

Franklin School RFQ: Questions and Answers

925 13th Street NW | Square 0285, Lot 0808

The following questions were asked by attendees of the Franklin School Phase I Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Pre-Response Information Session & Site Visit, either in-person or over e-mail to lee.goldstein@dc.gov.

Q: Why does the District prefer to lease the Franklin School? Would the District consider a fee simple disposition of the site?

A: The preferred disposition method of a long-term ground lease for the Franklin School is a policy directive by our office given the historic importance of the building and the level of involvement the District would like to maintain through the life of the project. If teams would like to offer an alternative structure they can, but this is the preference of our office for how we plan to dispose of the property.

Q: What particular aspects of the interior of the Franklin School need to be preserved?

A: In designating the interior of the Franklin School, the Historic Preservation Review Board cited the following notable features: the open stairways and stair halls; the Great Hall and its musicians gallery; the original roof truss system; the classroom spaces; the arched doorways and transoms; and the large amount of extant original or early trim, including wainscoting and metal work; and the tin ceilings at the south end of the second story. It is anticipated that these features will be treated commensurate with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, and applicants are encouraged to consider the use of the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit. Additionally, applicants are encouraged to review the National Historic Landmark Nomination form, which has been uploaded to the website.

Q: Does the District have additional plans, condition reports, plats, surveys or other relevant building information that describe any of the following with regard to the property: condition, mechanical systems, layout, services, boundaries, and dimensions?

A: The District does not have any additional information to share on the property at this time beyond the information currently available in the RFQ. It is expected respondents will perform any necessary assessments based on access to the building during the site tour, as well as any public information readily available. If any additional information does become available regarding the property, it will be posted to the DMPED website if deemed appropriate to inform the RFQ process. Additionally, as stated at the Pre-Response Information Session, the goal of the Phase I RFQ is to identify qualified candidates to advance to Phase II. More emphasis, information, and access will be provided to the building in Phase II so that detailed cost estimates and plans may be prepared.

Q: Are the previous design submissions/RFP responses available for review?

A: No.

Q: Is there a cost breakdown for the restoration/improvement expense estimate referenced in the RFQ?

A: The \$20-\$24 million listed for rehabilitation work on the Franklin School is a cost estimate derived internally by the District. Respondents are encouraged to perform their own independent cost estimates for restoration and improvements to the site.

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Q: What size/capacity and utilities are currently servicing the building?

A: Respondents should assume the building needs complete overhaul of its mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and related utility systems. Public utility connections are readily available in the surrounding infrastructure.

Q: Does the District have a preference for use?

A: The District does not have a specific preference for a particular development program or programmatic use. Competitive projects will be financially viable, respect the historic character of the building, and meet the District's policy goals outlined in the RFQ.

QUESTIONS FROM FRANKLIN SCHOOL TOUR #2 (3.16.15)

Q: Who will be on the selection committee?

A: The selection committee for the Franklin School RFQ will be comprised of District government officials from different agencies who have expertise related to the redevelopment opportunity.

Q: Is the Franklin School connected to the GSA central steam system?

A: No, to the District's knowledge, the Franklin School is not currently connected to any outside utilities or mechanical systems or networks.

Q: Why did the District extend the deadline past the original March 23rd submission date?

A: DMPED received a number of inquiries about the project after the first tour on February 23rd. Our office decided to extend the timeframe to allow for two additional tours, and provide all teams the time necessary to put together teams and prepare quality responses to the RFQ.

Q: What are the District Department of Transportation's (DDOT) plans for K Street? Will there be changes that affect the service lanes next to the Franklin School?

A: Currently, there is no active work underway by DDOT that would affect the area of K Street, NW by the Franklin School site. DDOT has completed an initial planning study that focuses on a streetcar alignment along K Street, New Jersey Ave, and H Street connecting Union Station to Georgetown (<http://www.dcstreetcar.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/USGT-AA-NoAppendices.pdf>). An Environmental Assessment is underway to determine if there are any potential impacts resulting from the proposal. DDOT has not yet identified potential ancillary needs such as vehicle storage facilities or power needs (<http://www.unionstationtogeorgetown.com/>).

Q: Is the basement a full level?

A: The basement level is a full floor; however, the ceilings are not as high as the other floors of the building. It is anticipated the basement level is large enough to accommodate a range of uses.

Q: How flexible are the historic preservation requirements regarding modifications for accessibility and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?

A: As the Franklin School has an at-grade entrance on 13th Street and it is expected that the building will be retrofitted with new accessible vertical circulation either internally or through an addition in the rear, it is anticipated that the building can be made fully compliant with the Americans With Disabilities Act in a manner that is consistent with preservation standards. Applicants may want to consult the National Park Service's Preservation Brief "Making Historic Properties Accessible" (<http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/32-accessibility.htm>).

Q: How can redevelopment accommodate loading for large objects without compromising the historic integrity of the building?

A: Some exterior modification at the basement level in the rear of the building may be possible to provide loading for large objects.