The Columbus Metropolitan Library ("CML") and the Columbus Downtown Development Corporation ("CDDC") are inviting developers to respond to this Request for Proposal ("RFP") to develop a residential/retail site on Grant Avenue adjacent to the Main Library and Topiary Park in downtown Columbus, Ohio. **It is the intention of this RFP to solicit proposals that will include complete schematic designs and establish key deal terms. Proposals are due on November 1 at 12pm. Interviews will be scheduled with the proposing developers on November 2 and 3.**

The Columbus Metropolitan Library

Columbus Metropolitan Library has served the people of Franklin County, Ohio for 143 years. CML understands that great libraries create stronger communities and has invested millions of dollars in the Main Library to create a world class library facility. The transformation of its flagship Main Library represents a major investment in downtown Columbus and the Discovery District. Main Library has served as an anchor and civic partner to the downtown community and central Ohio since 1873.

The recent renovation, completed on June 25, 2016, transforms Main Library with a new glass façade that invites customers into the space but maintains the historic Carnegie Building facing Grant Avenue. A slightly raised, updated Carnegie Plaza keeps the mature trees, green space and iconic Peter Pan fountain that greets customers as they approach.
Inside customers will find a new and innovative children’s area and a grand reading room with sweeping views of Topiary Park. The Park Plaza on the east side of the building will connect the library to the park, with green space and an outdoor reading room for customers to enjoy. Topiary Park, named for the topiary representation of Georges Seurat’s Post-Impressionist painting *A Sunday Afternoon on the Isle of La Grande Jatte* at the center of the park, is one of the outdoor treasures of downtown Columbus.

**The Topiary Park Neighborhood**

CML is being assisted in this RFP effort by the Columbus Downtown Development Corporation, a nonprofit development corporation, whose projects include the Columbus Commons, the Lazarus Building, the RiverSouth Neighborhood, the Scioto Mile, and the Ohio Veterans Memorial and Museum.

CDDC has enjoyed tremendous success in downtown development by creating high quality greenspaces and safe walkable neighborhoods. Noting the tremendous asset represented by Topiary Park, CDDC led an effort in 2015 to explore the interest of major landowners in that neighborhood for cooperative development. With the support of MKSK, CDDC worked with each landowner to understand their respective goals for the neighborhood. The goals were remarkably similar – a safe, walkable and vibrant neighborhood for their employees, students, customers and stakeholders.

CDDC believes this can best be achieved by building residential development and employing Grant Avenue and Library Park Alley as significant pedestrian connections. New development fronting Grant Avenue can leverage revision to the streetscape and traffic patterns with new active first floor uses. Overall, CDDC has proposed over 650 new residential units, over 1000 new parking spaces and 100,000 square feet office to be constructed on partners’ properties. CML is leading as the vanguard of the effort with this RFP for the Grant Oak site as a new residential development. A summary of the Topiary Park Neighborhood plan is included on page 10.

**The Grant Oak Apartment Redevelopment Opportunity**

CML acquired the Grant Oak Apartments in 1992 for potential expansion of the Main Library. CML was ultimately able to pursue a better development plan and no longer requires the site for Library expansion. The 1.256 acre site is currently occupied by 130 small apartments of 1940s vintage. CML and CDDC believe the best use of the site is for the construction of a new apartment development that will reinvest in the neighborhood, complementing CML’s reinvestment in the Main Library. This site is envisioned as 4-6 floors of market rate residential apartments. The east side of the site is adjacent to Topiary Park and will complement development opportunities planned by Motorists Insurance Group around the park.

As a part of the project, the Developer will be required to construct the project generally in accordance with the provided site plan, including the driveways and the new open or civic space. The driveways will be dedicated as public right of way, and the open civic space will be owned by the developer subject to an easement in favor of CML.
Site Location:

This site is located on Grant Avenue, directly across Library Park North from the Columbus Main Library, and also fronts Topiary Park. The location is well situated close to some of the largest employers in the region: State Auto Insurance, Motorists Insurance Group and OhioHealth with about 6,000 employees at the adjacent campuses. The site is also at the heart of downtown’s educational corridor comprised of Franklin University, Capital University Law School, the Columbus College of Art and Design and Columbus State Community College, with over 32,000 students and over 3,000 employees. With the catalysts of the Library renovation, Topiary Park, and the Columbus Museum of Art’s expansion, CDDC believes this is a unique opportunity to fulfill the residential market’s demand to live, work and play in the same neighborhood.

CMHA:

The CML’s mission is to provide its services to all people regardless of socio-economic status. In the spirit of that mission, CML is asking developers to partner with the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority to provide 10% workforce housing units. The units will be targeted to be affordable to working persons earning 80-120% of the area median income. CMHA will potentially bring exemption from sales taxes on construction materials and exemption from real estate taxes after the 15 year abatement ends.

The Building Program:

The existing apartments will be razed by the selected developer.
The library apartment site is envisioned as two mid-rise residential buildings with a potential for a small amount of neighborhood retail space (2000-5000 sqft). As shown, over 100 residential units are possible. The successful developer will raze the entire building site, reconstructing the open civic space and driveways shown on page 10. The open civic space will be owned by the developer, subject to a open space easement for the use of CML, with the developer being entitled to the same use for its residents/tenants. The driveways will be dedicated as public streets. CML has requested that the City reconstruct the Library Park North alley in a more attractive and pedestrian friendly design. The developer will be responsible for the streetscape along the north side of Library Park North as part of the project.

**Design Guidelines:**

All proposals must comport with the attached Design Guidelines.

**Potential Incentives:**

1. New residential housing in the Columbus downtown area is eligible for a fifteen-year property tax exemption. This site is eligible for a 100% exemption on the value of new improvements. Note that the partnership with CMHA may provide a longer tax exemption that also exempts the underlying land, depending on the structure of the partnership.

2. Services provided by the Discovery District Special Improvement District, which includes safety and cleaning services to the District.

3. Utility tap credits for taps currently serving the site.

**Information:**

Any information provided by CML or CDDC is without warranty or representation and intended only to facilitate the developer’s proposal. Each developer will be given access to the property and should rely on its own experts’ opinions on due diligence matters.

**Proposal Evaluation:**

Proposals will be competitively evaluated based on factors including the following:

- Architectural Planning and Design
- Compliance with the Design Guidelines
- Project Timeframe for Full Completion
- Project Team Experience
- Ability to Finance the Project/Financial Feasibility
- Purchase Price
- Amount of Investment in the Development
Submission Requirements:

1. **Design**
   
   a. Please submit schematic plans and renderings (in substantial conformity with the Design Guidelines).
   
   b. The plans should include architectural treatments, unit layouts and configuration of commercial space (if any).
   
   c. Please specify the number of units, the unit mix and the number of floors.
   
   d. The proposed project should be primarily market rate rental residential. Some mixture of office and/or retail use is permissible.

2. **Development Schedule**
   
   (a) Please submit a detailed proposed development schedule based on the schematic plans. Describe any material assumptions in the scheduling that could alter or impact the proposed schedule.
   
   (b) The proposed schedule should cover each period of development but should indicate specific planned dates for the start of construction and the completion of construction. The schedule will serve as the basis for performance criteria in the purchase agreement, as discussed below with respect to anticipated key terms of the purchase agreement.

3. **Pro-Forma**
   
   (a) Please submit a project pro-forma detailing:
      
      (i) projected costs of construction and development including a detailed line item breakdown of hard costs, soft costs, and developer fees.
      
      (ii) projected income including breakdown of rentable square feet and projected rent per square foot.
      
      (iii) projected costs inclusive of debt service.
      
      (iv) net present value of project, specifying appropriate capitalization rate.
   
   (b) Please clearly indicate assumptions on level of debt, interest on debt, required returns to equity, and the capitalization rate used.

4. **Financing**
   
   a) Please submit a detailed financing plan indicating equity and debt.
b) Please identify source(s) of equity. If a source of equity is external to the Developer, please provide letters from identified investors representing a commitment to provide the equity required under the financing plan.

c) Please identify the planned source(s) of debt.

d) Please identify any other planned sources of funding together with timetables for securing such funding.

e) Please identify all entities involved including partners, parents and subsidiary companies and their relationships.

5. **Litigation**

Please disclose any threatened or pending litigation against the developer.

6. **Key Terms**

CML and CDDC desire to confirm the following “key terms” as a part of the proposal process. *Please indicate agreement with each of the following key terms, or clearly describe any proposed modifications.*

a. **Price**
   
i. Developer must propose a purchase price for the site. Purchase price will be a significant factor in proposal evaluation.

   ii. Developer will make a deposit of 10 percent of the purchase price upon full execution of the purchase agreement. The purchase and sale agreement will provide for a 45 due diligence period. After the due diligence period, the deposit will be non-refundable, except for a Seller default.

b. **Site**

   i. The site will be tax parcels 010-007467 and 010-217038 bounded by Oak Street, Grant Avenue, Library Park North and 9th Street as shown below.
ii. The purchase agreement will provide 45 days for Developer’s due diligence. Contingencies will be limited to title review, subsurface and environmental review. All contingencies will be foreclosed at the conclusion of the due diligence period.

iii. CML will provide the sites in as is, current condition. Developer will be responsible for any costs of environmental remediation, soil conditions, or other latent issues.

iv. The property will be delivered occupied by current residents and all leases and tenancies will be assigned to Developer.

v. The property will be deed-restricted to reflect obligations with respect to the completion of the proposed schematic project plan, including completion timing. Obnoxious uses will be prohibited.

vi. Developer will be required to construct the open civic space and driveways depicted on the attached schematic plans at Developer’s sole expense as part of the project construction. After construction, the driveways will be dedicated as public right of way, and the open civic space shall be subject to an open civic space easement for the use of CML, with the developer being entitled to the same use for its residents/tenants. CML will retain the right to approve all plans and supervise the construction of the driveways and open civic space.

vii. Developer will cause the open civic space to be designed at its sole expense. The design will be based upon input from CML and the final design will be subject to CML’s approval.

c. Performance

i. No interest in the sites will be conveyed until the closing of Developer’s construction financing.

ii. CML will retain a right to repurchase the sites at a repurchase price discounted by 10 percent if substantial construction does not commence within 6 months of closing.

iii. If Developer forms an entity limited in purpose to the Project, developer’s parent entity will provide a guarantee of its performance of all obligations and covenants to CML.

d. Parking
i. With the Main Library expansion, CML does not have excess parking capacity to provide parking for these apartments. CML will not provide parking for this development. The development will be required to self-park or to obtain parking agreements with neighboring properties. Capital University Law School has indicated it is potentially amenable to providing some parking for the development, but that would be negotiated directly between the Developer and the school. CML strongly encourages proposals that include underground parking.

e. Approval(s)

i. CML and CDDC will approve the selection of Developer’s general contractor, except to the extent Developer self-performs the construction.

ii. Developer will not make any changes to the design presented that affects the allocation of use, materials approved or exterior appearance without CML’s consent.

Additional Key Terms: Please disclose any additional terms contemplated in the proposal that could have a material financial, legal, timing or practical impact on the project, including any key terms proposed by the developer in response to project preferences indicated in this RFP (e.g., proposed CMHA partnership, etc.).

Submission:

Proposal Submission Requirements

All proposals must be in a sealed envelope or appropriate packaging, with the title of Library Park Apartments Development – CML# 16-012 clearly marked on the outside, addressed and mailed or hand delivered to the following address:

Columbus Metropolitan Library
Attn: Wanda Dixon, Procurement Analyst
96 South Grant Avenue
Columbus, OH 43215

With an electronic copy to

Matt Lutz
General Counsel
Columbus Downtown Development Corporation
150 S. Front Street, Suite 210
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Submissions must be received by **November 1 at 12pm** to be considered.

**SELECTION PROCESS:**

- CDDC will review all proposals and recommend the three best proposals to CML.

- A committee established by CML will interview the developers providing the proposals recommended by CDDC and make a final selection.

- The CML Board of Trustees will provide a final approval and authorization of a purchase and sale agreement.

- CDDC will assist CML and its legal counsel in finalizing the purchase and sale agreement with Developer.
Proposed Site Plan: