



# **Request for Proposals for**

## **Development Partnership**

**associated with the properties at:**

**145 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way  
Gastonia Conference Center  
Hotel Pad**

**Gastonia, North Carolina  
April 13, 2026**

# **Request for Proposals**

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## **I. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND**

The City of Gastonia, North Carolina (the City) is soliciting and accepting Development Proposals from interested and qualified firms for providing development services for a hotel to be located on the vacant lot adjacent to 145 Dr. Martin Luther King Way located on the south side of the Gastonia Conference Center. This is an opportunity for a developer to be part of the exciting growth of Downtown Gastonia. The Gastonia Conference Center opened in 2012 to offer functional but elegant rental space for both social and corporate events. Over the past two years, the Gastonia Conference Center hosted an average of 400 events annually producing approximately \$760,000 in revenue each year. The Conference Center was constructed with the possibility of connecting to a hotel on the surface parking lot with the connector located on the second floor at the south wall.

Located a short drive from Uptown Charlotte and the Charlotte Douglas International Airport, Gastonia is the largest municipality in Gaston County and the second-largest in the rapidly-growing Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The strong MSA-level trends have led to Gastonia's resurgence as a residential destination for families in neighboring counties, with approximately 35% of families moving to Gaston County coming from Mecklenburg County.

This city-owned potential hotel pad is located at the corner of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and Franklin Blvd. offering the highest level of visibility and access. Adjacent to the property is a three-story parking deck municipal parking deck that is expandable with an additional three levels to accommodate this potential hotel.

This corner site is 23,885 square feet and 0.55 acres with dimensions of 116.92 feet by 205 feet. Previous hotel studies show support for a 90-key mid-upper-scale product offering select-service. The City would also desire a full-service product based on updated market conditions.

Much of the recent investment in Gastonia's core stems from the creative exciting, amenity-rich offerings in and around Downtown. Downtown Gastonia has been under transformation with new living opportunities in Center City Crossings offering urban downtown living with market rate apartments. Webb Custom Kitchen is a destination restaurant attracting visitors from around the region and was featured in Forbes Magazine. The Esquire offers a boutique hotel option for guests looking for an upscale experience with 35 rooms. The Gastonia Conference Center offers a 5,200 square foot grand ballroom that can seat up to 400 people. With more properties under redevelopment, Downtown Gastonia is trending in a positive direction for growth.

Downtown Gastonia is in walking distance to the exciting new Franklin Urban Sports and Entertainment (FUSE) District anchored by Caromont Health Park and home to the Gastonia Ghost Peppers Atlantic League Baseball team. New developments in the FUSE District include Trenton Mill Lofts and Durty Bull Brewery. The Dillinger and Hangar development are under construction and future projects of Franklin Yards and The Foundry have been announced.

## **PROPOSED SCOPE OF WORK**

The City is seeking a development partner for a public-private partnership with a specialty in hotel development. The City is looking to partner with a development firm to maximize the potential of this important gateway property. The development will serve the public and guests of the Gastonia Conference Center.

The proposed scope of work involves working in collaboration with City Staff to develop:

- A signature hotel that will support the needs of Downtown and FUSE while also supporting the events of the Gastonia Conference Center.
- A project focused on Market and City needs.
- Maximization of the property to increase tax base.
- A proposal that shows how the property will optimize the site and connection to the Gastonia Conference Center.

## **II. GENERAL SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION**

The City invites all interested and qualified development firms to submit development proposals. Responses should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward and concise description of the Responder's experience and qualifications related to proposed scope of services. This outline is not all-inclusive and respondents can provide additional information as deemed appropriate.

- Letter of Introduction
  - a. Include a summary of the respondent's basic qualifications, experience, and reasons for interest in this opportunity. The letter should be signed by a principal or authorized officer for the entity
- Development Team
  - a. Identification of partner firms and roles, including co-developers, architects and designers, and general contractors that will be working on this project.
  - b. Overview of each firm on the team, including brief history of firm, experience working with the developer.
- Development Proposal
  - a. Submit a potential development concept based on your understanding of the Scope of Work noted above. The concept should be able to address all elements of the Scope of Work, additional innovative and creative approach to hotel development is preferred.
- Experience & References
  - a. Location and name of project (preference for projects in North Carolina)
  - b. Scope and scale of development program
  - c. Photos/illustrations of completed project
  - d. Total development budget
  - e. Experience of the development team with executing public-private partnerships
  - f. Provide evidence of sufficient financial strength to undertake and successfully complete a project of this scale
  - g. Evidence of successful hotel development or other hospitality projects
- Disclosures
  - a. Disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest that could be relevant to this project in any manner

- b. Disclosure of whether the developer or any officer, director, or owner thereof has had judgments entered against him or her within the past 10 years for the breach of contracts for governmental or nongovernmental construction or development
- c. Disclosure of whether the developer has been in substantial noncompliance with the terms and conditions of prior construction contracts with a public body
- d. Disclosure of any projects/financing on which the team collectively or individually has defaulted
- e. Disclosure of whether any officer, director, owner, project manager, procurement manager, or chief financial official thereof has been convicted within the past 10 years of a crime related to financial fraud or to governmental or nongovernmental construction or contracting
- f. Disclosure of whether any officer, director, or owner is currently debarred pursuant to an established debarment procedure from bidding or contracting

- *Local Business Utilization Plan / Sub-Contracts*

Describe if you plan on utilizing any local firms, including their roles, their experience, and the extent of their involvement. If the firm intends to sub-contract portions of the work, please include each sub-consultant's name and address, and specific designations of the tasks to be performed by the sub-consultant.

- *Litigation History*

Include a statement detailing whether your firm is currently in litigation or has been in litigation in the past five years. If there is litigation history, please explain each occurrence and the circumstances with the outcome.

- *Submittal Deadlines*

**Interested firms should submit a fully completed RFP as outlined herein no later than 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 10, 2026.** Please provide a minimum of six (6) bound copies or Electronic copy, submitted to:

Attn: Kristy R. Crisp, Director of Economic Development  
City of Gastonia  
P.O. Box 1748  
150 S. York Street (physical street address)  
Gastonia, North Carolina 28053

Each respondent is responsible for the timely delivery of its proposal package. No proposal will be accepted after the deadline noted above; any submittals received after this time will be returned to the Sender. The City reserves the right to cancel this RFP for any reason without any liability or to waive any irregularities at their discretion. Please note that the overall Statement of Qualifications / Proposal should be limited to a maximum of 25 pages.

**There will be an optional Pre-Proposal Meeting set for Wednesday, May 13 at 10:00 a.m.** Please email [Kristy.crisp@gastonianc.gov](mailto:Kristy.crisp@gastonianc.gov) to get a meeting invite.

### III. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation of developers responding to this solicitation will be undertaken in order to select a partner and plan that will best serve public interests. City staff will lead and analyze responses, contact references, and coordinate interviews as necessary. City Staff will evaluate all responses to identify a potential Development Partner and a plan that is viable, will best serve public interests, and can be completed in a reasonable time frame. Responses will be evaluated by the following criteria:

- Development Proposal (30%)
- Qualifications and experience of the development team, with preference given for experience with the type of development proposed in respondent's plan for the site (20%)
- Level of integration of guiding public interests, to include financial benefit to the City (20%)
- Quality and success of prior development projects and public-private partnerships (10%)
- Demonstrated ability to execute projects of similar scale and complexity (10%)
- List of active development projects and demonstration of confidence in the project (10%)

After a review of submitted proposals, clarifications may be requested. Unless requested by City staff, no additional information may be submitted by developers after the June 10, 2026 deadline. Council will then select their preferred partner to begin exclusive negotiations of a development services agreement.

#### **Contact Information:**

Any questions should be directed to: Kristy Crisp, Director of Economic Development  
kristy.crisp@gastonianc.gov

### IV. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- **Public Records:**

Upon receipt by the City, all proposal packages are considered a public record except for material that qualifies as "Trade Secret" information under North Carolina General Statute 66-152.

- **Clarification of Submittal:**

The City reserves the right to obtain clarification of any point in a firm's proposal or to obtain additional information.

- **Conditions and Reservations:**

The City reserves the right to reject any and all responses to the RFP, or to accept any RFP response deemed to be in the best interest of the City. The City reserves the right to waive technicalities and informalities. A response to this RFP should not be construed as a contract, nor indicate a commitment of any kind by the City. The response does not commit the City to pay for costs incurred in the submission of a response to this RFP or for any cost incurred prior to the execution of a final contract. No recommendations or conclusions from this process concerning your firm shall constitute a right (property or otherwise) under

the Constitution of the United States or under the Constitution, case law, or statutory law of North Carolina. Neither binding contract, obligation to negotiate, nor any other obligation shall be created on the part of the City unless the City and your firm execute a contract.

