



DOWNTOWN
SHAREHOLDERS
OF
KANSAS CITY, KS, INC.

November 15, 2023

Alyssa Marcy, Long-Range Community Planner
Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas
701 N. 7th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101

RE: 4th & Minnesota "Triangle Site" RFP Criteria

Dear Ms. Marcy:

Downtown Shareholders of KCK (DTSKCK) and its Housing & Economic Opportunity Committee is pleased to offer our input on important criteria to be included in this Request for Proposal.

Several times over the past couple of years, we have performed a variety of surveys seeking community input for the redevelopment of our downtown. Most recently, input specifically regarding 4th & Minnesota has come from surveying community members during Third Friday Art Walks, as well as from our assistance in organizing, advertising, and participating in the UG's October 27 public meeting at The Merc Co-op Grocery. Our Hsg+EcoOpp Committee has thoroughly discussed the issue as well.

If you have questions or would like to discuss any of this further with us, we are available.

Sincerely,

Jim Schraeder, Committee Chair
DTSKCK Housing & Economic Opportunity

Tomi Francis-Ramirez
Executive Director

Attachment: Recommended Criteria – Request for Proposal (RFP)

cc: DTSKCK Hsg+EcoOpp Committee members
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RECOMMENDED CRITERIA – REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
4th & Minnesota “Triangle Site”

Prepared by DTSKCK Housing & Economic Opportunity Committee
On behalf of
Downtown Shareholders of KCK (DTSKCK)

A. Strongly discourage any development designed for isolation from the rest of the community. Instead, any development needs to enable, to encourage, and to integrate access from, to, and with both its immediate neighborhood and the greater community it serves.

Example criteria

- How well do the uses included within the development address housing and retail and institutional uses / services currently under-represented throughout downtown’s Minnesota Avenue / State Avenue area.
- How well does the overall development present an “open face” to the rest of downtown by providing multiple pedestrian entries into the complex, and avoiding blank walls and blank street-fronts on its north-, west-, and south-facing facades.
- How well does the development enable and encourage individual access (NON-automobile) from nearby, specifically from three locations – 1) the current core of downtown along 7th Street, 2) the Turtle Hill neighborhood north of Washington Boulevard, and 3) the Strawberry Hill neighborhood south of Armstrong Avenue.
- How well does the development enable and encourage automobile access from different parts of the metro, specifically from three locations – 1) local street network that feeds into State & Minnesota Avenues, 2) adjacent Missouri locations via Lewis & Clark Intercity Viaduct, and 3) Kansas locations to the south & west traveling through the interchange of I-70 & I-635.

B. Healthy “walkability” should be encouraged not only within the development but also for getting to the development from the surrounding community. The development must partner with the local government to extend walkability beyond the boundaries of the site, through a variety of tools such as “roadway diets,” protected crosswalks, and even pedestrian overpasses.

Example criteria

- Within the development, how well can users circulate throughout the site after parking.
- Within the development, how well are vehicle / pedestrian points of conflict managed in favor of the pedestrian.
- For users approaching the site on foot from across Minnesota Avenue or across State Avenue, how well are vehicle / pedestrian points of conflict managed in favor of the pedestrian.

C. In addition to housing, retail, and commercial options, this development should include as many “public use” options as feasible, in order to encourage activity within the development that can involve the broadest variety of users. The range of outdoor and indoor “public use” options could include:

- ✓ Park-like open space with walks, benches, and long-distance views over “The Bottoms” and beyond
- ✓ Observation platforms or towers (outdoor or indoor) with long-distance views
- ✓ Outdoor gathering spaces (e.g. festival area; farmer’s market)
- ✓ Indoor gathering spaces (e.g. “maker spaces”; community meeting spaces)
- ✓ Local educational/community spaces (e.g. a new 21st-century library)
- ✓ Local or regional museum-like attractions (e.g. a new home for the Steamboat Arabia Museum)

Example criterion

- How prevalent within the development are “public use” options [sample listing above].

D. By providing new and enhanced services and amenities downtown, this development should complement other planned or existing developments, particularly those within a block of the site at 5th & Minnesota. Users and patrons of Children’s Campus, KU Health System Strawberry Hill campus, and The Merc grocery could utilize services and amenities this development could offer. The make-up of this new

development should be seen by those users and patrons as an enhancement rather than an impediment. This new development should also acknowledge the already-approved redevelopment of the Reardon convention center at 5th & Minnesota, as well as acknowledge the possibility of other nearby housing developments, e.g. the proposed additional housing at both 6th & Minnesota and 6th & Ann. While “competition” can be healthy for the future of our downtown, this development should strive to enhance this other redevelopment.

Example criteria

- How well does the development complement and not duplicate services and amenities available at 5th & Minnesota (The Merc grocery, Children’s Campus, KU Health System Strawberry Hill campus, and the already-approved redevelopment of the Reardon convention center site).
- How well does the development address any perceived conflicts between users of this new development and users of the health- and education-related services at such adjacent facilities as Children’s Campus and KU Health System Strawberry Hill campus.

E. Any development should offer financial stability and sustainability to downtown. Whatever is developed will be in place for decades to come, if not in its initial form, for certain in some related (renovated) form. Both in terms of long-term physical maintenance of the property and its improvements, and in terms of its long-term financial health, the development in just a few years should not become a “burden” on the shoulders of its downtown neighbors and this community’s taxpayers.

Example criteria

- How well “self-financed” and “self-sustaining” is the development such that the development can show a positive return on investment (ROI) to the taxpayers for any taxpayer incentives provided the development.
- Can the development show that if it ever has to default on its terms of engagement with the Unified Government, that the taxpayers will not “inherit a white elephant” that requires an extraordinary amount of tax dollars to resolve or even maintain.
- How well does the design of the development incorporate sustainable materials and construction methods such that maintaining the facilities long-term does not become detrimental to the long-term financial stability of the development, e.g. would the development meet or exceed LEED Gold (or even LEED Platinum) criteria for environmental sustainability.

F. Any development offering commercial space of any kind should include a strong component of local small businesses. While downtown currently has a few national and regional companies represented, we continue to need more and better opportunities and venues where KCK small businesses also can compete successfully. In addition, the planning & construction of the development should include KCK and small business components.

Example criteria

- When the development is fully operational, what opportunities are included for KCK-based enterprises, particularly small KCK businesses (retail, service, consulting, etc.).
- What opportunities are included during planning and construction for KCK-based enterprises, and would any be considered small business, or women-owned business, or historically-disadvantaged business (design, consulting, service, etc.).

G. Any development should offer “smarter” short-term automobile parking.

Example criterion

- How well does the development enable and encourage use not only of “on-street”-type parking within the confines of the site, but also address potential uses of short-term parking along both adjacent streets and at existing nearby public-access parking structures. [example: “on-street” parking “option” at Zona Rosa].