



# **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**For**

**HOTEL DEVELOPMENT**

**On the Campus of The Classic Center, Athens GA**

**The Classic Center Authority**

**THE CLASSIC CENTER (CCA)  
Athens, Georgia  
RFP# CCA-HOTELDEV2**



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL May 20, 2022

The Classic Center Authority (CCA) is soliciting proposals from firms specializing in Hotel Development for Development Services within extended campus of The Classic Center in Athens, Georgia. All interested firms are invited to submit a “Statement of Qualifications and Conceptual Information” (SQCP).

This RFP is the first in a two-step proposal and selection process. This first step is intended to obtain SQCP information related to the qualifications, experience, capabilities, and general overall conceptual vision of prospective Developers. The Classic Center Authority (CCA) may choose one or more respondent Developers for consideration to advance to Step Two of this proposal and selection process. Step Two may include, but not be limited to, discussions with Developer(s) and providing qualified Developer(s) with additional, detailed information related to the site and project for preparation of detailed development and financial proposals.

**A. Contact:**

All inquiries regarding proposals must be made to Richard Sawyer via email at: [richard@classiccenter.com](mailto:richard@classiccenter.com). Questions or requests regarding the RFP may be asked in writing up until 2:00 PM, June 1, 2022. Emails must be titled “*Questions for Classic Center RFP#HOTEL DEV2*”. Contact regarding this solicitation or scope with any other person within Athens Clarke County Unified Govt. (ACC), employees of The Classic Center, members of The Classic Center Authority, or otherwise involved with this project is prohibited and may result in disqualification and elimination from the selection process.

The requirements contained in this RFP shall not be changed or superseded except by written addendum from The Classic Center Authority. Failure to comply with the written requirements for this proposal may result in rejection from further consideration by The Classic Center Authority. One (1) electronic .pdf version must be submitted via email with “**SQCP for Classic Center Hotel**”: included in the subject line and sent to the contact above. Submittals are due not later than **June 22, 2022 – 4:00 P.M.**

The Classic Center Authority reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive any technicalities or irregularities, and to award the contract based on the highest and best interest of The Classic Center Authority.

## **I. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CLASSIC CENTER**

The **Mission Statement** of The Classic Center: To seek to enhance the quality of life in Athens- Clarke County by serving as the cultural, civic, and social center of the Southeast by generating maximum economic impact.

The **Brand Statement** of The Classic Center: Through a thoughtfully planned and conveniently placed facility, located in a uniquely vibrant and charming cultural environment and proactive, creative approach to personal service, The Classic Center elevates the experience of events to exceed the expectations of our guests.

## **II. THE CLASSIC CENTER AUTHORITY, THE CLASSIC CENTER FACILITIES AND CAMPUS/COMPLEX**

The existing Classic Center venue is a 350,000 square foot public assembly facility (includes all pre-function/lobby spaces) located in Athens, Georgia. Athens is the capital of Athens-Clarke County Unified Government and is approximately sixty (60) miles northeast of Atlanta, Georgia. The Classic Center Authority was formed in 1988 and currently holds a newly established 50- year lease on The Classic Center property on which to manage the facilities which are owned by the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County (ACCUG). The Classic Center Authority is a political subdivision of the State of Georgia and semi-private/semi-public in nature.

Athens-Clarke County serves an immediate area population of approximately 126,000 with a growth of over 9% since year 2010. The Classic Center is a business, cultural and social hub for the many surrounding counties/communities in Northeast Georgia that include, but are not limited to Oconee, Barrow, Greene, Gwinnett, and Madison counties. The Classic Center includes a 2000 seat performing arts theater, 18,000 square foot ballroom (divisible into 10 breakout room), 55,000 square foot exhibit hall, historic 3,000 square foot Firehall, a 9,000 square foot indoor Atrium, fully functional 5,000 square foot kitchen facility, a 12,000 square foot break-out space in its renovation of an old warehouse now making up the Foundry Street Ballrooms, and an additional 4 more break-out rooms above its exhibit space totaling 7000 square feet making a total possible 29 break-out rooms.

In addition to existing facilities, a new Arena on the CCA campus is being designed and constructed and has been partially funded through the 2020 SPLOST referendum with was approved by the voters in Nov. of 2019.

It is anticipated the Arena will host touring music concerts, conventions, sporting events, and family entertainment shows as its primary event drivers, generating 125 events, and driving some 75,000 room nights as noted on two separate studies from Odell and CSL. The Arena will be an estimated 5,500 fixed seats and allow another 1,500 to access the floor for a total concert attendance capacity of 7,000. Groundbreaking for the Arena was

achieved in April 2022 and construction completion is estimated by late-year of 2023. More information about the Arena can be obtained about The Center at [www.ClassicCenter.com](http://www.ClassicCenter.com).

### III. PURPOSE:

The Classic Center Authority is soliciting “Statement of Qualifications and Conceptual Proposal” (SQCP) information from capable and experienced Developers to develop a Downtown Athens, Georgia Hotel under a ground lease with The Classic Center Authority. The selected Developer will provide comprehensive development services in close coordination with the Authority for the development of a quality 200-room hotel on the campus adjoining The Classic Center on land/air rights the Classic Center Authority controls. The specific site is on The Classic Center owned property of approximately 1 acre bordered by Hickory Street and Willow Street. Parking for the hotel is contemplated to be on the campus, convenient to the hotel and the Arena. (**See attached master plan, Exhibit III**).

In issuing this RFP, it is the intent of CCA is to identify one or more finalist(s) whose SQCP is determined through the evaluation process described herein to be especially compatible with the goals and objective of CCA and ACC. The successful finalist Developer(s) will advance to Step Two of this process and receive additional information for preparation of a formal Development Proposal and/or possibly enter discussions and negotiations with The Classic Center Authority for development of the Project. It is the intent of The Classic Center to ultimately enter a Development Contract based on negotiations between The Classic Center and the Selected Developer.

### IV. GROUND LEASE - MINIMUM RESERVE:

The Classic Center Authority is seeking to receive the following as minimal annual lease payments:

- Up-front Developer hotel program investment: \$1.5M (in 2023/2024 dollars)
- Hotel Site and Parking- 50 Year Ground Lease: \$350K (in 2023/2024 dollars)

### V. RFP SCHEDULE:

The RFP schedule is anticipated as follows:

1. Step One “SQCP” RFP Issued ..... **May 23, 2022**
2. **New\*** deadline for submission of questions .... **June 10, 2022, 2:00 PM ET**
3. **SQCP Submittal DUE** ..... **June 22, 2022, 4:00 PM ET**
4. Selection of Firm(s) to advance to Step Two (target) .. **June 30, 2022**

**\*(This is a change from original RFP posting)**

All expenses involved with the preparation and submission of proposals to The Classic Center, or any work performed in connection therewith shall be borne by the respondent Developer(s). No payment will be made for any responses received or for any other effort required of or made by the Developer(s) prior to commencement of work as defined by a contract approved by The Classic Center. Developers are encouraged to visit the site and generally inspect and familiarize themselves with the proposed Hotel site. The site is open and available to the public and visits do not need to be scheduled or coordinated. In no event shall failure to inspect the site constitute grounds for a claim after contract award.

The Classic Center may make such reasonable investigations as deemed proper and necessary to determine the ability of the Developer to perform the work and the Developer shall furnish to The Classic Center all such information and data for this purpose as may be requested. The Classic Center reserves the right to contact Developer respondents for clarifications or additional information and reject any proposal if the evidence submitted by, or investigations of, such Developer fails to satisfy The Classic Center that such Developer is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract and to complete the work contemplated therein.

## **VI. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND SCOPE OF SERVICES**

### **PROJECT BACKGROUND:**

This Classic Center/Downtown Hotel Project is part of the community's plan to address the ongoing demand for additional Hotel Rooms in Downtown Athens. A confidential preliminary Master Plan has been attached within this RFP to provide information on the proposed future Campus and adjacent developments. Please note that this Master Plan is in the process of being refined and is not to be considered as final and may be adjusted or revised by the Authority.

Planning for the hotel shall:

- not impede vehicle traffic and access to the Classic Center and Arena
- include development one parking space per room key (one to one equivalence)
- not exceed 200 rooms.
- coordinate hotel event space usage, square footage, and target business functions in conjunction with The Classic Center sales staff to complement one another. Specifically, The Classic Center would like to be able to obtain blocks of 75% or more for CCA groups.
- anticipate (prior to hotel construction completion and opening for operations), coordinate on-site staff/vendor requirements for parking with Classic Center staff. Coordinated to open hotel on or about the same schedule as opening of the arena (late 2023).
- Outline the Developer's (and Operator's) experience and abilities in establishing facility use agreements and convention center/arena hotel booking policies.
- Explain the Developer's understanding of this property being connected with a convention / performance facility and what are the unique characteristics of a convention hotel and how their proposed hotel will accommodate the attendees of such gatherings.

- supporting The Classic Center becoming a learning lab with the hospitality industry to include education and training in music, events, sports, culinary and hotel management. Please state the ways your hotel will assist with that partnership
- support The Classic Center's and ACC's objectives for the development providing a living wage with regard to the MIT Living Wage Calculator (*link provided here: <https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/13059>*) for appropriate employee categories of both the construction activities and the hotel operation, and maintain consistent, progressive consideration of workforce development.

## **VII. PROJECT GOALS:**

1. Provide an urban convention hotel for Athens that compliments the quality, service, convenient, and aesthetic standard as set forth by The Classic Center Authority.
2. Provide a successful hotel operation for downtown Athens that enhances and integrates well with the existing urban framework via design, transportation and pedestrian connections/access, and overall functionality.
3. Provide for the continuous, successful, and sustainable operation of a hotel property with experienced management company to meet the anticipated growing room night demands for downtown Athens.
4. Provide construction staffing and eventual operational staffing of the hotel in a manner that is consistent with The Classic Center's and ACCUG equal opportunity initiatives, hiring practices, and that provides equitable living wage and benefit standards to all labor employed or apprenticed. Provide opportunities for local minority and female-owned subcontractors to build their capacities.
5. Continually support the prevailing workforce development goals and objectives including the continuum of hospitality education of The Classic Center and ACCUG.
6. Plan, phase, and implement construction to coordinate with The Classic Center operations to minimize disruptions and negative impacts to Classic Center and clients.
7. Plan and develop the project in an environmentally sensitive manner consistent with the goals and objectives of The Classic Center and ACCUG. Identify and pursue LEED certification potential for the development's facilities, supporting ACC's stated goals reducing carbon "footprint" by 2035 (Resource information may be found in ACC's "Sustainability Goal" dated, Feb. 13, 2020).
8. Assure the requirement of The Classic Center Authority that during construction exterior drives and pedestrian walkways, landscaping and hardscaping and other amenities around the site will remain available and all efforts made to mitigate any adverse impact for public use and enjoyment, events, and other uses consistent with The Classic Center's purpose and Master planning efforts.

## VIII. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

ALL PROPOSALS RECEIVED WILL BECOME A PART OF THE OFFICIAL CONTRACT FILE AND MAY BE SUBJECT TO PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS.

*Note: Labeling sections of the SQCP information as proprietary or confidential does not waive this provision. A complete proposal should include the documents listed below:*

### **PROPOSAL SUBMISSION:** .

**Ownership of materials submitted:** All materials submitted as part of this RFP become the property of The Classic Center Authority. Proposals shall be organized with Tabs in the following order and shall not exceed 30 doublesided pages:

**COVER – Transmittal Letter:** Provide cover letter of introduction and statement of interest.

### ***TAB 1 – Table of Contents***

**TAB 2 – Business Information:** Provide relevant information regarding organizational stability and strength. Documentation should include:

1. A narrative description of the founding of the company, its purpose and business focus, years in business and overall growth and capabilities.
2. If the name of the Developer/Offeror is a corporation/trust. The proposal shall be signed by an authorized person of the corporation, with the designation of the signer's official capacity. The proposal shall show the state in which the corporation is chartered and that the corporation is responsible and authorized to do business in and in good standing the State of Georgia. A statement of organizational structure (e.g., ownership structure, partners, board of directors, joint venture partners, etc.), a listing of financial references.
3. If the Developer/Offeror is a partnership, the proposal shall be signed in the name of the partnership by a general partner or other person duly authorized to bind the partnership. The capacity and title of the person signing shall be shown set forth on the document.
4. If the Developer/Offeror is an individual or sole proprietorship, the Proposal shall be signed by the individual in person, stating the name or style, if any, under which the Offeror is doing business.
5. In any case, the proposal shall show the present business address of the Developer/Offeror at which communications from the Authority and notices

served are to be received.

6. The hotel brands and Operator(s) that the Developer would recommend as appropriate.

**TAB 3 – Firm/Team Experience/Qualifications:** Include an organization chart depicting the team structure and include resumes and a description of the area of responsibility for each team member to be directly assigned or involved in deliver and execution of this project.

- a. Representative projects of similar size, scale, use and complexity developed within the last 10 years. Please include project information including photos, location, overall project cost, architect and contractor, and date completed. Provide evidence of project success including Owner references and contact information.
- b. Failure to Complete Prior Projects – disclose whether the Developer (or any general partner or joint venture of the Developer) has ever failed to complete a project of similar size and scale. If so, list the date of the commencement of the project and the entity for which the project was to be performed, and explain why the project was not completed.
- c. Disclose information and provide explanation regarding any contracts involving the Developer or joint venture firm within the last three years which exceeded initial program or project budget, exceeded initial schedule, and any contract penalties or damages assessed.

**TAB 4 – Understanding of the Project Requirements:** Provide a written description of the Development team's understanding of the project's goals, objectives and requirements and overall conceptual vision for the project. Include any preliminary conceptual design concepts, strategies or preliminary proforma indicating the anticipated plan for Development including design and construction.

**TAB 5 – Impact on Downtown Athens:** Provide in the proposal a narrative of the generally anticipated impact and contributions the Hotel will provide to downtown Athens and goals and objectives of The Classic Center.

**TAB 6 – Program:** Provide a narrative of the firm's envisioned Program of Space Requirements for the development of this site and the hotel. List all proposed development uses, including square footages, lobby size, room size, and proposed parking. Outline any amenities that may be offered both to hotel guests and outside users (spa or other). Please share thoughts and recommendations about potential hotel Brands or proposed operators.

Provide your plans to support The Classic Center's and ACCUG's objectives for the development in providing a living wage regarding the MIT Living Wage calculation for

appropriate employee categories of both the construction activities and the hotel operation, and to maintain consistent, progressive consideration of workforce development and community workforce initiatives. Provide any planned specific wage amounts/tiers for the hotel operation you envision. Provide any planned benefit standards for employees or apprenticed labor constructing and operating the hotel. Provide evidence of past success in workforce development and living wage provision in successful, relevant developments. Provide relevant information of past labor and community relations. Demonstrate willingness to participate in the workforce development programs fostered by the Classic Center Cultural Foundation. Provide plans for workforce development in hospitality and trades through any other initiatives such as Department of Labor apprenticeships, etc.

Describe how your development and construction team shall be comprised of local subcontractors, small minority and women-owned contractors, local workers, and other area resources. Describe any relevant experience in building capacity among small minority and women-owned contractors in past projects.

Note: A hotel market study will be required for the successful respondent's program, the cost of which is to be covered by the successful developer. The study is to be conducted by a qualified firm to be approved by The Classic Center.

**TAB 7 – Design:** Provide a narrative of Offeror's approach to design of the project.

**TAB 8 – Construction:** Provide a description of the Offeror's plan and approach to construction of the project including thoughts about site management and construction phasing. Clearly describe any special accommodations the Developer will provide to assist in minimizing disruptions and impacts to the on-going operations of The Classic Center.

**TAB 9 – Transportation:** Provide a narrative and conceptual drawings or sketches describing how the proposed hotel addresses public transportation and both vehicular and pedestrian traffic around the development.

**TAB 10 – Sustainability:** Provide a narrative describing envisioned strategies and approaches related to sustainability. Include information concerning the long-term commitment Developer seeks to make regarding renewable energy, the sustainable elements of the physical construction of the building, and all related infrastructures. (See attached ACCUG Sustainability Goals letter dated Feb. 13, 2020)

**TAB 11 – MANDATORY DOCUMENTS:** Developer must complete, execute, and include with the proposal the following Mandatory documents:

**Georgia Security & Immigration Compliance (GSIC) Act Affidavit:** Include a notarized copy of the GSIC Affidavit form for the contractor and all sub-contractors, from VI - D, and D1 and D2 of this RFP.

## IX. SELECTION PROCESS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

After review and evaluation of proposals, The Classic Center intends to select one or more Developer(s) for interviews and discussions. These interviews will be with the Developer(s) whose SICP proposals have been determined to be in the highest and best interest of The ClassicCenter Authority and ACCUG.

The goal of the selection process is to identify one or more Developer(s) to undertake, construct, open and successfully operate a Hotel in Downtown Athens.

These proposals will be evaluated by an Evaluation Committee (thus referred to as "The Committee") that will rank the proposals and make a recommendation to The Classic Center Authority.

The Evaluation Committee will review and score each response to this RFP. Once the ranking is developed, a decision will be made by the Selection Committee for one or more Developer(s) to advance to Step Two.

Evaluation criteria to be used in determining the Developer(s) to advance to Step Two is listed below (NOT listed in order of importance) with general weighting percentages:

1. **FIRM / TEAM EXPERIENCE / QUALIFICATIONS** **20%**
  - Stability, Qualifications, and Experience of Developer and any envisioned teammembers (Architect, Engineer, Builder)
  - Experience with projects of similar size and complexity
  - Experience of envisioned Hotel operator with urban convention hotels in similar settings
  
2. **OVERALL CONCEPTUAL VISION** **60% (divided as described below)**
  - a. Impact on Downtown - 20%
    - Commitment to alignment and support of Classic Center goals of
    - A learning lab for hospitality education
    - Local workforce development in hospitality and construction trades and paying a living wage
    - Development enhances a vibrant sustainable down-town
  
  - b. Program Vision- 10%
    - Understanding of the Program Requirements and Alignment of Vision to the Program Goals
    - Inclusion of Program Requirements, Enhancements to Program Elements
    - Ability to block rooms for conventions
    - Ability to handle large numbers at one time (elevators, and food service)

- c. Vision for Design- 10%
  - Design sensitive to scale of Downtown
  - Consideration of Athens Design Requirements and “Fit” for the Campus
  
- d. Sustainability- 10%
  - LEED Certification Potential
  - Renewable energy plans/initiatives
  - Material sustainability
  - Operational efficiencies
  - Economically sustainable
  
- e. Wage/Employment 10%
  - Evidence of past success in workforce development and living wage provision and evidence of respondent’s proposed support of CCA/ACCUG’s objectives to support a living wage consistent with MIT recommended wage rate for Athens/Clarke County described in the planning requirements and project goals of this RFP. Proposed wage and benefit standard policies and any specific wage amounts/tiers proposed for the hotel and its construction.

- 3. FINANCIAL 20%**
- Financial viability/Developer’s capital resources capabilities
  - Identification of viable funding sources
  - Proposed arrangements dedicated to this project for capital cost
  - History of financial success of developer’s projects

**X. EXHIBITS (ATTACHED HEREIN)**

I: Disadvantaged/Minority (DBE/MBE) Business Enterprise Information and Drug-Free Workplace

II: MANDATORY FORM: Georgia Security & Immigration Compliance (GSIC) Affidavit

III. CCA Master Plan

**EXHIBIT I****Small and Disadvantaged/Minority (DBE/MBE) Business Enterprise Information, Non-Discrimination; and, Drug-Free Workplace**

It is the policy of Athens Clarke County and the CCA that small businesses, female-owned businesses, and minority businesses have a fair and equal opportunity to participate in the purchasing process. Therefore, the Authority encourages all small businesses, female-owned businesses and minority owned businesses to compete for, win, and receive contracts for goods, services, and construction. This desire on the part of the Authority is not intended to restrict or limit competitive bidding or to increase the cost of the work. The Authority supports a healthy free market system that seeks to include responsible businesses and provides ample opportunity for business growth and development. All Respondents should be aware that contractors and subcontractors who utilize qualified minority subcontractors may qualify for a Georgia state income tax credits for qualified payments made to minority subcontractors. See O.C.G.A. § 48-7-38.

The Authority shall require, prior to, or incidental to, the award of a contract, confirmation by the respondent stating that the respondent has not discriminated and will not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, religion or national origin in any of its employment practices with respect to the work force of the business, or procurement services in connection with this project. The successful respondent will be required to execute certificates, affirming these requirements of non-discrimination.

The Authority, as policy, operates all facilities as a drug-free workplace, and requires that the labor force of the contractor be drug-free. The contractor hereby acknowledges this requirement and asserts that the organization of the contractor adheres to such policy and practice. The contractor acknowledges that it may be required to produce certificates affirming its compliance of these requirements of drug-free workplace for duration of agreement term, at execution, or at any time during the term of the agreement. The contractor shall secure from any sub-contractor hired to work in a drug-free workplace the following written certification: "As a part of the subcontracting agreement with (contractor's name, sub-contractor's name) certifies to the contractor that a drug-free workplace will be provided for the sub-contractor's employees during the performance of this contract pursuant to paragraph 7 of subsection B of Code Section 50-24-3." The contractor may be suspended, terminated, or debarred if it is determined that: 1. The contractor has made false certification hereinabove; or 2. The contractor has violated such certification by failure to carry out the requirements of Official Code of Georgia Section 50-24- 3. 7.

**EXHIBIT II**

**GEORGIA SECURITY AND IMMIGRATION COMPLIANCE ACT AFFIDAVIT**

Respondent's Firm Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**STATE OF GEORGIA  
CONTRACTOR AFFIDAVIT**

By executing this affidavit, the undersigned Contractor verifies its compliance with O.C.G.A. §13-10-91, stating affirmatively that the individual, firm, or corporation which is interested in contracting with the CCA has registered with, is authorized to participate in, and is participating in the federal work authorization program commonly known as E-Verify\*, in accordance with the applicable provisions and deadlines established in O.C.G.A. 13-10-91.

The undersigned Contractor further agrees that it will continue to use the federal work authorization program throughout the prospective contract period and, should it employ or contract with any subcontractor(s) in connection with the physical performance of services pursuant to this prospective contract with the CCA, Contractor will secure from such subcontractor(s) similar verification of compliance with O.C.G.A. § 13-10-91 on the Subcontractor Affidavit provided in Rule 300-10-01-.08 or a substantially similar form. Contractor further agrees to maintain records of such compliance and provide a copy of each such verification to the CCA at the time the subcontractor(s) is retained to perform such service.

\_\_\_\_\_  
EEV / E-Verify™ User Identification Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Authorization

\_\_\_\_\_  
BY: Authorized Officer or Agent  
(Contractor Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title of Authorized Officer or Agent of Contractor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Authorized Officer or Agent

**SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN  
BEFORE ME ON THIS THE**

\_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 202\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public

[NOTARY SEAL]

My Commission Expires: \_\_\_\_\_

\*or any subsequent replacement operated by the United States Department of Homeland Security or any equivalent federal work authorization program operated by the United States Department of Homeland Security to verify information of newly hired employees, pursuant to the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), P.L. 99-603.

EXHIBIT III  
CLASSIC CENTER AUTHORITY MASTER PLAN

Classic Center Expansion  
Aerial View

