

Kendall Center Opportunity Space

255 Main Street, Cambridge, MA

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Issued: August 24, 2018

Due: September 28, 2018



255 Main Street | 8th floor | Cambridge, MA 02142 | 617-492-6800
cambridgeredevelopment.org

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1.0 OVERVIEW OF THE RFQ

The Cambridge Redevelopment Authority (CRA), in collaboration with Boston Properties (BXP), is issuing this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for program operators to utilize facilities within an Opportunity Space to be developed at 255 Main Street within the Mixed-Use District (MXD) of the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Project (KSURP) area. The Opportunity Space, planned as a 16,000 SF portion of the Innovation Space requirement within the KSURP (described in Section 2.3 below), is envisioned as a workforce and professional development center to launch and support individual careers in technology industries. The Opportunity Space will fulfill a below market-rate Innovation Space requirement of the MXD zoning and advance the economic development goals of the KSURP by expanding access to the innovation economy of Kendall Square and strengthening connections between diverse talent and employers in technology related fields.

The CRA and BXP seek to partner with several program operators who have interest in and the capability to provide workforce development services within the Opportunity Space, including but not limited to skill-based assessment, technology training, recruitment and placement services, and/or career support services. The RFQ is issued to identify qualified program operators with experience and ideas suitable for inclusion within the Opportunity Space. Respondents are asked to describe their program concepts, explain how their program would benefit from a location in Kendall Square, describe space requirements for their program to best contribute to the goals of the Opportunity Space, and provide evidence of their experience in this field.

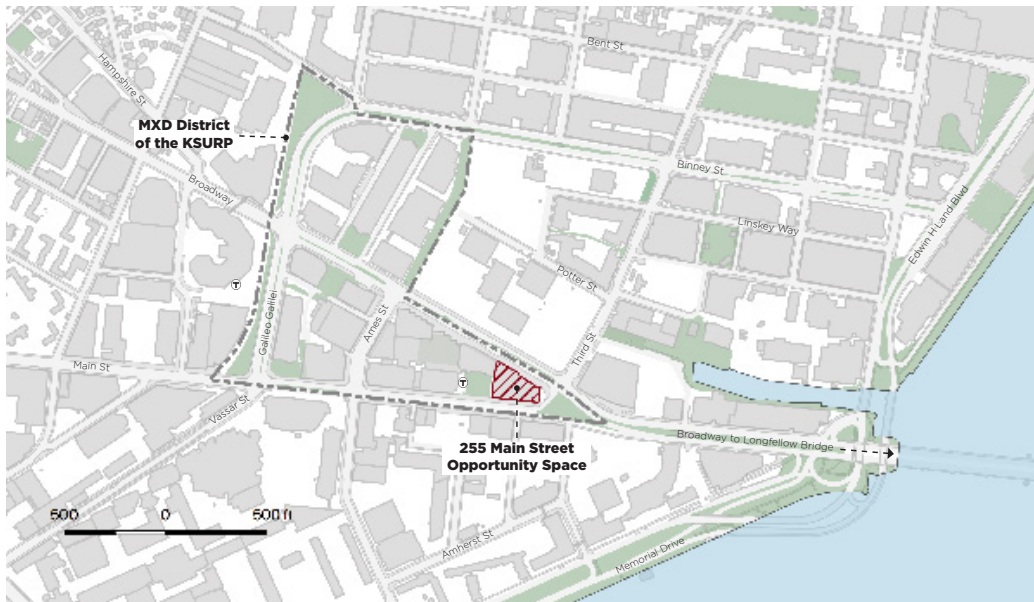


Figure 1: Location of Opportunity Space at 255 Main St. within Kendall Center

All inquiries and responses to this RFQ should be addressed to the following person:

Thomas Evans, Executive Director
Cambridge Redevelopment Authority
255 Main Street, 8th floor
Cambridge, MA 02142
Phone: 617-492-6800
Email: planning@cambridgeredevelopment.org

The CRA will accept and review responses on a rolling basis. The deadline for RFQ responses are due on Friday, September 28, 2018, no later than 4:00 pm.

The CRA will host a non-mandatory tour of the 8th floor Opportunity Space at 255 Main Street, on Thursday, September 6, 2018 from 11:00am - 12:00pm. All attendees must RSVP via email by 9 am on Thursday, September 6, 2018.

2.0 PROJECT CONCEPT

The CRA is working to create a workforce development Opportunity Space, as a component of the KSURP, to strengthen the connections between job seekers in Cambridge and the Boston-area, and the innovation economy of Kendall Square. The CRA and BXP will fit-out an area of shared commercial space within the existing 255 Main Street building to be dedicated as the Opportunity Space by 2019 as described below. Other floors of the 255 Main Street building will be privately developed by the Cambridge Innovation Center (CIC) as market-rate Innovation Space designed for start-up and small-scale companies. The Opportunity Space operations will collaborate and, in many areas, overlap with the programs offered by CIC within the building.

The Opportunity Space is being designed to serve as a workforce development center (a 'campus' cluster of classrooms, small offices, gathering spaces, event space and co-working spaces) within the broader Innovation Space of 255 Main Street. Programs within the Opportunity Space will provide a full range of targeted technical education and career development opportunities. The CRA anticipates that the Opportunity Space will become a central node for workforce development activity in Cambridge, combining classroom/training space with offices, conference facilities, and/or additional co-working space for related organizations. As Kendall Square is home to a wide range of local start-ups and large-scale international companies that are collectively leaders in the innovation economy, the Opportunity Space will be pivotal in meeting the economic opportunity objectives of the KSURP while helping many residents meet their individual career development goals.

The purpose of the RFQ process is to review and evaluate program concepts that expand the framing of workforce development to match the innovation climate of Kendall Square, determine the feasibility and compatibility of the various programs and their physical requirements, and lead toward the implementation of a diverse set of programs within the Opportunity Space. The CRA and BXP seek programs to utilize the Opportunity Space and help fulfill the objectives of the KSURP (Section 2.2 below), as

well as contribute to the broader economic and social development goals of the City of Cambridge (City).

2.1 Mission and Objectives

Working Mission:

The Opportunity Space is a workforce and career advancement center to serve as a link between under-represented residents and the innovation economy of Kendall Square, as well as technology career opportunities throughout the Boston region.

Objectives:

- Create a center with multiple layers of career assistance services, such as assessment, education, counseling, and mentorship resources, to individuals seeking to enter the innovation economy.
- Deliver a high impact set of training programs targeting a range of skill levels matched to the needs of Kendall Square employers.
- Develop an approachable, professional space for job seekers in the community and an accessible, useful resource for employers building their workforce.

The concept of the Opportunity Space is to function as a hub of overlapping uses within one facility that matches talent, training and job opportunities in Kendall Square. The Opportunity Space will be considered successful if it becomes a keystone location in the workforce development landscape of the region, **and** functions as a critical resource for employers seeking to fill their talent pipeline.

2.2 Background - Kendall Square Urban Renewal Project

The CRA was formed in 1956 by the City of Cambridge to stimulate investment in disinvested areas of the city. The KSURP was adopted in 1965 to guide the transformation of 42-acres of urban blight into land suitable for development, with a central goal of job creation. Using the tools of a redevelopment authority, the CRA acquired land, relocated roadways, demolished buildings, and made public infrastructure improvements. In 1977, the CRA created the MXD in the KSURP to provide a flexible set of land-use regulations to stimulate private investment. In 1979, the CRA designated BXP as the Master Developer of the MXD portion of the KSURP area.

The Kendall Square area has undergone a remarkable transformation from a neighborhood of blighted, polluted, industrial properties with little market value into one of the most valuable commercial districts in the United States. Strengthened by its location next to MIT and its proximity to downtown Boston, the KSURP area and surrounding Kendall neighborhood have transformed into a leading technology and biotechnology innovation district. However, within the neighborhoods of Cambridge and the greater Boston region there are well documented disparities of the wealth of the thriving commercial center of Kendall Square. The City's Kendall Square Planning Process (K2 Plan), completed in 2013, identified the need to accommodate additional growth with a desire to create a diverse, mixed-use environment and leverage development

investments to enhance numerous public benefits, including workforce development programs.

In 2015, the City Council passed amendments to the KSURP and the MXD zoning to make them consistent with the K2 Plan. The amended KSURP plan provides for additional commercial and residential development across three development blocks. As part of the KSURP amendment some significant policies and land use controls were put in place to diversify the benefits of new development to reach a broader sector of the Cambridge community. One policy central to this RFQ is:

Section 112: The CRA will establish, in coordination with the City, an economic development program to facilitate opportunities to engage residents and businesses in Cambridge in the broad range of economic development opportunities within Kendall Square.

More specifically, the MXD zoning and land use controls within the KSURP were modified to create the Innovation Space requirement and incentives described below. Please also refer to the reference documents listed at the end of the RFQ.

2.3 Innovation Space Requirement

The KSURP and MXD zoning amendments adopted in 2015 include a requirement that a portion of commercial square footage in the project area be operated as Innovation Space, designed to provide office space to support start-up and small-scale companies. A component of these requirements is an incentive to set-aside a portion of the Innovation Space as below-market space to be offered by the CRA or the City to qualifying tenants.

In 2017, the CRA and the City approved the Infill Development Concept Plan (IDCP) presented by BXP for new development in the MXD, which identified 255 Main Street as the location of its new Innovation Space. In 2018, BXP entered into a lease with CIC to operate the market-rate Innovation Space in 255 Main Street.

The CRA and BXP determined that the Kendall Square community would benefit from utilizing the below-market rate space incentive to create the Opportunity Space as described within this RFQ. A conceptual layout of the floor is illustrated in Figure 2. Other alternative space designs are described in the Draft Innovation Space Operation Plan. In every scenario, the facility's design will provide access to classrooms, meeting rooms, event space, co-working office areas, and informal gathering areas including a shared kitchen.

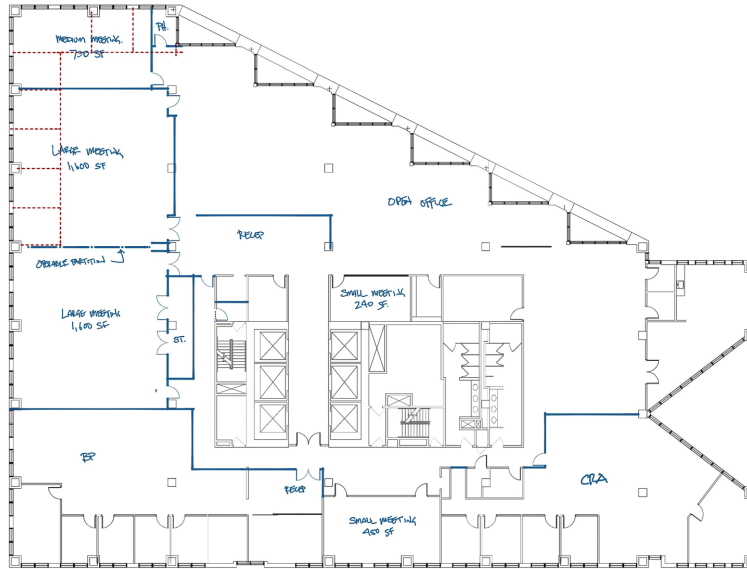


Figure 2: Office Floor Plate Conceptual Layout Alternatives

2.4 Economic Development Need

Within a mile of the thriving commercial center of Kendall Square, are census tracts with median household incomes as low as \$32,000, individual poverty rates of 15%, and even more pronounced poverty in families with children (19%) and families with a female head of household (33%) [2016, American Community Survey]. According to the Boomtown/Hometown Report published by the Cambridge Community Foundation, nearly 5,000 households in Cambridge get by on less than \$40,000 a year.

The ability to connect low income Cambridge residents, especially youth, to the innovation economy of Kendall is an important goal of the CRA. The goal of tech-oriented workforce development is not just access to employment, but access to career opportunities in good jobs that can provide a living wage and opportunities for advancement. The Opportunity Space is not intended to host programs that exclusively serve Cambridge residents, although this would be a target population. The CRA and BXP believe that a key element of the healthy evolution of Kendall Square is broadening connections to the diverse talent resources of the Boston region. These parallel community and economic development goals are central to this effort to provide space in Kendall Square to host technical training and career resource programs assisting the local and regional workforce and employers in technology-based industries.

2.5 Existing Workforce Development Landscape

Cambridge currently has a healthy ecosystem of citywide workforce development programs targeting various populations and career pathways. The City's Department of Human Services offers programs for youth in high school and programs for adults

seeking to re-enter the workforce. The City has also launched a STEAM Initiative designed to foster science and technology readiness amongst students of all ages. The Cambridge Housing Authority runs resident job connection programs. The Community Learning Center provides job readiness and English-language learning programs. The Metro North Regional Employment Board (soon to be MassHire) offers a wide range of services through its one-stop career center. Just-A-Start, a Cambridge-based community development corporation, runs biotechnology and information technology training programs serving adult Cambridge residents, as well as participants from other nearby communities. There are numerous nearby, neighborhood non-profits that also serve a role in assisting residents with career counseling such as the Margaret Fuller House, the East End House, and the Cambridge Community Center.

Various Kendall Square companies have collaborated with the City and regional workforce development organizations to host internships, trainings, or other efforts to hire local residents. Some of the larger tech companies in Kendall Square run their own workforce development programs and some biotech companies operate community labs and other programs for education and skill development. MIT has made commitments to invest in workforce development programs related to its Volpe development, expanding on education programs and partnerships in operation.

The City and the CRA have recently begun a collaborative research project with the UMass Donahue Institute to collect and analyze data regarding workforce development needs and opportunities in Cambridge. Additionally, the CRA is working to redevelop and operate the Foundry building just north of Kendall Square with opportunities to host workforce development training and services, especially focused on the intersection of arts and sciences.

The CRA and BXP do not plan to duplicate any of these efforts and recognize the overlapping nature of the various activities underway in Cambridge. The Opportunity Space will seek to improve linkages between these programs and leverage their resources to fill gaps and expand the network of programs serving Cambridge, especially targeting opportunities in information technology fields.

3.0 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All submissions shall provide information related to the elements listed below in sufficient detail to allow an informed and fair evaluation process.

Submissions should be provided in a digital version as a single PDF with a maximum file size of 10 MB.

All materials submitted to the CRA in response to the RFQ will become the property of the CRA and BXP and, unless specifically exempted, should be considered to be public records under Massachusetts law.

3.1 Letter of Interest

Responders must submit a statement of interest signed by the leadership(s) of the Responder(s) organization.

3.2 Project Concept

Responders must submit three types of information to convey their overall concept for the Opportunity Space:

- A. **Mission:** Description of their organizational mission and its workforce program(s) vision.
- B. **Program:** Description of current or proposed program offerings and concepts as to how those programs may take advantage of the Opportunity Space.
- C. **Space Needs:** Conceptual space needs for their program and the potential to collaborate and share resources within the Opportunity Space.

Alternative program scenarios may be presented and will be considered, such as forming or creating partnerships, new training concepts, and multi-layered career support services that can take advantage of the Opportunity Space within 255 Main Street. Additionally, the CRA is soliciting ideas for programs that may utilize the space on a more incidental basis to facilitate connections to Kendall Square or collaborations with other programs.

3.3 Team Composition

Responders must submit a summary of the team composition that identifies the key personnel and their respective roles and responsibilities for program management. Other staff roles and responsibilities can also be listed, including new positions under consideration for program evolution or expansion.

3.4 Program Experience, Capacity and Implementation Timeline

Responders should describe their program's experience and capacity to work with their target population in providing training, career advancement support, or other workforce development programs.

Responders should provide an explanation of how their program(s) might operate in the Opportunity Space. In order to demonstrate their capacity to utilize and contribute to the Opportunity Space, Responders should describe any known financial commitments or describe potential funding and revenue sources that are available.

Responders must submit a conceptual timeline for when they might be able to deliver programs within the Opportunity Space. Additionally, feedback regarding the obstacles and critical milestones for program development within Kendall Square are welcomed.

3.5 Innovation Space Compatibility

Responders should articulate how the operations of their program would fit into the broader definition of the Innovation Space (see attached definition from MXD and/or KSURP), including the utilization of small office suites, co-working stations, event space, and shared resources such as reception and circulation, classrooms, meeting rooms, and gathering areas, such as lounges and kitchens.

4.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA

As a result of this process, the CRA and BXP may select several different program operators, seeking to balance compatible and complementary services. The evaluation criteria below reflect the qualifications for the Opportunity Space as described in Section 3.0. More specifically, the Evaluation Committee will review the responses focused on, but not limited to, the following criteria:

- A. **Program compatibility** with the workforce development goals of the Opportunity Space
- B. **Performance record** of existing or past programs operated by the respondent
- C. **Creativity** in new program approach, especially related to co-location with like-minded organizations
- D. **Team experience** and organizational capacity

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

The following reference documents are posted on the CRA website at (www.cambridgeredevelopment.org/workforce-development) to provide further context and background to the Opportunity Space and the intent of this RFQ.

- A. CDD K2 Plan
- B. Kendall Square Urban Renewal Plan
- C. MXD Zoning
- D. Infill Development Concept Plan
- E. Draft Innovation Space Operation Plan