



## **REQUEST FOR DEVELOPER PROPOSALS**

**Transit-Oriented Development  
.84 acres Site  
At 3532 Franklin Street  
Denver, CO 80205**

**Submissions due by 5 pm  
May 11, 2018**

For further information, please contact:  
Mark Marshall, Director of Real Estate  
Urban Land Conservancy  
1600 Downing Street, Suite 300  
Denver, CO 80218  
(phone) 303-377-4477 ext. 210  
[mmarshall@urbanlandc.org](mailto:mmarshall@urbanlandc.org)

## I. Introduction, Property Information

### A. Urban Land Conservancy

Urban Land Conservancy (ULC) is a Colorado non-profit organization formed in 2003. Its mission is to acquire, develop, and/or preserve community assets in urban areas for a variety of community needs with the goal of creating catalytic community projects. ULC's work includes land banking and community-inspired development accomplished through strategic partnerships with other agencies and businesses that share our vision of preserving assets to strengthen communities. Since 2003, ULC has acquired \$73 million in real estate assets, with \$55 million focused on Transit Oriented Development. ULC, which focuses its efforts on serving low-income communities/households, currently owns real estate along the A-Line Corridor, W-Line Corridor, Southeast Corridor, Southwest Corridor, Central Corridor and the future North-Line Corridor.

### B. Project Description:

Urban Land Conservancy (ULC), hereby requests proposals from development teams to partner with ULC to develop a .84 acre parcel of land located on a vacant parcel situated along Gilpin Street, between 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue (*see attached diagram identifying site*), herein referred to as "Cole Train". ULC recently demolished the structure that existed on the site and relocated utilities that serve the adjacent building. The concrete flooring of the former structure remains, as well as an approximately 3,000 sf exiting structure (previously attached) and will be the Developer's responsibility to remove or incorporate into the future redevelopment.

ULC wishes to participate in developer fees or sell development air rights to a development partner and retain ownership of the land utilizing a long-term ground lease. ULC will negotiate terms of a Development Agreement / Ground Lease with the selected developer, but be advised that the partner must demonstrate the ability to execute a development plan to purchase the air rights and meet requirements referenced in Section II.

As owner, ULC expects to recover its costs incurred during the predevelopment phase totaling approximately \$400,000. ULC also expects to be engaged in various aspects of the development design process and expects a share of the developer's earned development fee or to sell development air rights; specific terms will be negotiated with the selected developer based on type and density of proposed development.

### **Phased Site Planning Efforts:**

The proposed design should be complementary to the existing Tramway Nonprofit Center located to the West owned and operated by ULC. While only the east parcel will be the initial development site, respondents are encouraged to consider the existing, adjacent 9,500 sf garage/storage space as a potential two-phased site development. Submissions shall include the potential for a to-be-determined phase II in the site plan, to seamlessly integrate with phase I at a later date. Although there will be a robust community engagement process in addition to a market study to identify the most desirable use for the site, anecdotal indicators identify the need for more affordable

homeownership opportunities, mixed-use and potentially affordable rental. However, we will not consider market-rate proposals. We prefer that design solutions incorporate, or in some meaningful way, make reference to the rich history that the previous building represented in the neighborhood (see Building History section).

## **C. Site Information**

### **Location:**

The subject site is located at 3532 Franklin Street and has historically been associated with the Tramway Nonprofit Center, owned by ULC, but recent demolition of the east section of the building allowed us to separate the structure to create an independent parcel for development. The primary section of the redevelopment parcel (36,782 sf) fronts Gilpin Street and is bordered by 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the Cole neighborhood in northeast Denver.

*\*Please see attached site map.*

### **Building History:**

The Motor Division Building was originally owned by the Denver Tramway Company and located on a block that was surrounded by historic trolley lines. The building was significant for its use as a garage for the Denver Tramway Company. Denver Tramway was incorporated in 1886 and by 1893 had acquired the entire city railway system. In the early years of the City, the street car was an important means of transportation. The lines allowed Denver residents to live out of the hustle and bustle of downtown in the residential Cole neighborhood.

The building played an important role as the Denver Tramway Company transitioned away from streetcars to buses from the late 1930s to 1950s. The architecture of the original building was representative of this transitional time. The original building, known as the East Division Car Barn (located on the corner of E. 35<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Gilpin Street), was constructed in 1893 and was later refinished with stucco and simplified, while a large addition was added along Franklin Street in 1937 and now serves as a multi-tenant nonprofit center. The addition doubled the size of the building and it began to serve as a bus garage and maintenance facility. Denver Tramway occupied the building as a trolley car and bus barn through the late 1950s and early 1960s. In the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, several businesses occupied the site, including manufacturing, a lumberyard and RTD. Because of this rich history, the building (including the adjacent west facing nonprofit center) is on the Registry of Historical buildings, however, the building does not have a formal Historical Designation, therefore, there are not any specifically mandated design requirements.

Starting in the 1990s, the property was purchased by a local community businessman; the building began to serve as a work training center and later as a center for nonprofit and educational organizations which continues as its focus under ULC ownership. The 14 tenant organizations of the Tramway Nonprofit Center provide services primarily to low and moderate-income families and individuals employing approximately 120 people and serving over 5,000 clients each year from this location.

### **Current Ownership:**

ULC acquired the property in November 2007 which consisted of 98,450 sf structure and an adjacent parking lot. ULC is currently pursuing a zone lot amendment to legally separate the subject site from the original building. The vacant warehouse portion of the building located on Gilpin was recently demolished due to concerns about the structural instability of the exterior masonry walls.

### **Neighborhood:**

The Cole neighborhood is one of Denver's oldest neighborhoods and is bound on the south by Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, on the north by 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue, on the east by York Street, and on the west by Downing Street. More than half of the residential blocks were developed prior to 1900 and by 1930, it was fully developed. The pattern of development generally occurred from southwest to northeast. Much of the area remains typical of middle-class sections of the city developed at the turn of the century. The neighborhood remains largely residential with sections of commercial use along Downing and along Bruce Randolph Blvd; and industrial occupied by Coca-Cola Bottling, located in the northeast section of the neighborhood.

In recent years, the Cole neighborhood has been experiencing a very dramatic shift in demographics due to the rising costs of real estate occurring throughout Denver. This gentrification of the neighborhood is resulting in the displacement of a number of long-time multi-generation residents who can no longer afford the housing costs and have few, if any, options for obtaining affordable housing elsewhere in Denver. A sign of the changing demographics is highlighted by the statistic that between 2010 and 2014, the annual household income for the neighborhood increased 68% from \$29,170 to \$49,051, while the total neighborhood population decreased slightly from 4,651 to 4,600 residents. Providing affordable housing at this location will offer lower-income residents some additional opportunities to remain in this neighborhood.

The Cole Neighborhood Association, the local Registered Neighborhood Organization, is very active in the community. The association is generally present and offers input at most development activity occurring in, or affecting their neighborhood. The development partner selected will be expected to engage with the Cole Neighborhood Association and other local community groups in a meaningful way.

- A number of other neighborhood influences affect the Tramway site. The first is Wyatt Charter School, located directly across the street to the north and built as Hyde Park School in or prior to 1890.
- Over the past few years, there have been discussions about the feasibility of closing 36<sup>th</sup> Street between Franklin and Gilpin and converting the space into a pedestrian plaza between the two buildings.
- To the west, a small section of the Cole neighborhood is included in the River North or RiNo Arts District, which is less than ½ mile from the Tramway Building. The RiNo Arts group was very influential in working with the City to pass a height amendment to increase zoning density around the commuter-rail station platform. RiNo also took the lead in creating a design overlay to establish architectural standards for developments planned within the district.

- New buildings currently constructed or in the development planning phase in the RiNo Arts District include the proposed 300,000 square foot World Trade Center-Denver; the under-constructed HUB, a 275,000 square-foot mixed-use, transit-oriented creative office development; the recently constructed Industry Two with 150,000 square feet of shared office space building and the Rock Drill project, in the development phase, is comprised of a 9 acre site which will include a blend of office, multifamily, hotel and retail space.
- ULC currently owns land near the 38<sup>th</sup> & Blake station platform on which the two separate development partners propose to develop 65 affordable multifamily housing units on Walnut Street and 300+ multifamily market-rate units on Blake Street. Both of these developments are projected to break ground in Q4 2018.

**Site improvements/Environmental:**

Any asbestos containing material was abated during the demolition phase. The redevelopment site is 36,782 sf and the adjacent nonprofit building to the west is 71,062 sf and includes a large garage space on the northeast portion of the building. A small, children's playground (utilized by a tenant) on the northeast corner of the site is also part of the redevelopment area. The developer will assume responsibility of the parcel as an "AS-IS" slab-on-grade site.

Included in the files accessible to the development teams by Dropbox are Asbestos Abatement records, Environmental Assessment Reports and drawings identifying the location of utility connections onto the parcel.

Please refer to Environmental Assessment Reports for additional information on historical use and known site conditions.

**Utilities:** Electric & Natural Gas – Xcel. Water/Sewer - City & County of Denver. Please see attached drawings location of utility services onto parcel.

**Zoning:**

The site is zoned R-MU-20 with waivers that were approved in 2006 with Ordinance 434, Council Bill No. 369. The waiver 1) reduced the previous maximum permitted building height from 55 feet to 45 feet; 2) waived the right to all required front, side and rear setback, changing minimum setback for all building on the site to 0 feet; and 3) waived the right to minimum unobstructed open space, changing the minimum required unobstructed open space to 0 feet.

ULC will cooperate in the entitlement process to achieve the appropriate zoning to maximize development goals if deemed necessary.

**RTD Commuter Rail Station:**

The subject site is located .4 miles to the southeast of RTD's 38<sup>th</sup> & Blake commuter rail station platform. The station is the first stop on the University of Colorado A-Line Commuter Rail from downtown at Union Station on the way to Denver International Airport.

### **City and County of Denver:**

In February 2018, the City also approved the zoning overlay for the height amendment at the 38<sup>th</sup> & Blake platform area, allowing for increased density near the rail station platform. The height amendment does not directly impact the subject property, however there is now higher density allowed four blocks to the west on Downing (up to 5 stories); four blocks to the northwest on Walnut (up to 12 stories) and four blocks to the north on 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue (between 5 and 12 stories). Respondents are encouraged to investigate other improvements proposed for this area.

## **II. Minimum Program Requirements**

ULC desires to develop the Cole Train site as a mixed-use community with a variety of uses that may include affordable housing, neighborhood retail, office space, and/or community space. A higher preference will be placed on Submissions that include a component of affordable housing. ULC regards the project area as a catalytic opportunity for the neighborhood with the potential to create positive change. The development partner that is selected will be expected to conduct a meaningful and inclusive community engagement process to determine the needs and the ultimate use of the site.

Submissions should address as many of the following program components as is feasible:

- The proposed project plans should maximize density to create a mixed-use transit-focused community.
- Walkable community components that draw in the community, bring life and energy to exterior spaces, and demonstrate positive outcomes for the community.
- Should include either Affordable Rental housing serving households at or below 60% of Area Median Income and/or Affordable Homeownership opportunities serving households at or below 95% of Area Median Income. Submissions that do not include an affordable housing component will receive less favorable consideration.
- Preferred commercial space to accommodate non-profit organizations that provide needed amenities and services to the community.
- Neighborhood commercial/retail uses that will help create a variety of employment opportunities for the community.
- Community gathering spaces to activate interior and exterior public spaces
- The final architectural / construction design shall incorporate ADA, Universal Design (as appropriate based on population), Green Building concepts, i.e., E- Star and Enterprise Green Communities / LEED certification, green roofs, and other energy cost savings systems.
- While the primary focus of this RFP is for the redevelopment of the currently vacant parcel on the east half of the site, there also exists an opportunity to redevelop another section of the property as a phase II. This second potential redevelop opportunity is an under-utilized, indoor garage/storage space immediately adjacent to the subject property. The space is part of the remaining, adjoining Tramway Nonprofit Center to the west and has a footprint

of approximately 9,500 sf and is approximately 20 feet tall. We are open to ideas of how this space might be better utilized and incorporated into the larger redevelopment plan for the site. Phase II ideas will not be a determinant factor of developer selection.

- To the extent possible, housing preference shall be granted to current residents of the Cole neighborhood, with more intensive marketing strategies focused in this location. Secondary preference shall be granted to those who resided in communities immediately adjacent to Cole.

While ULC is a proponent of economic development activities, the following are examples of uses that do not align with ULC community standards and should **not** be incorporated:

- Gambling facilities, liquor stores, drinking establishments (bars), tanning services, marijuana related uses, (dispensaries, grow facilities) and other uses generally not acceptable near a school or child care facility.

### **III. Pre-submittal Conference and Site Visit**

Two site visits will be conducted to tour the site and answer questions: (1) on **Thursday, April 5, 2018 at 10:00 am**, and (2) **Friday, April 6, 2018 at 10:00am**.

Any questions posed after the site visit must be submitted in writing to Mark Marshall (contact info below) by **Friday, April 20, 2018** with a subject line: TRAMWAY - COLE TRAIN RFP QUESTION; responses to all questions will be distributed to all respondents.

ULC will make available the following reports as part of this RFP **via Dropbox**. Please contact Mark Marshall (contact info below) to inquire about additional information that may be available.

#### **DROPBOX Material**

- 1) Site Aerial Photos
- 2) ALTA Survey
- 3) Environmental Reports
- 4) ACM Reports
- 5) LBP Reports
- 6) O & M Plan
- 7) Tank Removal Report

### **IV. Selection Criteria**

The primary objective of this Request for Proposals is to select a qualified development team experienced in developing TOD related projects/communities and/or affordable housing. The development team should meet the following basic qualifications in order to be considered for this project:

- 1) Demonstrated experience in the development of mixed use projects in the Denver metro area, with a specific focus on transit-oriented development and Green Building
- 2) Demonstrated experience in mixed-use TOD projects that include an affordable workforce housing component and community space
- 3) Demonstrated experience working in diverse socio-economic neighborhoods in the Denver metro area
- 4) Demonstrated financial capacity to undertake the project described
- 5) Demonstrated staff capacity
- 6) Respondents are encouraged to consider Disadvantaged, Minority, Women-Owned Business Enterprises when creating Development teams

## **V. Selection Process**

All submissions will be reviewed by ULC development staff (within the time frame referenced in Section VII) to identify those that best align with ULC's vision for the site. ULC will evaluate all submissions, consider the qualification of the team members, and determine whether the submission complies with ULC requirements. A short-list of development teams will then have an opportunity to submit full Development Proposals for final presentation and consideration of ULC's Development Committee. At least two Submissions that best fit the vision and program goals for this site will be selected.

ULC may enter negotiations with a selected developer. Should those negotiations prove unsuccessful, negotiations may commence with another developer or ULC may choose to solicit additional Submissions. ULC, in its sole discretion, may negotiate with any developer who is not a respondent or conduct any other action as it may decide is warranted. ULC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Submissions.

## **VI. Content of Submissions**

Interested parties should submit four (4) 11x17 bound copies of the following documents to the address referenced in Section V and by the deadline referenced. Also include one electronic copy of the Submission in PDF format on a compact disk or flash drive. All Submissions shall be marked: TRAMWAY – COLE TRAIN CONCEPT SUBMISSION

- Statement of Interest
- History - Short description of the history, mission, and company goals; organizational chart
- Statement of Development Team Qualifications – Information on key development team members; company resume(s) referencing experience with similar projects completed within the past 10 years. Please include a few samples of projects completed with similar program components, i.e., development mix, size, total development costs
- Design - Basic 11 x 17 (preferred) bound concept drawings detailing a proposed site plan/development concept for subject site.



- Schedule - General project development schedule (predevelopment phase, development phase, construction phase)
- Preliminary Economic Analysis – preliminary analysis to support financial feasibility of proposed project, i.e., proposed financing plan, alternate financing options
- Description of team’s capacity to pursue this project – List projects completed and in progress; please reference current status
- Outreach - Describe your experience effectively working with community constituents to solicit community feedback/support for proposed development plans.
- Affidavit stating that no member of the proposed development team, or its agency principals, is not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded by any Federal department or agency
- Financial Capacity – Two years financial statements and current year interim financial statements demonstrating company’s financial capacity to pursue this project
- Insurance - Evidence of Professional Liability Insurance and Workers Compensation Insurance
- Legal - List any litigation in which the firm or any team member has been named as a defendant during the past five years; current status
- References from clients/partners for similar type projects

**V. Closing Deadline**

**Four** (4) copies of Submission must be delivered no later than: 5pm - May 11, 2018 to:

Mark Marshall  
 Director of Real Estate  
 Urban Land Conservancy  
 1600 Downing Ave., Suite 300  
 Denver, CO 80218  
 (phone) 303-377-4477 ext. 210  
[mmarshall@urbanlandc.org](mailto:mmarshall@urbanlandc.org)

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**RFP Timeline:**

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|--------------------------------------|---|
| Request for Qualifications Announced | March 28, 2018                            |
| Site Visit(s)                        | April 5 (10 am) and April 6, 2018 (10 am) |
| Q&A Period Deadline                  | April 20, 2018                            |
| Submissions due                      | May 11, 2018                              |
| ULC Review/Short List Announced      | May 18, 2018                              |