

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS  
AND EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

REDEVELOPMENT OF XL CENTER AND  
ASSOCIATED PROPERTIES

RFQ#17-001

Issue Date: Monday, May 8, 2017

## **A. PURPOSE**

The Capital Region Development Authority (“CRDA”) seeks responses (“Submissions”) from qualified entities authorized to do business in the State of Connecticut for the Redevelopment of the existing XL Center (the “XL Center”) and the surrounding site (collectively, the “Site”) into a first-class, state-of-the-art sports and entertainment destination (the “Project”).

CRDA is issuing this Request for Qualifications (“RFQ”) as the first of a two-phase developer selection process whereby the Authority seeks potential development entities that are interested in a Public-Private-Partnership (“PPP”) for the redevelopment of the Project and Associated Properties. Statements of qualifications submitted under this RFQ will be reviewed by a selection committee charged with developing a short list of respondents who will be invited to submit detailed development proposals in Phase II under a separate Request for Proposals (“RFP”).

## **B. INTRODUCTION**

The Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) is the quasi-public State agency responsible for operation and maintenance of the XL Center in Downtown Hartford. The Authority is looking to undertake a significant transformation of the XL Center and Associated Properties in order to ensure the Project’s long-term sustainability.

The XL Center (originally the Hartford Civic Center) opened in 1975 and consists of two facilities: a Multi-use Spectator Arena and an Exhibition Hall. The Center is located in downtown Hartford, adjacent to Hartford 21 (a residential and commercial development), parking structures and office/retail complexes.

The facility was formerly the home of the NHL Hartford Whalers of the National Hockey League (NHL). Its current capacity is approximately 13,850 for hockey, 14,500 for basketball and 15,700 for center-stage concerts. The primary premium space is the Coliseum Club, which is located above the upper seating bowl.

The XL Center currently hosts the AHL Hartford Wolf Pack and University of Connecticut Men’s and Women’s basketball games and Men’s ice hockey. A term sheet has been executed with the University of Connecticut for the program to continue as a tenant in the Transformed XL Center. In addition, the facility hosts concerts, family shows, motor sports and other sporting events. The Exhibition Hall is currently used for tradeshow, conventions, banquets, meetings and other similar events. However, the Exhibition Hall is not included in the future design as this space will be needed as part of the design plan to upgrade the transformed facility.

Spectra is the current manager of XL Center and the management agreement extends to 2023.

Since CRDA assumed control of the building in 2012 through a lease agreement with the City of Hartford, it has continued to invest in facility improvements over the last three to keep the operation of XL Center viable for the near term. In 2014, approximately \$33 million in improvements to the XL Center were completed for repairs and upgrades to the buildings mechanical systems, public spaces and locker rooms to improve the fan experience, enhance revenues and reduce operating costs. The improvements were implemented to extend the building's life for 8 – 10 years while planning proceeds for a new facility.

It is generally recognized that the XL Center's functionality and ability to generate revenue are severely limited by its age, obsolete design, mechanical systems, limited current building footprint, narrow concourses, limited fan amenities, shortage of restrooms and ADA deficiencies. While some important improvements have been made, most of the overall mechanical, electrical and plumbing (MEP) infrastructure is in poor condition.

A 2015 study by SCI Architects concluded that at least 100,000 square feet of additional space is necessary to bring the XL Center up to modern venue standards, improve circulation, meet certain ADA and building code requirements and enhance the overall fan experience. SCI also concluded that sufficient space to meet these needs is available in the large atrium, unused retail space and a portion of the parking garage located adjacent to the XL Center.

SCI Architects and its sub consultants recommended the following Facility Program for a Transformed XL Center:

1. Seating capacities:

- 9,000 to 10,000 in lower bowl
- 8,000 in upper bowl
- Total seating capacity:
  - 17,000 for hockey
  - 18,000 for basketball
  - 19,000 for center stage concerts, boxing, wrestling

2. Premium Seating:

- 6 bunker suites with 20 person capacity each
- 30 mid-level suites
- 1 large corporate party suite
- 1,500 Lower Level Club seats
- 1,000 Terrace seats
- 30 four-person loge boxes
- 2 Lower Level Clubs/Lounges and Restaurant/Sports Bar

The SCI Study for a Transformed XL Center can be found at [www.crdact.net](http://www.crdact.net).

**C. PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

1. Provide for the Redevelopment of XL Center into a modern, industry standard facility to accommodate thirty (30) University of Connecticut Men’s and Women’s Basketball and Men’s Hockey games annually as well as family entertainment, concerts, sporting and other events and to provide guests and industry users with a contemporary, first-class and sustainable entertainment experience.
2. Identify a Developer who desires to enter into a PPP with CRDA for Redevelopment of the XL Center and Associated Properties..
3. Potentially develop a portion of the Site to complement and enhance the overall guest experience
4. Provide for a Project Design in a manner that enhances connections to adjoining neighborhoods and serves as an economic catalyst for the local business community

**D. RFQ RESPONSE – TIMETABLE**

| <b>ACTIVITY</b>                    | <b>DATE</b>                           |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. RFQ Issued                      | Monday, May 8, 2017 at 3:00 PM (EST)  |
| 2. Deadline for Questions          | Friday, May 19, 2017 at 3:00 PM (EST) |
| 3. Responses Provided to Questions | Monday, May 26, 2017 at 3:00 PM (EST) |
| 4. RFQ Responses Due               | Friday, June 9, 2017 at 3:00 PM (EST) |

Respondents may request an individual information session and walkthrough of the XL Center to acquaint firms/entities with the Project. Respondents should contact Robert Saint at 860.493.2917 to schedule such appointment.

**E. INQUIRIES REGARDING RFQ**

Questions regarding this RFQ prior to the date of [Friday, May 19, 2017] should be addressed via email to:

Michael W. Freimuth, Executive Director, Capital Region Development Authority  
and to,  
Carl S. Hirsh, Managing Partner at Stafford Sports  
The email addresses for both contacts is:

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|---|--|
| Michael W. Freimuth<br>Capital Region Development Authority<br>mfreimuth@crdact.net | Mr. Carl S. Hirsh<br>Stafford Sports<br>carlhirsh@staffordsports.com |
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CRDA will answer all inquiries in writing. If any inquiry results in a change in the RFQ, CRDA will issue an Addendum and the Addendum will be on CRDA’s website at [www.crdact.net](http://www.crdact.net). A copy of the Spectra Management Agreement for operation of the XL Center can be found at [www.crdact.net](http://www.crdact.net).

It is the responsibility of Respondents to check the CRDA website for any addenda or exhibits.

**F. RFQ RESPONSE – GENERAL**

1. A Respondent’s Submission must be received no later than Friday, June 9, 2017 at 2:00 PM (EST) in order to be considered. Any Submission received after the time and date specified shall not be considered. The qualifications and other information contained within the Submission should be submitted in strict compliance with the directives provided in this RFQ. All sealed Submissions will be opened and acknowledged by receipt at the established deadline. It is the Respondent’s responsibility to make certain the CRDA receives the Submission at the specified location by the established deadline.

2. All Proposals, inquiries or correspondence relating to this RFQ and all reports, displays, schedules, attachments, exhibits and other documentation submitted by any Respondent will become the property of CRDA upon receipt and may become public records pursuant to the State of Connecticut Freedom of Information Act.
3. All proprietary information disclosed to CRDA shall, to the extent permitted by law, be held in confidence, except as CRDA may otherwise be permitted by written instructions from the Respondent.
4. Each Proposal should clearly identify any information that is considered to be confidential or proprietary information.
5. CRDA shall have the right to request additional information from, and review additional records of any or all Respondents and failure to comply with such requests may result in elimination from further consideration.
6. CRDA, in its sole discretion, may interview none, one, some, or all of the Respondents who submit to this RFQ. CRDA may also require the Respondents to submit additional information.
7. Issuance of this RFQ does not obligate CRDA to undertake any action. This RFQ does not commit CRDA to award a contract. CRDA reserves the right to use the Submissions as a basis for negotiation with one or more Respondents and/or with parties other than those responding to this RFQ and/or terms other than those set forth herein. CRDA reserves the right to waive compliance with and/or change any terms of this RFQ.
8. This RFQ may be reissued, amended, or withdrawn if it is deemed in the best interest of CRDA to do so, or if, in the sole and absolute judgment of CRDA (in consultation with its advisors), all responses are unacceptable. CRDA retains the right to reject any and all Submissions at CRDA's sole discretion and retains the right to re-solicit for Submissions if deemed to be in its best interest.
9. CRDA reserves, holds without limitation, and may exercise, at its sole discretion, all rights and conditions with regards to the RFQ. CRDA makes no representations or warranties to the accuracy of the information or assumptions contained in this RFQ or otherwise furnished to Respondents. A Respondent is expected to become familiar with the requirements of the RFQ.
10. Facsimile or e-mailed Submissions will not be accepted in response to this RFQ. It is the sole responsibility of the Respondent to ensure that its Submission and any other documentation required under this RFQ are received by Michael W. Freimuth on or before the deadline.

11. CRDA is not liable or responsible for inhibited or interrupted courier, mail or other service, regardless of the postmark, weigh bill or other details. Respondents shall be solely responsible for the delivery of their Proposals in the manner and time prescribed. Late proposals may be accepted at the discretion of CRDA. . CRDA will not accept responsibility for documents delivered to other City facilities and, at the discretion of CRDA, may be declared disqualified.
12. Submissions that are unsealed, conditional, illegible, obscure and/or contain arithmetical errors, erasures, alterations, or irregularities of any kind may, at the discretion of CRDA, be declared disqualified.
13. All Submissions must be delivered according to the instructions herein. Each Submission must comply with the stipulations set forth in this RFQ, any amendments and any written responses from CRDA to Respondent inquiries.
14. The Respondent's Submission shall identify a single contact person for receipt of responses and information from CRDA. The preferred method of receipt and distribution of information will be by e-mail. Therefore, include a contact name, phone number, mailing address and e-mail address with your proposal.
15. Amendment(s) to the RFQ, if any, will be issued at the discretion of CRDA and will be located on CRDA's website at [www.crdact.net](http://www.crdact.net). In the event that it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFQ or if additional information is necessary to enable the Respondents to make adequate interpretation of the provisions of this RFQ, an amendment to the RFQ will be issued. All Respondents are strongly urged to periodically check the website.
16. The Respondent is responsible for any and all costs incurred by Respondent while inquiring or responding to this RFQ. Respondents are solely responsible and without recourse to CRDA for their own expenses in preparing and submitting an RFQ response and providing any clarifications and additional information that may be requested by CRDA.
17. A Submission found to be non-responsive will not be considered. A Submission may be rejected if found to be in nonconformance with the requirements and instructions.
18. The Authority is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action employer and does not discriminate in its hiring, employment, or business practices. The Authority is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs, services or activities.

## **G. RESPONDENT SUBMISSION - FORMAT REQUIREMENTS**

Respondents are required to submit:

- One (1) original copy complete
- An additional Three (3) paper copies as well as separate electronic copies on two (2) USB flash drives

Respondent Submission shall be drafted in an organized manner, allowing for Submission of complete electronic copies (PDF Format) as well as hard copies, bound or presented in a three-ring binder, with sections appropriately tabbed and identified in both formats. Preferred formatting is 8.5" x 11", with hard copies printed back to back to reduce paper use.

Greater detail regarding supporting information and documentation will assist CRDA in the evaluation of responses. Elaborate format and binders are neither necessary nor desired. Legibility, clarity, and coherence are more important. The RFQ response should be limited to no more than twenty-five pages. Information regarding marketing materials, corporate brochures, personnel policies and fiscal policies and procedures should be included as exhibits and will not be considered part of the twenty-five (25) page limit.

The Response must be submitted in a sealed package with the name and address of the Respondent. The Submission should be clearly marked on the packaging envelope as:

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS  
AND EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

REDEVELOPMENT OF XL CENTER

Attn: Michael W. Freimuth  
Capital Region Development Authority  
100 Columbus Blvd #500  
Hartford, CT 06103

## **H. SUBMISSION MATERIALS**

The Respondent shall include the information below in their Submission in the following order:

- Introduction/Cover Letter: Provide a letter of introduction not to exceed two (2) pages. The letter should highlight or summarize whatever information the company deems appropriate. This section shall include the contact name, name

of firm, address, telephone number, fax number and e- mail address of the designated person to whom all correspondence should be directed.

- **History of the Company:** Respondent should include a description of the organization, its history, the company's ownership structure, officers and directors and number of employees. Provide information regarding any contractual litigation, arbitration and mediation cases for the last five (5) years that are material or relevant to this RFQ.
- **Comparable Experiences:** Provide a brief history of the company's relevant or comparable large-scale development projects, similar entertainment and associated development projects as well as any experience with public-private ventures and the results of those experiences. Include a description of the company's professional qualifications that demonstrate extensive experience in your industry.
- **Staff and Roles:** Provide a description of key staff that would be involved in the Project along with their roles, experience and qualifications.
- **Financial Strength:** Provide proof of the company's financial capacity such as credit information, credit references and audited financial statements for the last 3 years as evidence that company has financial capacity to participate in the PPP and that any other corporate affiliate or parent company resources that may be relied upon for completion of the Project.
- **References:** Identify at least three (3) references for accounts where your firm has been involved in a public/private partnership. Explain the role your firm performed/continues to perform for the partnership. If you have less than three clients, indicate that your response includes your full client base. For each reference, include a contact name, telephone number and email address of the client.
- **Other Information:** Provide any other information that would be appropriate and helpful in determining the Respondent's capacity and reliability to perform these services including marketing materials, background information or descriptive examples of the company's work.