- 1.) Serve as a pedestrian gateway to the northern entrance of Polar Park.
- 2.) Serve as a dynamic, creative public place for leisure activities and family entertainment.
- 3.) Provide amenities, including limited food and beverage opportunities for visitors.
- 4.) Provide opportunities for pop-up retail and serve as a launch-pad for new business startups.
- 5.) Host arts, cultural, and community events, as well as programs and shows.

4. LAND USE REGULATIONS

The site is zoned Business, General 6.0 (BG-6.0). In addition to the use specifications described herein, the Rockland Trust Plaza operator must conform to City of Worcester land use regulations.

5. CONTRIBUTIONS / SERVICES BY THE CITY

The City will provide the following contributions and services as part of the operation of Rockland Trust Plaza:

- Utility Costs
- Landscaping Maintenance

- Snow Removal
- Fountain Operation and Maintenance
- Irrigation System Operation and Maintenance

6. MINIMUM REQUIRED SERVICES BY THE DESIGNATED OPERATOR

At a minimum, operators interested in the programming of Rockland Trust Plaza are expected to provide the following services at their own expense:

- Trash Removal
- Portable Restrooms
- Insurance
- Licensing
- Marketing
- Event Booking and Programming
- Vendors
- Tables and Chairs
- Security (when necessary)

7. PROPERTY VISIT

Proposers will be able to tour the property with City representatives for visualization purposes by appointment.

8. INQUIRIES

Any inquiries related to this RFI must be submitted in writing, no later than five (5) days before the RFI deadline, to:

Paul D. Morano
Assistant Chief Development Officer
Executive Office of Economic Development
455 Main Street, Room 402
Worcester, MA 01608
Email address: moranop@worcesterma.gov

9. SUBMISSION OF LETTER OF INTEREST

Letters of Interest are due at the City of Worcester Executive Office of Economic Development, 455 Main Street-Room 402, Worcester, Massachusetts 01608 no later than Friday, June 7, 2024 at 10:00 AM.

SECTION II. LETTER OF INTEREST SUBMISSION

Proposers must submit a Letter of Interest addressed to Peter Dunn, Chief Development Officer, City of Worcester, Room 402, City Hall, 455 Main Street, Worcester, Massachusetts, 01608. The Letter of Interest must be signed by the person(s) with authority to contractually bind a future

agreement on behalf of the entity submitting. Within the Letter of Interest and proposal, the proposer should provide the following information:

1. **Description of the Entity/Operator(s):** A description of the entity or operator submitting the Letter of Interest must include, if not an individual, the name of all partners, corporate name(s), and dba(s) if applicable, and the pertinent address and telephone number, names and addresses of all investors, shareholders, and officers of the corporation, names and titles of persons with the authority to contractually bind an agreement on behalf of the entity by corporate vote or other. The description of the operator shall also provide the following information:
 - A clear statement of the entity's interest in operating, managing, and programming Rockland Trust Plaza.
 - Experience in operating, managing, and programming, similar type public or private spaces, as well as any other relevant operations experience (if applicable), including successful public programming and managing vendors.
2. **Description of the Operator's Vision of Programming and Activating Rockland Trust Plaza.** The description should be consistent with the City's vision for Rockland Trust Plaza.
3. **Description of the Proposed Approach to Operations, Management, and Programming.** The description should include:
 - How the operator would identify and qualify businesses, organizations, artists, or entrepreneurs to participate as vendors.
 - How the operator would approach the retail/market mix to create cohesion among the vendors, surrounding business community, and offerings.
 - How the operator would activate and enhance the Plaza as a destination by curating and implementing special events and/or programming.
 - How the operator would create a unified marketing plan for the Plaza, its vendors, and its program schedule.
 - How the operator would assist with cleanliness, maintenance and/or beautification of the Plaza, provided that the City expects to be responsible for capital repairs.
 - How the operator would approach any and all staffing needs to carry out the management, operations, and programming plan.
4. **Description of the Operating, Management, and Programming Model and Financial Plan:**
 - A description of how the operator would structure its leases or written agreements with vendors (e.g. gross rent, net rent, percentage rent, fees, etc.).
 - A description of other opportunities to diversify revenue streams.
 - A description or pro-forma financial statement, including anticipated expenses, to outline the overall financial model to support the operations.
 - A description of the operator's existing financial stability.

SECTION III. DECLARATION OF RESTRICTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. The operations must adhere to any and all regulations relative to the use of the property, including, but not limited to licenses and permits for food and beverage and entertainment operations.
2. The Plaza must be activated / programmed for a minimum of 50 events per calendar year.
3. The operator must work with local arts, cultural, organizations, and other community stakeholders interested in holding an event at Rockland Trust Plaza.
4. The Plaza may have one of each of the following vendors: food, alcohol, and dessert/specialty at any time. More than one food, alcohol, or dessert/specialty vendor will require prior written approval of the City.
5. Preference will be given for submissions that specifically addresses the City's goals and vision for the Plaza as stated in Section I, Subsection 3.
6. Preference will be given for submissions that demonstrate an awareness of the existing retail/market mix in the Canal District, and how the approach to identifying vendors will complement Canal District businesses.
7. Preference will be given to submissions that have an intentional strategy for outreach to local residents/entrepreneurs and underrepresented populations for pop-up retail opportunities.
8. Any changes or additions to the Plaza, including, but not limited to signage, lighting, fixtures, etc. will be subject to design review and approval by the City.
9. The operator shall indemnify and hold the City, its officers, agents, and employees harmless from, against, for, and in respect to any liability arising out of operations carried out by the operator, its vendors, or agents.

SECTION IV. REVIEW OF LETTERS OF INTEREST

Letters of Interest will be evaluated in accordance with the procedures and criteria established by this RFI. After the deadline for submission for Letters of Interest to the City, all proposals shall be reviewed for compliance with the said procedures and criteria, including the Minimum Evaluation Criteria listed below.

All Letters of Interest will be reviewed by the Chief Development Officer, representatives from the City's Executive Office of Economic Development, and other City departments and divisions as appropriate. The City Manager will ultimately determine the next steps for the operation of this property.

Minimum Evaluation Criteria:

Letters of Interest must include all of the information described in Section II: Proposal Submission in order to be considered and evaluated based on the comparative criteria described below.

Comparative Evaluation Criteria:

i. Activation/Programming

Highly Advantageous - A proposal that supports the City's goals and vision for Rockland Trust Plaza, clearly demonstrates more than five years of public programming and vendor management experience, and has a marketing plan that includes a commitment to program more than 50 events per calendar year.

Advantageous - A proposal that supports the City's goals and vision for Rockland Trust Plaza, demonstrates between one year and five years of public programming and vendor management experience, and has a marketing plan that includes a commitment to program 50 events per calendar year.

Not Advantageous - A proposal that does not support the City's goals and vision for Rockland Trust Plaza, or demonstrates less than one year of public programming or vendor management experience, or does not include a marketing plan with a commitment to program at least 50 events per calendar year.

ii. Financial Plan

Highly Advantageous – A proposal that provides a financial model that clearly demonstrates opportunities for diversified revenue streams and the Proposer's financial capacity to support operations.

Advantageous - A proposal that provides a financial model that reasonably demonstrates opportunities for diversified revenue streams and the Proposer's financial capacity to support operations.

Not Advantageous - A proposal that provides a financial model that does not demonstrate diversified revenue streams and/or the Proposer's financial capacity to support operations or relies upon additional City funding.

iii. Community Outreach

Highly Advantageous – A proposal that demonstrates an intentional strategy for engaging with local arts and cultural organizations, underrepresented populations, and/or other community stakeholders interested in holding events at Rockland Trust Plaza, as well as cohesion among vendors and the surrounding business community.

Advantageous - A proposal that demonstrates support for local arts and cultural organizations, and other community stakeholders interested in holding events at Rockland Trust Plaza but does not specifically or clearly articulate an intentional strategy and/or address cohesion among vendors or the surrounding business community.

Not Advantageous - A proposal that does not demonstrate diversified support for local arts and cultural organizations and other community stakeholders interested in holding events at Rockland Trust Plaza and/or cohesion among vendors or the surrounding business community.

LIST OF APPENDICES

- 1) Appendix A – Certificate of Non-Collusion
- 2) Appendix B – Certificate of Tax Compliance
- 3) Appendix C – Proposer Entity Disclosure Statement
- 4) Appendix D – Real Property Disclosure Statement

APPENDIX A

Certificate of Non-Collusion

Under Massachusetts General Laws C. 40, 4B ½, the following Certification must be provided:

“The undersigned certifies under the penalties of perjury that this proposal is in all respects bona fide, fair and made without collusion or fraud with any other person. As used in any of these sections the word “person” shall mean any natural person, joint venture, partnership, corporation or other business or legal entity.”

(Please Print) _____
Name of person signing proposal

Signature of person signing proposal

Date

Title

Address & Zip Code

No award will be made without Proposer certification of the above.

APPENDIX B

Certificate of Tax Compliance

STATE LAW NOW MANDATES THAT TO DO BUSINESS WITH THE CITY OF WORCESTER the Massachusetts Revenue Enforcement and Protection Program of 1983 requires that the following be supplied with your bid:

Date: _____

Pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 62C, Section 49A, I certify under the Penalties of Perjury That I, To My Best Knowledge and Belief, Have Filed All Mass. State Tax Return and Paid ALL Mass. State and City Taxes Required under Law.

Company Name _____

Street and No. _____

City or Town _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Tel. No. _____ Fax No. _____

Social Security No.
or
Federal Identification No. _____

Certified by State Office of Minority and Women Business Assistance (SOMWBA)

Yes _____ Date of Certification _____

Failure to complete this form may result in rejection of bid and/or removal from City Bid Lists.

Authorized Signature

APPENDIX C

Proposer Entity Disclosure Statement

Give full names and residences of all persons and parties interested in the foregoing proposal:

(Notice: Give first and last name in full; in case of Corporation give names of President, Treasurer and Manager; and in case of Firms give names of the individual members.)

<u>NAMES</u>	<u>ADDRESSES</u>	<u>ZIP CODE</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Kindly furnish the following information regarding the Respondent:

- (1) If a Proprietorship

Name of Owner: _____

<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>ZIP CODE</u>	<u>TEL. #</u>
Business: _____	_____	_____
Home: _____	_____	_____

- (2) If a Partnership

Full names and address of all partners:

<u>NAMES</u>	<u>ADDRESSES</u>	<u>ZIP CODE</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

<u>BUSINESS ADDRESS</u>	<u>ZIP CODE</u>	<u>TEL. #</u>
_____	_____	_____

(3) If a Corporation

Full Legal Name: _____

State of Incorporation: _____

Principal Place of Business: _____ Zip Code _____

Qualified in Massachusetts: Yes _____ No _____

Place of Business in Massachusetts: _____ Zip Code _____ Tel. # _____

Give the following information regarding Surety Company:

Full Legal Name of Surety Company: _____

State of Incorporation: _____

Principal Place of Business: _____

Admitted in Massachusetts: Yes _____ No _____

Place of Business in Massachusetts: _____ Zip Code _____ Tel. # _____

NOTE: The Office of the Attorney General, Washington, D.C. requires the following information on all proposals amounting to \$1,000.00 or more.

E.I. Number of Proposer _____

This number is regularly used by companies when filing their "EMPLOYER'S FEDERAL TAX RETURN," U.S. Treasury Department Form 941.

Authorized Signature of Proponent:

_____ Title: _____

Date: _____

