

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

# **PORTER LEATH CAMPUS**

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY IN MEMPHIS, TN



**Submission Deadline:  
April 4, 2025**

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Greenlaw neighborhood

## **The Uptown Community comprises several neighborhoods in North Memphis, each with a rich history and a bright future.**

Over the last 20 years, significant redevelopment and new housing construction have taken place, mainly in the Greenlaw neighborhood which is located immediately adjacent to Downtown Memphis.


Directed by the 2018 [Uptown Community Plan](#), the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) is working with residents, property owners, institutions, businesses, and the City to support and facilitate the revitalization of the community. To further community goals related to creating fully occupied residential neighborhoods, preserving and celebrating historic assets, and protecting affordability, the CRA is pleased to offer this RFP for redevelopment of the historic Porter Leath campus.



Inside an empty room on the third floor of the main building.



The Porter Leath campus is located a mile Northeast of St. Jude.



The CRA envisions every neighborhood in the City of Memphis and Shelby County providing its residents with a healthy and safe environment, economic opportunity, affordable housing and excellent quality of life.

850 N. Manassas St. | Memphis, TN 38107  
www.cramemphis.org

*RFP revised November 18, 2024*

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The project site is one parcel totaling just over 5.9 acres.

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The selected developer(s) will be required to provide financial analysis and a plan of the costs required.

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Proposals will be reviewed and ranked based on quality of concept, project feasibility, experience, and economic inclusion.

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A successful proposal will include as much detail as practical.

## VIII. Submission Process

Submit questions to [vivian.ekstrom@cramemphis.org](mailto:vivian.ekstrom@cramemphis.org).

## IV. Other Requirements

Must meet CRA's diversity and inclusion goals. The CRA reserves the right to not select a proposal as a result of this process.

## V. Timeline and Key Deadlines

All proposals must be submitted by April 4, 2025.

# I. Reinvesting in North Memphis

The Uptown Redevelopment Area is located immediately adjacent to the northern edge of Downtown Memphis and encompasses a number of different neighborhoods in North Memphis, including: Greenlaw, Uptown, Smokey City, New Chicago, Bickford, Bearwater, Mud Island, and the Medical District.

The purpose of the Uptown Redevelopment Area is to fund affordable housing construction, building repair/retrofit/rehabilitation, building demolition, site preparation, and infrastructure improvements that will create and ensure the continued economic vitality of these neighborhoods. Over the last 20 years, the Memphis & Shelby County Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) has been instrumental in the ongoing revitalization of the Uptown area, with 850 homes and apartments built and 30,000 square feet of roads, sidewalks, and alleyways improved.

The CRA's work is guided by the [Uptown Community Plan](#). This plan provides a shared vision for the district and outlines areas of focus, community priorities, and recommended projects. A major recommendation of the plan is to strengthen community anchors in order to have the greatest impact towards stabilization, revitalization, and community pride.

This RFP represents an important opportunity to adaptively reuse a historic property and bring services, amenities, and additional affordable housing options to the Uptown area. The CRA is excited to partner with experienced development teams to bring this vision to reality.



Edgeview at Legends Park



Room In The Inn



Greenlaw neighborhood

## II. Opportunity

The CRA invites proposals from qualified developers for the adaptive re-use of the historic Porter Leath property, located within the Uptown Redevelopment Area. This property, situated at 850 North Manassas, is a longtime community anchor in the Smokey City neighborhood. The [Uptown Community Plan](#) (pg. 34, 68) identifies the campus as an opportunity to provide accessible open space for the community and as a potential terminus for the historic Smokey City alleyway interpretive trails.

### Property Description:

- The site encompasses one contiguous parcel, approximately 6 acres in size.
- The focal point is the historic orphanage building, which has been vacant for over 5 years and is approximately 26,000 square feet.
- As a property listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the CRA prioritizes adaptive re-use of the buildings, preserving their historical significance while repurposing them for contemporary use.

### Development Objectives:

- *Adaptive Re-Use:* Proposals should focus on creatively repurposing the historic orphanage building, with a strong preference for maintaining its architectural integrity.
- *Affordable Housing:* Develop a portion of the property for affordable housing, targeting low- to moderate-income residents.
- *Green/open space:* Incorporate publicly accessible open space into the redevelopment.



Inside the Porter Leath orphanage.

Tour Online  
[3D Tour](#)

Contextual Design  
[Page 11](#)



Housing proposed for the site may be tailored to different income levels, but developers are strongly encouraged to provide a robust level of quality, affordable housing for the project. The CRA prioritizes affordable housing for low-income households whose income does not exceed 80% of the Memphis MSA’s median income based on family size:

<b>Family Size</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Annual Income Limits</b>	<b>47,750</b>	<b>54,550</b>	<b>61,350</b>	<b>68,150</b>	<b>73,650</b>	<b>79,100</b>

Housing designed for moderate income households, up to 120% AMI, is also encouraged.

Through this RFP, the CRA seeks proposals from qualified developers that:

- Possess experience developing complex, adaptive reuse projects in an urban context and working collaboratively with the community.
- Propose a realistic strategy for starting construction within 6 months from the date of the executed development agreement.
- Demonstrate the ability to obtain and work efficiently with private and public financing.
- Present a development concept that meets the goals of this RFP and the Uptown Community Plan.

Developers must demonstrate their capacity and experience in developing well-designed, commercial and mixed-use property in urban areas. respondents will have the financial and organizational capacity to complete the project within 18-24 months of the executed development agreement. Proof of financing and equity will ultimately be required prior to any transfer of property from the CRA to a private developer.



### III. Project Goals

The CRA seeks proposals from qualified developers who support and can fulfill the following project goals:

- Provide retail and services that meet the needs of the surrounding community, particularly current residents.
- Provide quality, affordable housing and maintain housing affordability over the long-term within the TIF district.
- Honor and preserve community identity.
- Create a land use pattern that promotes the development of vibrant anchors that are gathering places for the community.
- Create a development with high-quality urban design and architectural design that supports a more walkable, pedestrian-scale environment and that reflects the scale and character of the neighborhood.
- Strengthen connections to Downtown.
- Preservation of open green space.

*\*Please reference pages 23, 34, & 68 of the Memphis Uptown Community Plan*

#### **Community ideas on potential uses and contextual design**

Community members have also provided inspiration and ideas for potential re-use of this site, including:

- The Swift Factory, in Hartford Connecticut, incorporates many of the amenities that community members encourage.
- New Orleans' Tate, Etienne, Provost (TEP) Center possesses some of the affordable housing and cultural preservation suggestions and desires of the community.

During the proposal review process as well as development agreement negotiations, developers will be expected to engage with the community on project details. The Uptown Community Advisory Committee is the primary avenue for this work.



**PARCEL ID**  
**027013 00002**  
 6.0 Acres

**BUILDING FOOTPRINT**  
**HISTORIC ORPHANAGE**  
**26,800 Sq. Ft.**

**GOULD COTTAGE**  
**4,576 Sq. Ft.**

**ZONING**  
**Uptown Special Purpose District,**  
**Medium Density Residential (MDR)**

**Documents for Consideration :**

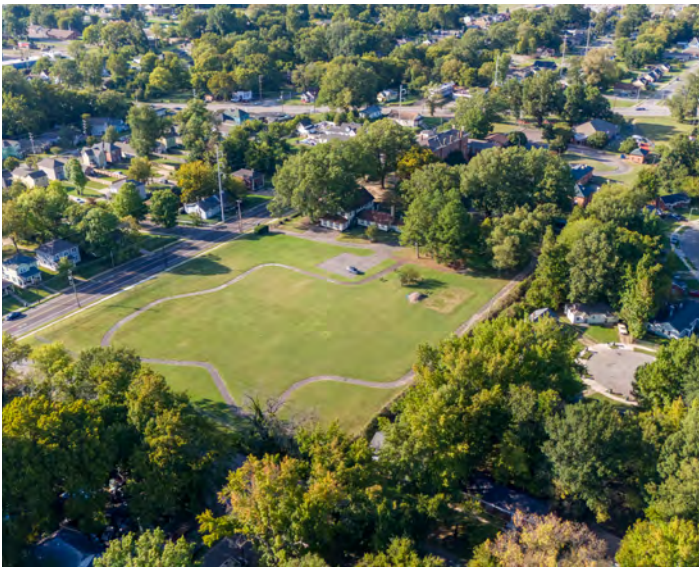
- [850 Manassas \(Gould Cottage\) building envelope assessment \(2021\)](#)
- [868 Manassas Structural Evaluation \(2015\)](#)
- [Porter Leath Facility Assessment \(2014\)](#)
- [National Register of Historic Places \(1977\)](#)

## IV. Property/ Site Details

The site encompasses one contiguous parcel, approximately 6 acres in size, with two historic structures and a large greenspace on the southern half of the property. The main orphanage building dates to the 1850s and was converted to a medical clinic and office uses in the 1970s and 1980s. It has been vacant for over five years. The Gould Cottage building - built in 1927 - was also converted to office space and is currently occupied by the CRA.

The site is zoned as Moderate-Density Residential (MDR) as part of the Uptown Special Purpose District. The MDR district focuses on preserving existing residential development patterns and allows single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, and limited institutions.

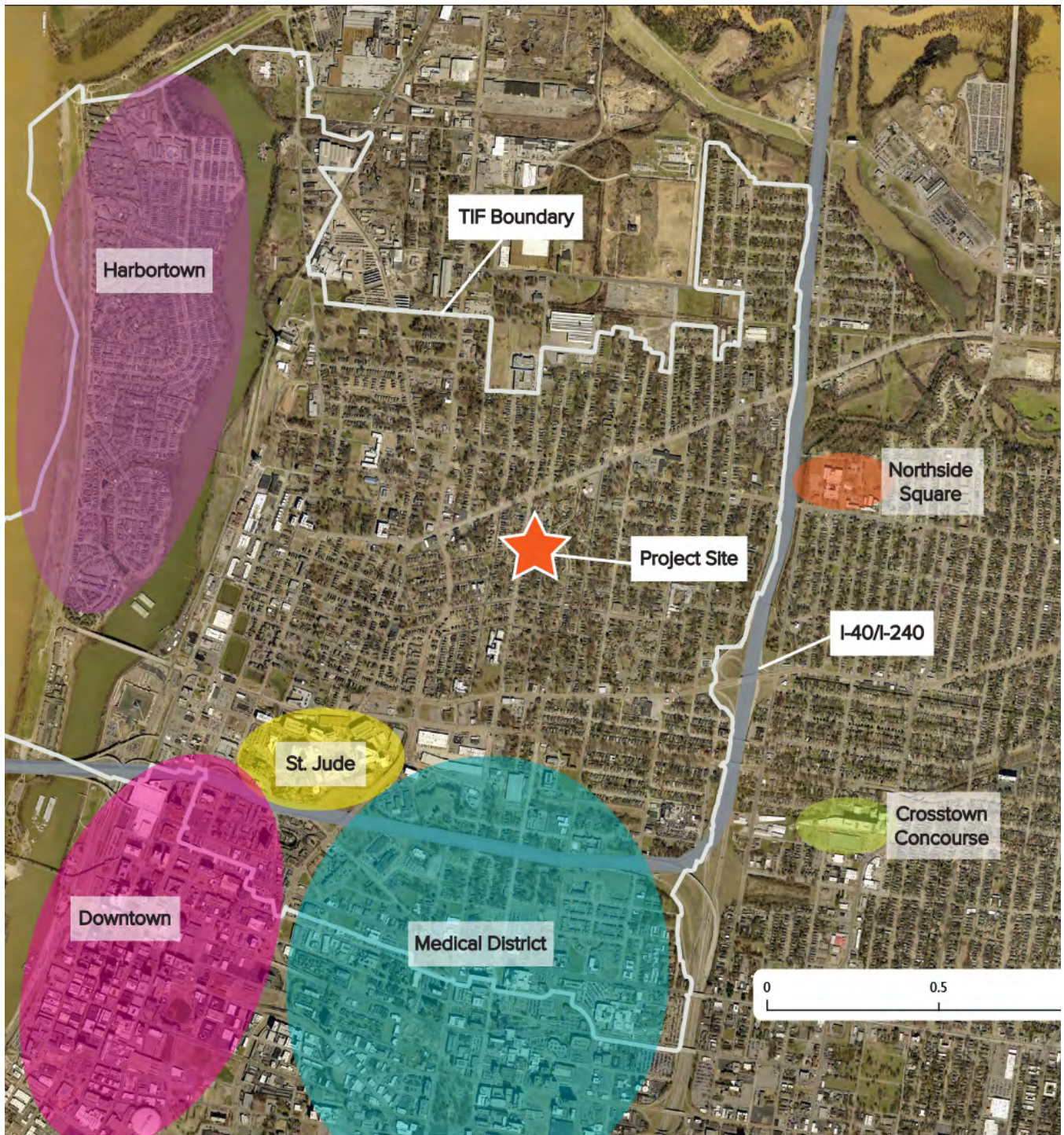




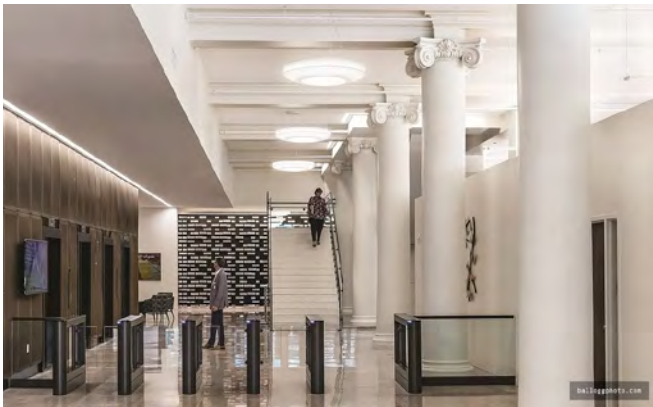
Surrounded primarily by low- to moderate-density residential uses, the Porter Leath campus has been a long-standing institutional anchor in the Smokey City neighborhood. The site is also close to several major redevelopment projects (Snuff District north of downtown, Northside Square, and the future Hattiloo community educational theater on Chelsea Avenue), as well as the major employment hubs of downtown and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.



# UPTOWN AREA



# Contextual Design Examples



Tate, Etienne, Provost | New Orleans, LA



Swift Factory | Hartford, CT



Looking up the spiraling staircase.

## IV. Financial Assumptions

The selected developer(s) will be expected to identify and secure all necessary pre-development financing.

The selected developer(s) will be required to provide financial analysis and a plan of the likely costs required to undertake the proposed project, including the potential sources and uses for the development budget. The financing plan must demonstrate a sensitivity and approach in using public funds and resources in the most efficient manner.

If public funding or incentives are required to fill a demonstrated financing gap, the CRA may be able to provide funding for the project.

The selected site is situated within a highly distressed census tract, thereby qualifying for several financial incentive programs aimed at fostering economic revitalization and development. These programs include the Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC), Opportunity Zone incentives, and Federal Historic Tax Credits. Additionally, potential eligibility for Brownfield incentives may be explored, contingent upon the specific requirements and intended use of the buildings on site.

It is important to highlight that the offices of the CRA are currently housed within the Gould Cottage located on the campus. Our preference is to maintain our tenancy and continue to operate from this location as part of the proposed development project. This alignment not only supports our mission but also adds value to the project through the continuation of a symbiotic relationship between the redevelopment efforts and our agency's objectives.

# VI. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed and ranked based on a 100-point scale. Criteria used in evaluation of proposals include, but are not limited to, the following:

## Quality of development concept and alignment with project goals

(30 points)

1. Proposal meets the project/community goals and requirements outlined in this RFP.
2. Overall scope and quality of the proposed development.
3. Quality of the design of the proposed development, as well as its compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.

## Project feasibility

(30 points)

1. Project is economically sound and supported by realistic assumptions.
2. Proposed capital stack and financing strategy.
3. Project may be accomplished in a timely manner.
4. Project does not face insurmountable regulatory hurdles or constraints.

## Developer capacity and experience

(20 points)

1. Developer has a track record of delivering high-quality adaptive reuse projects of a similar scale and level of complexity.
2. Proven ability to obtain sufficient financial resources for similar projects.

## Economic and community inclusion

(20 points)

1. Proposal provides a plan that outlines the minority- and women-owned business (M/WBE) and locally owned small business (LOSBS) participation in the proposed site development, including a preliminary list of M/WBE and LOSBS consultants, financial institutions, and employees who will be asked to participate.
2. Proposal provides a plan that outlines community engagement throughout the design and implementation process and that demonstrates an understanding of the collaborative nature of this project and the need for strong community partnership.



### Proposal must include:

- Cover Letter
- Development Team Details
- Development Experience and Qualifications
- Initial Design Concept, Timeline, and Financial Feasibility
- Financial Capacity of Developer
- Diversity & Inclusion Plan

## VII. RFP Submission Requirements

The submitted proposal should articulate the vision for the property and explain how the project will meet the evaluation criteria set forth in this RFP. It is understood that the preparation of exact budgets and detailed architectural drawings is not possible or necessary at this point in the process. A successful proposal will include as much detail as practical, with the understanding that architectural drawings will be conceptual and budgets will be subject to further revisions.

Please include the following components:



### Cover Letter

The cover letter should explain your interest in the opportunity, outline the main elements of your development concept, and identify the primary contact person (name, address, phone number and email address).



### Development Team Details

This section should provide information on all members of your team and relevant experience, expertise, and capacity. Identify the development entity's name and contact information, and specify the legal form of the organization (e.g. corporation, partnership, joint venture, other).

Provide relevant experience and qualifications for each team member - including architects, engineers, contractors, financial and equity partners, lenders, or any other consultants or entities. This section should include a resume, a description of previous projects, and the team members' role in the cited project and proposed project. Provide information on whether any of these team members are a certified M/WBE business.



### **Development Experience and Qualifications**

Provide descriptions for completed projects similar to the proposed project and their respective locations. Include project timelines, showing all pertinent dates of the project development. Include all funding sources utilized for the project. Provide the names and telephone numbers of project references (private and/or public sector) for each project described.



### **Initial Design Concept, Timeline, and Financial Feasibility**

1. Provide a narrative of the proposed development concept and how it addresses the project goals. Identify your team's vision for this project and how it would fit into your overall business strategy. Proposals should illustrate the team's understanding of Memphis, the Uptown TIF district neighborhoods, and the importance of a successful project. Include any conceptual site plans, building elevations, floor plans, or renderings as needed to communicate the concept and design. Applicants shall comply with local development and construction codes. The proposal should illustrate that the developer understands legal requirements and property disposition restrictions.
2. Provide an estimated budget indicating the likely costs of the project. This budget should include the purchase offer (this can be nominal) that will be made by the developer to the CRA as well as the estimated hard and soft costs. Provide a summary of the assumptions on which these estimates are based, such as previous comparable projects or estimates provided by contractors.
3. Explain the proposed capital stack and financing strategy. If possible, provide a Sources and Uses Statement estimating the amount of debt and equity by source.
4. Provide a clear overview of identified/desired CRA funding, if needed, in order to make the project viable.
5. Provide a project timeline with key milestones listed. Explain any project phasing, if planned.



### **Financial Capacity of Developer**

Provide information that demonstrates the team has the financial capacity and willingness to carry out the proposed project and to initiate construction within 6 months of completing the development agreement. Submittals should include the following information:

1. Identify the team's capacity to secure the equity and financing required to construct, market, and sell the proposed development. Include the developer or related entities' financials and holdings.
2. Provide a basic pro forma and identify the potential amount of gap financing required and the gap financing resources related to underwriting the cost of development and operations. Define the team's experience with securing sources of gap financing that may be used for the project. The CRA may be able to provide funding for financial gaps identified in the pro forma.



### **Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion**

Applicants should include as part of their proposal a Diversity Plan that is both attainable and workable. The Diversity Plan shall identify goals for participation of Minority/Women Business Enterprises (M/WBE) and Locally Owned Small Businesses (LOSB). Suggested percentages or degrees of participation by certified M/WBEs and LOSBs are:

1. For all projects, the CRA sets an overall combined goal of 40% M/WBE participation for Professional Services, with a 26% for MBE and a 14% goal for WBE, as defined by Shelby County ordinance.
2. Within this overall goal for M/WBE participation, the CRA sets goals for goods and services categories consistent with those of the City of Memphis as outlined in Ordinance 5384, Sec. 2-327, using the ratio of the M/WBE participation goals for each sector. These goals are to be updated when the City of Memphis revises their goals.
3. The LOSB participation goals remain at 10%.
4. The CRA will monitor its projects, requiring contractors to submit regular reports, and reviewing the goals on an annual basis.

Upon approval, the Applicant will be responsible for implementation of the Diversity Plan and for filing with the CRA staff quarterly reports that reflect the names of the certified firms involved, the amount of money received by such firms and the total amount spent.

Respondents should also outline their experience and commitment to community collaboration and provide a plan for community engagement throughout the redevelopment process.



## VIII. RFP Submission Process

### QUESTIONS

Submit questions in writing to Vivian Ekstrom via email at [vivian.ekstrom@cramemphis.org](mailto:vivian.ekstrom@cramemphis.org) using the subject line "Porter Leath RFP." Responses to questions will be posted on the CRA website as they are received.

### SUBMISSION DUE DATE

All proposals to this RFP must be submitted to the CRA by 5:00 PM CST on Friday, April 4, 2025. Respondents must submit a digital PDF of the entire submission via email to [vivian.ekstrom@cramemphis.org](mailto:vivian.ekstrom@cramemphis.org) (subject line should read "Porter Leath") prior to the deadline described above. Please format the document to fit 8.5 x 11 size. A maximum length of 20 pages is preferred.

## IX. Other Requirements

### EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

The CRA is an equal opportunity employer and will select a development proposal without regard to age, disability, religion, creed or belief, political affiliation, race, sex, or ethnicity.

### CRA'S DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION GOALS

The CRA requires that a best-faith effort is made to proactively avail any potential contracting or subcontracting opportunities to qualified minority and women-owned businesses and locally owned small businesses. Our minimum overall goal is 40% combined M/WBE participation and 10% LOSB participation. Please reference the Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion section on page 15 for additional details.

### RIGHT TO REVISE OR REISSUE RFP

The CRA may need to request additional information from the respondents as part of the selection process once finalist firms have been identified. The CRA reserves the right to not select a proposal as a result of this process. In that event, the CRA may, or may not, elect to reissue the RFP if deemed necessary to solicit additional interest in the property.

## X. Timeline and Key Deadlines

### RFP Published

October 1, 2024

### Open Houses (9-10am):

November 13; December 4; January 15;  
February 10; March 10

### RFP Submittals Due

April 4, 2025 by 5:00 PM CST

### Selection Committee Review:

April/May 2025

### Development Agreement:

July 2025

### Start of Construction:

Early 2026

Please send questions to:

Vivian Ekstrom, Director of Planning and  
Community Development  
[vivian.ekstrom@cramemphis.org](mailto:vivian.ekstrom@cramemphis.org)