



# Urban Redevelopment Authority

In cooperation with:

**CITY OF PITTSBURGH DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING**

and

**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF PITTSBURGH**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

**GREATER HILL DISTRICT  
HOUSING STUDY**

**RFP Issue Date: January 14, 2015**

**Proposal Due Date: February 17, 2015 at 4 PM ET**

## I – Summary Information

The Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA), in partnership with the City of Pittsburgh Department of City Planning (DCP) and the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh (HACP), is requesting proposals from a consultant, or consulting team, to undertake a Greater Hill District Housing Study. The purpose of this study is to better understand the demand for housing in the Greater Hill District in order to help guide investment strategies and provide for diverse patterns of housing occupancy throughout the neighborhood, while sustaining and benefitting current residents.

Building off the groundwork laid by the 2011 Greater Hill District Master Plan, this study will help to inform a vision for the appropriate mix of housing development for the Hill District. This vision will seek to create a healthy community for people of diverse ages, races, incomes, and family sizes in all sectors of the neighborhood that sustains and benefits the current community, creates opportunities for existing and potential residents, and supports the City as a whole.

The study will:

- Evaluate current housing market conditions in the Greater Hill District and adjacent markets;
- Analyze demographic trends within the neighborhood and adjacent markets;
- Analyze housing trends and the demand across demographic markets for housing in each sector of the Greater Hill District of different typologies (rental and for-sale), income levels (affordable - generally defined as 30-60 percent area median income (AMI), workforce - generally defined as 80-120 percent AMI, and market rate), and sizes (apartments and family housing);
- Discuss the competitiveness of the Greater Hill District in the regional housing market;
- Recommend strategies for supporting existing Greater Hill District residents in their current homes;
- Identify development sectors based upon existing conditions and market potential of various geographic areas within the study area;
- Recommend strategies for economically and demographically inclusive housing development within each sector;
- Recommend financing strategies for developing economically and demographically inclusive housing communities;
- Provide overall recommendations for the entire study area including a discussion of the economically feasible optimum mix of housing.

Submission Deadline:

**Proposal Due Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2015 at 4 PM ET**

Delivery: Thomas E. Cummings  
Director of Housing  
Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh  
200 Ross Street – 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
[tcummings@ura.org](mailto:tcummings@ura.org)

Deliverables: The consultant/consulting team should submit ten (10) hard copies of the proposal package printed to double sides with one (1) electronic copy in a bookmarked PDF format.

Formal interviews of respondents will be scheduled at the discretion of the Selection Committee within several weeks of the submission deadline.

Inquiries regarding this RFP should be directed to Thomas E. Cummings, who can be reached at 412.255.6670, or [tcummings@ura.org](mailto:tcummings@ura.org).

The URA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted. The URA further reserves the right to retain all responses submitted and to use any ideas in a proposal regardless of whether that proposal is selected. Submission of a response indicates acceptance by the organization of the conditions contained in this request for proposals, unless clearly and specifically noted in the response submitted and confirmed in the contract between the URA and the organization selected.

There is no expressed or implied obligation for the URA to reimburse organizations for any expenses incurred in preparing responses to this request.

## **II – Background & Description of Housing Study**

### Background Information

#### **Hill District History and Context**

The following narrative is largely taken from the Greater Hill District Master Plan. The Hill District is located directly east of Pittsburgh's Central Business District. It has a rich multi-cultural history. Some of the Hill District's first inhabitants were black soldiers in the Army of General John Forbes in the Revolutionary War. After the Revolutionary War, a wide variety of European immigrants, including people of Scotch-Irish, German, German-Jewish, Italian, Syrian, Greek, Lebanese, and Polish descent, moved to the Hill District. After the Civil War and through World War II, a large influx of African Americans relocated to the Hill District followed by more Eastern European families. By 1929 there were sections of the Hill District called "Little Italy," "Little Syria," "Black Belt," and "Athens." The area throbbed with life. At the street markets, one could hear a dozen languages spoken. The Hill had a flourishing commercial development along Centre Avenue through the Middle Hill.

Through the early 1800s to the late 1930s, the Lower Hill was also a center for abolition, black nationalism and black political advocacy. The area served as a hub of the Underground Railroad. Prominent residents included minister and barber Benjamin Tucker Tanner, father of artist Henry O. Tanner, whose home is said to have been a refuge for blacks fleeing enslavement. Other residents included John B. Vashon, Rev. Lewis Woodson (purported grandson of Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemmings), Abraham Lewis and John Peck (original owner of the famed Oyster House), each of whom worked to create and charter the Pittsburgh African Education Society in 1832. Their work led to the extension of the right to a free public school education to black Pennsylvania children and youth. Additionally, in the 1920s and 1930s, Negro League Baseball flourished in the Hill District and in the 1940s and 1950s a phenomenal jazz scene emerged in the Hill.

Also in the 1940s and 1950s, many of the neighborhood's buildings had become worn out due to overcrowding and age. Unfortunately, this problem could not be remedied through home improvements, because like many African-American communities, the Hill District was excluded from the post-war housing boom through the practice of mortgage redlining. As residents of European descent were able to obtain low cost mortgages to buy new homes in newly built communities, the Hill District became more segregated and disinvested.

In the 1950s and the 1960s, the City had plans to build a Lower Hill Cultural center and began to relocate many existing residents and businesses. Thousands of buildings were demolished and over 8,000 people were forced to relocate. A new Civic Arena was built but the more comprehensive plans to build other theater and art complexes were abandoned in favor of large surface parking lots for commuters and event attendees.

Currently, the Hill District is still struggling to recover from the devastation wrought by mortgage redlining, out-migration, disinvestment, and urban renewal. The remaining parts of the Hill District are still physically separated from Downtown by large expanses of parking lots and a 1960s-era depressed highway.

Though the Hill District remains challenged by having some of the lowest median incomes and some of the most physically deteriorated housing stock in the City, the Hill District also has a number of significant neighborhood anchors. Examples of such assets are a newly constructed Thelma Lovette Family YMCA on Centre Avenue, and a Carnegie Library branch at the corner of Centre Avenue and Kirkpatrick Street. There are also a wide range of social services and religious organizations, historical resources, schools, and public service providers in the Hill.

### **Lower Hill Redevelopment Community Collaboration and Implementation Plan (CCIP)**

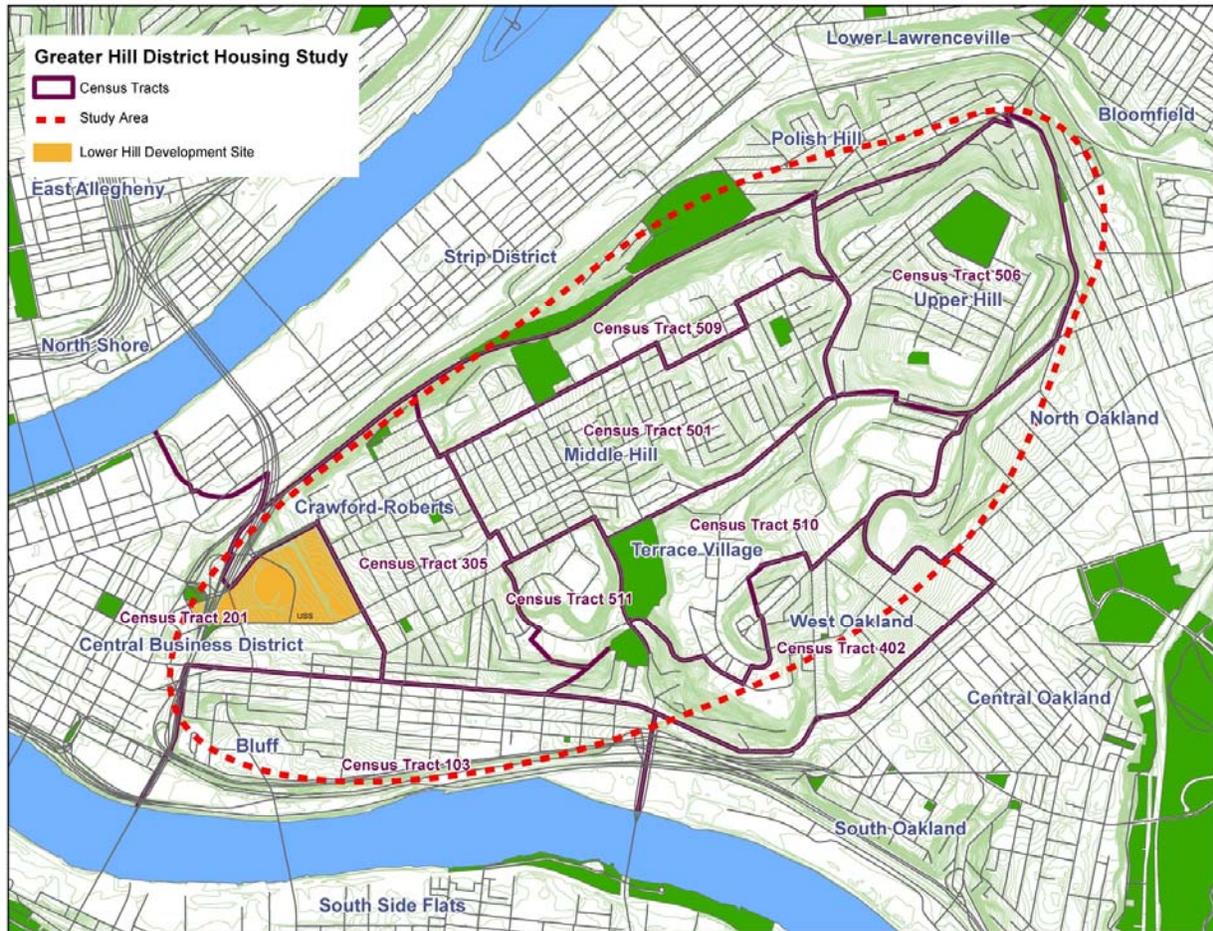
The City of Pittsburgh, URA, HACP, and Hill District community acknowledge that the redevelopment of the former Civic Arena site and the Melody Tent site (collectively the "Development Site") in the Lower Hill District has the potential to transform the City and region and in particular the Central Business District, Hill District and Uptown neighborhoods. The development is intended to reconnect these neighborhoods and act as a catalyst for economic development throughout the Greater Hill District by creating jobs, businesses and wealth-building opportunities for its residents.

The Community Collaboration and Implementation Plan (CCIP) was developed by the Pittsburgh Penguins organization, the Hill District Community and Lower Hill Working Group, the City of Pittsburgh, and Allegheny County to capitalize on the new opportunities created by the redevelopment of the Development Site. The CCIP describes specific goals, strategies and processes for maximizing the inclusion of the Greater Hill District community and its residents in certain aspects of the Development Site redevelopment project. In many respects, it establishes a set of best practices for the collaboration between the CCIP parties in the redevelopment of the Development Site for the benefit of the Greater Hill District community.

The housing study contemplated by this RFP is discussed in Section II.3 of the CCIP.

### **Study Area**

The study will examine housing in the Greater Hill District, as depicted by the boundaries included on the following map:



## Other Available Resources

The consultant(s) should review relevant information included in the following resources:

- Greater Hill District Master Plan (2011), [http://www..org/pdfs/HDMP\\_Report\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www..org/pdfs/HDMP_Report_FINAL.pdf)
- Hill District Vacant Property Strategy ( 2013), [http://www.hdcg.org/Resources/Documents/HDVPS%20FINAL%20Report%20for%20Census%20Group%20090613\\_Screen.pdf](http://www.hdcg.org/Resources/Documents/HDVPS%20FINAL%20Report%20for%20Census%20Group%20090613_Screen.pdf)
- Uptown Community Vision (2009), <http://fourtheconomy.com/publication/view/uptown-community-vision-plan/>
- <http://lowerhilltiger.com/LowerHillTigerAttachment8/images/Attachment.8.Greenprint.pdf>
- Schenley Heights ToolKit, [http://issuu.com/kabrams/docs/toolkit\\_print\\_issuu](http://issuu.com/kabrams/docs/toolkit_print_issuu)
- June 27, 2012 Regional Housing Legal Services Memorandum to Cheryl Hall-Russell [http://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/ura-files/RHLS\\_Memo\\_to\\_Cheryl\\_Hall-Russell.6.27.12-2.pdf](http://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/ura-files/RHLS_Memo_to_Cheryl_Hall-Russell.6.27.12-2.pdf)
- Anti-displacement Strategies Working Paper (2011), [http://www.hdcg.org/Resources/Documents/Hill\\_District\\_Anti-Displacement\\_Strategies-final.pdf](http://www.hdcg.org/Resources/Documents/Hill_District_Anti-Displacement_Strategies-final.pdf)
- Lower Hill Preliminary Land Development Plan, [http://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/Lower\\_Hill.PLDP.as\\_submitted.9\\_19\\_2014.pdf](http://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/Lower_Hill.PLDP.as_submitted.9_19_2014.pdf)

- Community Collaboration and Implementation Plan (“CCIP”), <http://www.hilldistrict.org/sites/default/files/LowerHillDistrict-CommunityCollaborationAndImplementationPlan-Final.pdf>
- PGH SNAP, <http://www.pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/snap/>

## Scope of Work

- *Existing Conditions:* The study should examine and document current housing market conditions in the Greater Hill District and adjacent markets through the evaluation of the housing stock age, physical condition, property sales data, vacancy rates, rental information, etc.
- *Demographic Analysis:* The study should analyze the existing economic composition of the neighborhood and the demographic trends within the neighborhood and adjacent markets and the likely demographic composition of the Lower Hill development sector at the prices that are contemplated in the Lower Hill PLDP and the CCIP.
- *Past Planning Goals:* This study should build on the work of previous planning studies.
- *Housing Trends and Demand Analysis:* This study should address the current and prospective demand across demographic markets for housing in each geographic sector of the Greater Hill District of different typologies (rental and for-sale), income levels (30-60 percent AMI, 80-120 percent AMI and market rate) and sizes (apartments and family housing). The analysis should consider projected employment and job growth trends particularly in the Central Business District and adjacent neighborhoods and factor those projections into future demand estimates.
  - How has this demand changed in recent years?
  - How are rental rates and sales prices expected to change over the next decade?
  - What are absorption rates for different typologies?
  - Are there any housing products missing from the Greater Hill District market?
- *Homeownership:* The study should benchmark Greater Hill District homeownership rates against overall City homeownership rates and those of other comparable urban districts.
- *Analysis of New Planned/In Progress Developments:* The study should analyze the impact of the proposed Lower Hill District 28 acres development plus other significant planned and/or in progress development activity occurring in proximate markets on the Greater Hill District residential market.
- *Competing Neighborhoods:* Where are newcomers to the neighborhood moving from? Where are those leaving the neighborhood moving to? How does the Greater Hill District compare to nearby or similar neighborhoods in terms of housing product and neighborhood amenities? How can the Greater Hill District be more competitive in the regional housing market?
- *Anti-Displacement Efforts/Support for Existing Residents:* The study should provide recommended strategies to help existing homeowners improve their homes and stabilize/increase the value of their equity in their homes. This study should identify strategies to help existing residents remain in the neighborhood as property values increase, including the preservation of existing affordable (e.g. low income housing tax credit, governmental assisted) assets.
- *The Identification of Development Sectors:* This study should divide the Greater Hill District study area into geographic development sectors (approximately five sectors). The existing conditions and demographic analysis amongst the sectors may differ. Each development sector may have its own unique needs, housing demand, and development strategies.
- *Strategies for Housing Development per Sector:* This study should recommend strategies to support diverse patterns of housing development in each development

sector. These strategies should include suggestions for development such as preservation, new construction of affordable/market rate housing, etc., and include recommendations to assure the optimum mix of rental and homeownership. Any specific development site recommendations/opportunities should also be articulated.

- *Strategies to Increase Homeownership:* The study should include recommendations to increase homeownership opportunities in the Greater Hill District.
- *Financing strategies:* The study should analyze the financing sources required to fund the recommended development strategies including the preservation of existing units and provide any recommended financing strategies. What investment can be expected from the private sector? Where are public investments required? The study should take into account the current funding availability and competitive environment of both public and private funding sources.
- *Overall Recommendations (for each development sector):* Based upon community goals, existing conditions and projected demand, what is the economically feasible optimum mix of new housing development in terms of income diversity, typology of units (rental, vs. for-sale) and unit sizes (apartments and family housing) that balances the needs of the current neighborhood population while attracting new residents?
- *Metrics:* The study should identify a set of metrics that can be used by stakeholders to evaluate progress.

## **Community Engagement**

- The selected consultant will be expected to participate in regular meetings (monthly or as necessary) with a working group consisting of representatives from the URA, the City, HACP, and the Hill District neighborhood.
- The selected consultant will be expected to participate in a minimum of three (3) community meetings in the Hill District (e.g. Introductory, Preliminary Results, Final Results). These meetings will be scheduled once the consultant is engaged.
- The selected consultant may also be expected to participate in various Hill District organization meetings as requested (if feasible).

## **Deliverables**

- The consultant will produce a report in accordance with the Scope of Work including all appropriate charts, graphs, maps, pertinent statistical figures, sources of data, and recommendations. Ten (10) hard copies of the proposal package printed to double sides with one (1) electronic copy in a bookmarked PDF format.
- Soft copies of all data, maps, and GIS files are required to be sent to the URA for future study and analysis.

## **Estimated Timeline**

- It is anticipated that this study should take approximately nine (9) months from the date of contract execution.

## **Estimated Budget**

- The consultant should propose an up-to-amount for compensation for this study. The cost to complete this study is budgeted to be approximately \$75,000 to \$80,000.

### **III– Evaluation Process**

#### **Proposal Calendar**

- Request for Proposals Issued Wednesday, January 14, 2015
- Proposal Due Date Tuesday, February 17, 2015
- Interviews (if deemed necessary) March 2- 6, 2015 (Estimated)
- Consultant Selection March/April, 2015

#### **Review of Proposals**

Proposals submitted will be evaluated by a Selection Committee comprised of representatives of the URA, DCP, HACP, and the Hill District community. Recommendations will be presented to the URA Board of Directors for final selection.

During the evaluation process, the URA reserves the right, where it may serve the URA's best interest, to request additional information or clarifications from respondents, or to allow corrections of errors or omissions. At the discretion of the URA, organizations submitting proposals may be requested to make oral presentations as part of the evaluation process.

#### **Acceptance and Right to Reject Qualifications**

Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the organization of the conditions contained in this request for proposals unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between the URA and the organization(s) selected.

The URA reserves the right without prejudice to reject any or all responses.

### **IV – Evaluation Criteria**

The following represent the principal selection criteria which will be considered during the evaluation process:

- 1) Mandatory Elements
  - a) The organization has no conflict of interest with regard to any other work performed by the organization for the URA, DCP, HACP or any related entity
  - b) The organization adheres to the instructions contained in this RFP in preparing the submitted proposal
- 2) Technical Qualifications Proposal
  - a) Experience and expertise
    - i) The organization's past experience and performance on comparable projects
    - ii) The qualifications of the organization's professional personnel to be assigned to the engagement with the URA
    - iii) Evaluation of the technical merits of the proposal and the recommended approach to the scope of work
    - iv) Pricing information
    - v) Proposed schedule with milestones
  - b) MBE/WBE Participation

## V – Proposal Requirements

### General Requirements – Submission of Proposals

For a proposing organization to be considered, one (1) electronic copy (preferably PDF) of the Technical Proposal is required to be received by February 17, 2015 no later than 4 PM ET.

Each submission should include a preliminary section which includes the following:

1. Title Page – include the organization's name, contact person and contact information for the organization and contact person
2. Table of Contents
3. Transmittal Letter – include the following:
  - a. A signed statement regarding the respondent's understanding of the work to be done;
  - b. A statement attesting that the organization will perform the work according to professional standards;
  - c. A statement that the organization understands that, after a selection is made, all qualifications may be public records under the Pennsylvania Right to Know Law;
  - d. A statement that neither the organization nor any partner, principal, member, or officer of the organization is currently in violation of or being investigated for violation of any regulatory agency rules that may have a material impact on the organization's ability to provide the services requested; and
  - e. A statement that should the status of item (d) above change while the organization is under contract to URA, the organization will notify the URA by writing within 30 days of discovery that such condition changed and the general nature of the issue.

### Technical Proposal

Please respond according to the following sections, clearly marking them accordingly. If you are unable to provide a response to a particular question, simply leave the section blank. Please do not provide any information other than what is specifically requested.

1. Experience
  - a. Briefly describe similar studies your organization has completed.
  - b. Please describe any innovative or unique aspects of previous relevant studies which your organization helped to complete in any of the examples listed above. Please limit your discussion to three examples.
  - c. Please describe your organization's experience working with low income neighborhoods and/or with disadvantage communities.
2. Organization Profile

Provide a brief profile of your organization using the format below:

  - a. Number of total employees; and
  - b. Number of employees who will be dedicated to the housing study.
3. Biography of Assigned Principal Personnel

Identify the staff within the organization who will be working on the study. Please include the individuals' relevant experience and their work location.

4. References

Provide three (3) references from City or State governments or other entities who have worked with your organization on similar projects. Provide only references who have directly worked with one or more members of the organization's proposed team. Include the reference's name, title, address, direct telephone number, and email address.

5. Primary Qualification

Provide a brief narrative that explains why your organization is best qualified to conduct the study.

6. Methods and Timeline

Provide a detailed narrative of methods and plan to carry out the scope of work; include a project timeline with key milestones.

7. Community Engagement

Provide a detailed narrative of your plan to maximize community engagement in your work activities.

8. Pricing

Describe how you will assess your costs to the URA. Please provide a line item budget estimate for the study.

9. MBE/WBE Participation

State as succinctly as possible what specifically your organization is doing to promote opportunities for women and minority professionals in your organization.

MBE/WBE participation can be satisfied by:

- a. Ownership/Partnership of organization;
- b. Employment levels of minorities and/or women in the organization;
- c. Use of minorities and/or women as part of study team;
- d. Organization's use of minority or women-owned businesses as vendors for legal, printing, office supplies, travel, etc.; and
- e. Subcontracting with organizations owned and controlled by minorities and/or women. If this is to be done, that fact, and the name of the proposed subcontracting organizations, must be clearly identified in the proposal. Following the award of the audit contract, no additional subcontracting will be allowed without the express prior written consent of the URA.

The URA, DCP and HACP have a long history of diversity and inclusion within all of its programs and other activities. We encourage the full participation of minority and women business owners and professionals in this effort.

10. Other Information

Please provide any other information which you believe is pertinent to the URA's consideration of your organization. Please limit your response to no more than two (2) pages.