

RFI

Request for Information



LEATH STREET ACTIVATION

Seeking activation and redevelopment of the Leath Street corridor in Uptown.



Jordan McKenzie

Director of Community
and Economic Revitalization

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Deadline: Friday, March 27, 2026



Greenlaw neighborhood

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

Over the last twenty years, significant redevelopment and new housing construction have taken place in Uptown.

Directed by the Uptown Community Plan, the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) is working with residents, property owners, institutions, businesses, and the City to support and facilitate community revitalization. To further community goals related to promoting the development of vibrant anchors that serve as gathering spaces and protecting housing affordability, the CRA is pleased to offer this RFI for a key location in the Uptown area.



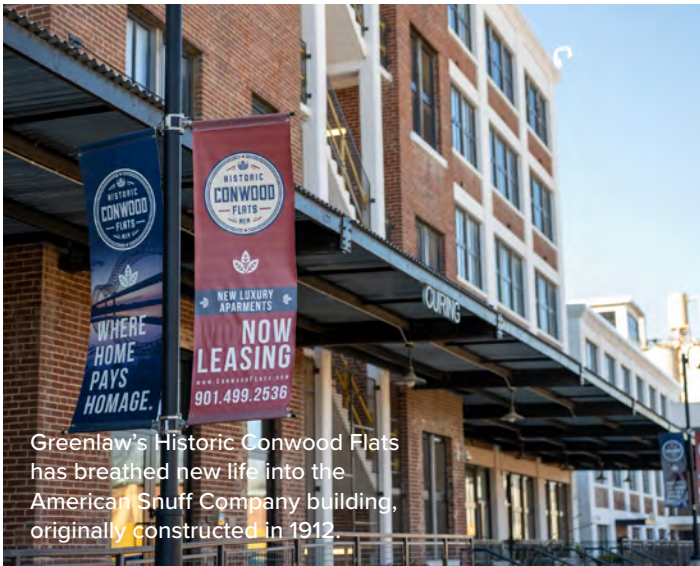
The CRA envisions every neighborhood in the City of Memphis and Shelby County providing its residents with a healthy and safe environment, economic opportunity, affordable housing and excellent quality of life.

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The Uptown Redevelopment Area consists of different neighborhoods on the northern edge of downtown Memphis.
- II. Opportunity**
This RFI seeks an innovative team to transform underutilized areas into productive spaces.
- III. Project Goals**
Development consists of food systems activation, essential housing, and adaptive reuse of an open-air pavilion.
- IV. Scope of Work**
Prepare a cohesive activation plan that integrates food systems, housing, and community gathering uses.
- V. Property/Site Details**
This development includes five vacant parcels, and on vacant building.
- VI. Financial Assumptions**
The selected developer(s) will be expected to identify and secure all necessary pre-development financing.
- VII. Submission Requirements**
A successful proposal will include as much detail as practical.
- VIII. Submission Process**
Submit questions and proposals to Jordan McKenzie.
- IX. Other Requirements**
Each proposal must meet the CRA's local small business goals.
- X. Timeline and Key Deadlines**
All interest forms must be submitted by March 27, 2026.

I. REINVESTING IN NORTH MEMPHIS



Greenlaw's Historic Conwood Flats has breathed new life into the American Snuff Company building, originally constructed in 1912.

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

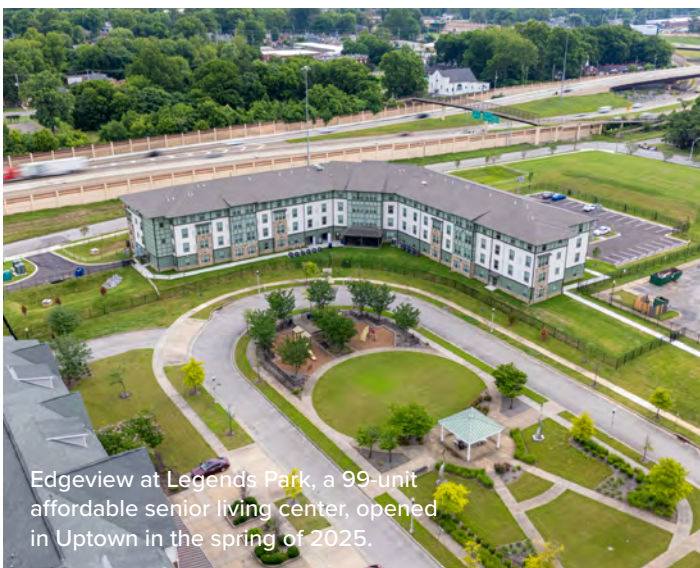
The purpose of the Uptown Redevelopment Area is to fund affordable housing construction, building rehabilitation, site preparation, and infrastructure improvements that will create and ensure the continued economic vitality of these neighborhoods. Over the last 20 years, the Memphis & Shelby County Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) has been instrumental in the ongoing revitalization of the Uptown area, with over a 1000 homes and apartments built and over 5 miles of sidewalks built/repared.



Place of Grace held a ribbon cutting at a redeveloped 10-unit apartment complex on December 18, 2025. The CRA donated the building and land.

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.

The purpose of this RFI is to remediate blight and illicit activity along Leath Street, create a supply access point for food distribution and develop attainable housing.



Edgeview at Legends Park, a 99-unit affordable senior living center, opened in Uptown in the spring of 2025.



II. OPPORTUNITY

The City of Memphis and Shelby County Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) invites qualified private development teams, in partnership with community-based organizations (CBOs), to submit an interest form for the activation and redevelopment of the Leath Street corridor in North Memphis.

This Request for Interest (RFI) seeks innovative, mission-aligned development teams capable of transforming underutilized and vacant assets into productive, community-serving, and economically catalytic uses that advance anti-blight objectives, local food systems, and attainable housing outcomes.

The selected respondent will demonstrate the ability to leverage private equity, collaborate meaningfully with neighborhood institutions, and deliver a phased activation strategy that aligns with CRA priorities and adopted revitalization efforts for Leath Street and the Uptown geography.



KEY LINKS

- [Leath Street Anti-Blight & Transformation into an Economic Asset](#)
- [Essential Housing Program](#)



III. PROJECT GOALS

Through this RFI, the CRA intends to proffer an agglomerate development opportunity consisting of the following three coordinated components:

- 1. Food Systems Alley Activation**
Activation of vacant and underutilized parcels along Leath Street to support food-system-oriented uses, including urban agriculture, agroforestry, farmers market supply chains, and food-based microenterprise incubation.
- 2. Inclusion of All Buildable Lots into the Essential Housing Program**
All buildable residential parcels within the RFI area will be made eligible for participation in the CRA's Essential Housing Program, subject to program requirements and approvals.
- 3. Adaptive Reuse of 730 Leath Street as an Open-Air Pavilion**
The property located at 730 Leath Street is envisioned for adaptive reuse as a community-serving, open-air pavilion designed to support public gatherings, programming, markets, and cultural activity.

The CRA's objective is to create a community-based partnership in which:

- Private investment provides initial capital investment and development capacity, and
- The community-based organization programs, activates, and steward's the pavilion space in alignment with neighborhood needs.

Interest forms are due by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 27, 2026.



IV. SCOPE OF WORK

The selected development team will be expected to perform, at least one or more of the following tasks:

1. Master Activation & Development Concept

- Prepare a cohesive Leath Street Activation Plan that integrates food systems, housing, and community gathering uses.
- Demonstrate how the proposed uses remediate blight, deter illicit activity, and convert vacant land into productive community assets.

2. Food Systems Alley Implementation

- Design and implement a strategy for activating vacant parcels as part of a food systems alley, potentially including:
 - » Urban agriculture or agroforestry uses
 - » Market-supporting infrastructure
 - » Connections to existing or planned farmers markets and food distribution networks
- Align the proposal with regional and local food access and economic development goals.

3. Essential Housing Program Integration

- Identify buildable lots suitable for Essential Housing Program participation.
- Demonstrate familiarity with incentive-based affordable and attainable housing development.
- Propose a development approach that complements surrounding neighborhood fabric and long-term stabilization goals.

4. Adaptive Reuse of 730 Leath Street

- Design and deliver the adaptive reuse of 730 Leath Street as an open-air pavilion suitable for:
 - » Community gatherings
 - » Markets and pop-up commerce
 - » Cultural programming and events
- Ensure the design emphasizes durability, flexibility, and low operating costs.

5. Community-Based Organization Partnership

- Formalize a partnership with a qualified community-based organization responsible for:
 - » Programming and activation of the pavilion
 - » Community engagement and stewardship
 - » Ongoing use coordination
- Clearly delineate roles, responsibilities, and governance between the developer and CBO.

6. Financing & Phasing Strategy

- Present a financing plan demonstrating the use of private equity for initial capital outlay.
- Identify potential complementary funding sources (philanthropic, grant-based, or public incentives).
- Propose a realistic phasing schedule for implementation.

7. Coordination with CRA and Public Partners

- Coordinate with the CRA, land banks, and other public entities as required for site control, approvals, and program alignment.
- Participate in regular progress reporting and coordination meetings.

V. PROPERTY SITE DETAILS

The CRA owns six (6) parcels on Leath Street between Keel Avenue and Jackson Avenue in the 38107 zipcode. Addresses are listed below.

790 Leath 027014 00001

Dimensions: 40.25x150

Land square footage: 5968

Acres: .137

788 Leath 027014 00024

Dimensions: 40.25x150

Land square footage: 5968

Acres: .137

730 Leath 027017 00018

Dimensions: 25x150

Land square footage: 3750

Acres: .09

723 Leath 027016 00007

Dimensions: 25x150

Land square footage: 3746

Acres: .086

721 Leath 027016 00008

Dimensions: 25x150

Land square footage: 3746

Acres: .086

645 Leath 027021 00002

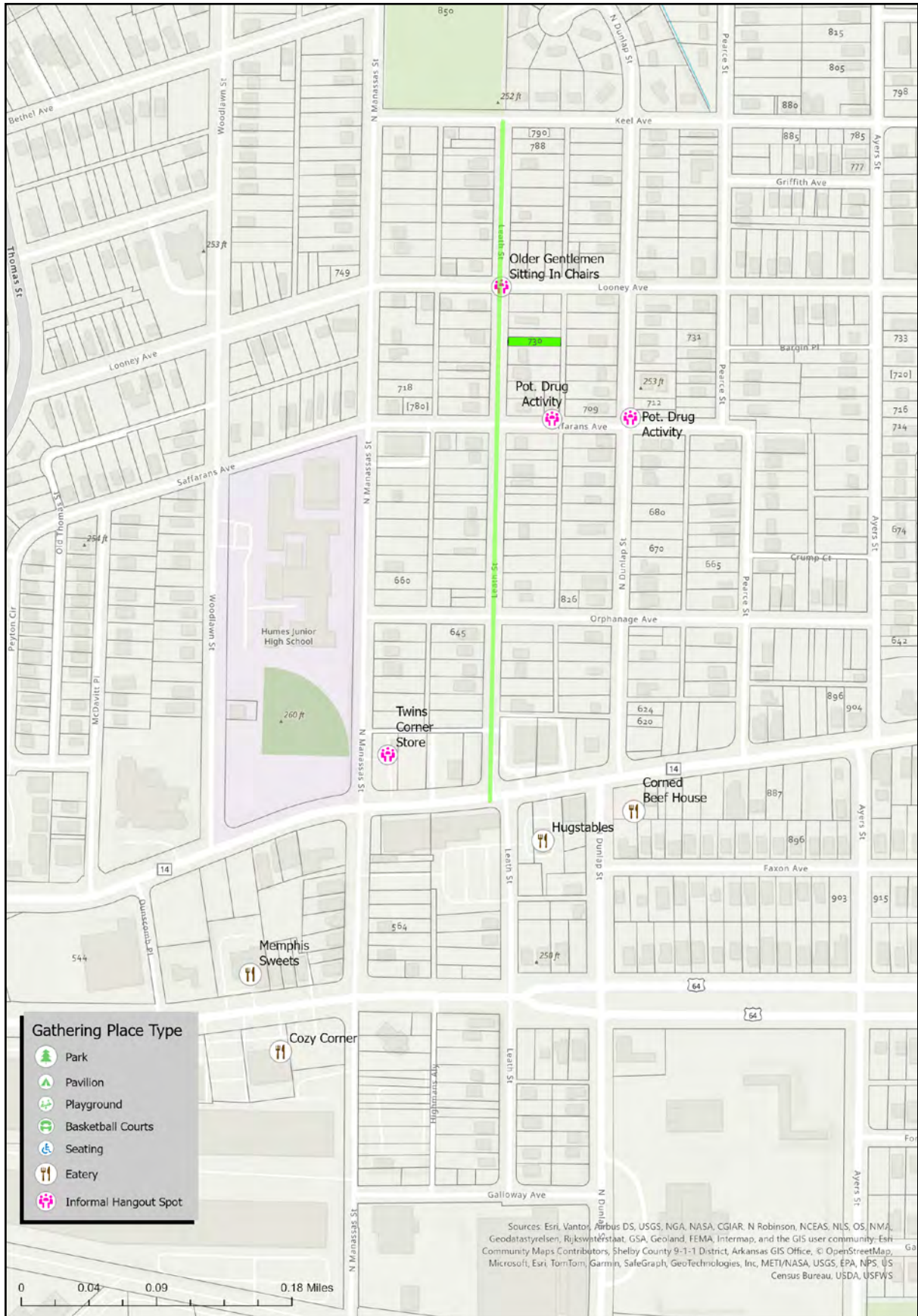
Dimensions: 50x150

Land square footage: 7492

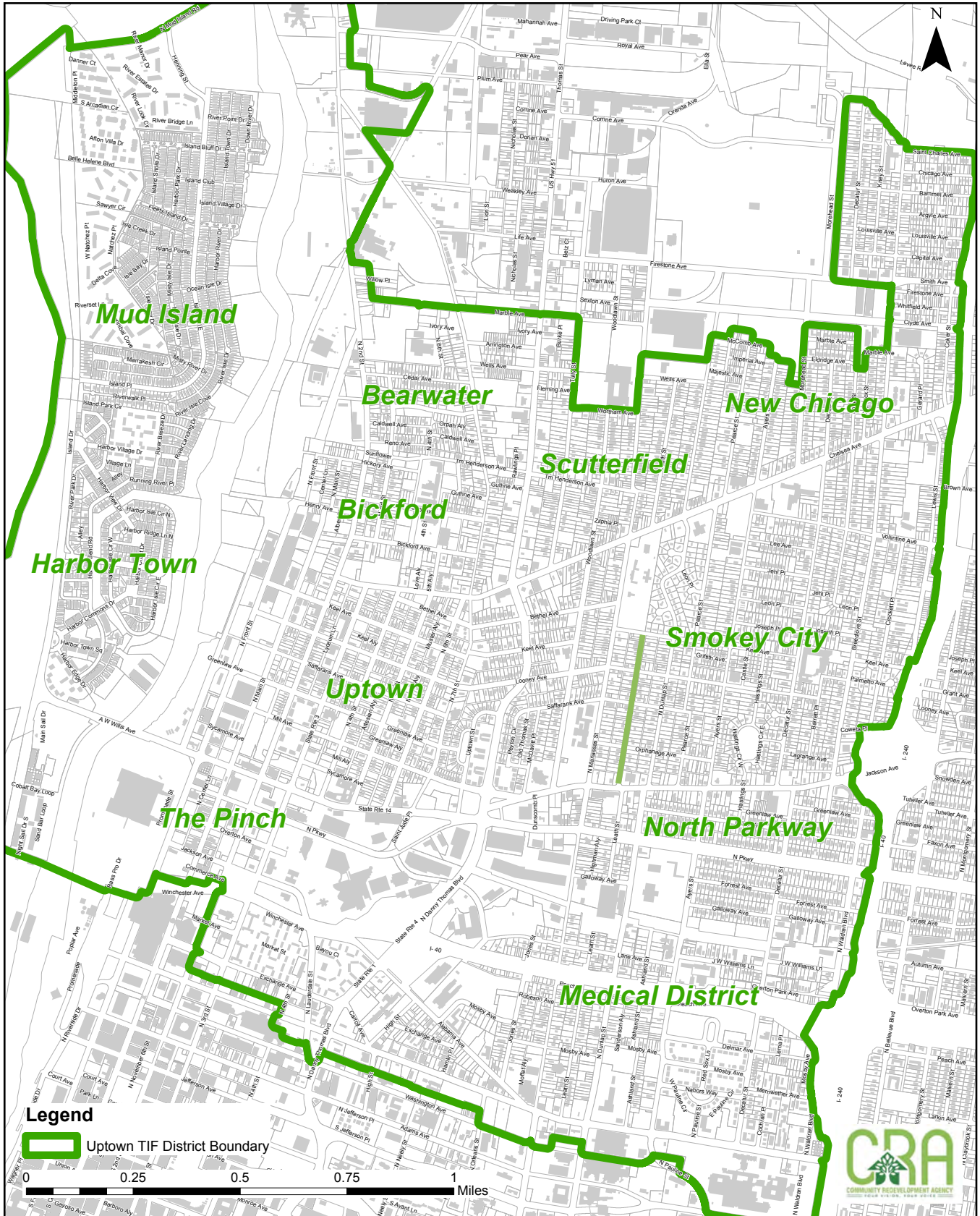
Acres: .172



LEATH STREET AMENITY ACCESS



UPTOWN COMMUNITY TIF DISTRICT





Trash is scattered on the sidewalk of Leath Street in the front of a damaged home.

VI. FINANCIAL ASSUMPTIONS

The selected applicants will be expected to identify pre-development financing.

The selected applicants will be required to provide financial analysis and a plan for 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 an approach to use public funds and resources efficiently.

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

FUNDING SOURCES

MDA Micro-Grant Program

- <https://whitehavenkulliye.org/mda-microgrant-program/>

USDA

- <https://cpa.tennessee.edu/funding-opportunities/>
- https://projects.sare.org/state-fact-sheets/?st=TN&action=sfs&submit=Go&script_id=sfs
- <https://ambrook.com/funding/tn-ag-enterprise-fund>

Workforce Development DRA (Delta Regional Authority)

- <https://dra.gov/programs/human-infrastructure/workforce/delta-workforce-grant-program/>

TN Department of Agriculture

- <https://www.tn.gov/agriculture/department/business-development-division/funding-opportunities.html>

VII. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The submitted response or interest form should articulate the vision for the property and explain how the project will meet the evaluation criteria set forth in this RFI. 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 response will include as much detail as practical, with the understanding that drawings will be conceptual and budgets will be subject to further revisions

Please submit the [online interest form](#) to explain your interest in the opportunity, outline the main elements of your development concept, and identify the primary contact person (name, phone number and email address).

VIII. SUBMISSION PROCESS

QUESTIONS

Submit questions in writing to Jordan McKenzie via email at jordan.mckenzie@cramemphis.org using the subject line “Leath Street RFI.” Responses to questions will be posted on the CRA website as they are received.

SUBMISSION DUE DATE

All interest forms to this RFI must be submitted to the CRA by 5:00 PM CST on Friday, March 27, 2026. The form can be found at <https://bit.ly/4bHIWve>.

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 COMMUNITY INCLUSION GOALS

The CRA requires that a best-faith effort is made to proactively avail any potential contracting or subcontracting opportunities to locally owned small businesses.

X. TIMELINE AND KEY DEADLINES

RFI Published

January 23, 2026

Informational Meeting

February 11, 2026 at 11:00 a.m.

RFI Submittals Due

March 27, 2026 by 5:00 PM CST

Review Committee:

April 2026

Development Agreement:

May 2026

Start of Construction:

Summer 2026

Please send questions to:

Jordan McKenzie, Director of Community and Economic Revitalization
jordan.mckenzie@cramemphis.org