



*St. Croix Foundation
for Community Development*

Pre-Proposal Conference Minutes

RFP 06-2021A Alexander Theater Safe Room/Building Retrofit Project: A/E Design Service
2:30 PM AST, Wednesday July 28, 2021

Location: St. Croix Foundation (1023 Market Street, Christiansted, VI 00820) & Zoom Online
Conference

*The purpose of this pre-proposal conference was to discuss the Request for Proposals (RFP),
issued July 21, 2021, for A/E Services for the Alexander Theater. Subsequently, a Facility
Walk-through was conducted to show in-person participants the structure.*

St. Croix Foundation Staff Present:

Deanna James, President
Haley Cutler, Project Manager
Magali Roldan, Operations Coordinator
Victoria Gonzalez, AmeriCorps Vista Member

A/E Contractor Attendees:

Gerville Larsen, Taller Larjas
KC Tomy, SEP
Steve Garner, Tropitech
Eduardo Hermida, Design Lab VI
Eric Douglas, Caritech Group
Clarence Browne, Design District VI
Linda McCracken, Creative Acoustics
Jillian Brown, Theater Consultants Collaborative
David Greenberg, Creative Acoustics
Jason Prichard, Theater Consultants Collaborative
Laurence Reed, Design District PLLC
Tony Green, Ingenuity Engineers

Summary Notes:

- Review of Key Dates with the last day for written clarification being August 3, 2021, and the last day to submit proposals being August 20, 2021

- Resources for the RFP Package including Addenda, Pre-Proposal Conference Agenda, Minutes, Questions and Answers, are available at <https://www.stxfoundation.org/community-revitalization/the-new-alexander-Theater/>
Any future addenda and the meeting minutes from this conference will also be posted at that link
- Brief overview provided of the RFP project summary, qualifications, implementation approach guidelines, etc.
- Explanation of preferred bidder status and the bonus points in the evaluation criteria that will go to preferred bidders: A preferred bidder is a person who has been a bonafide continuous resident of the Virgin Islands for at least eight (8) years or was born in the Virgin Islands – with more details available in the RFP package
- Historical narrative provided about the Alexander Theater as a movie Theater which opened in the 1950's and has played a crucial role in the cultural and economic history of Sunday Market Square and Christiansted
- Noting that the importance of the multi-purpose functionality highlighted from the RFP, the necessary components of both a disaster safe room and performing arts Theater/convening space are critical. Creativity and visioning around the multi-purpose functioning of the structure will be considered in the project approach section
- Noting the need for ADA compliance and other design standards noted in the RFP, including FEMA P361 standards for the safe room
- HMGP hardening requirements must be met. However, this is a full design RFP for a turn-key facility and A/E activities covered in the scope of work should cover all aspects of design, including those beyond hardening/retrofit requirements

Questions & Answers:

Is a letter of good standing required by just the prime respondent?

- Yes, a letter of good standing is only required for the prime.

Is the M/WBE (Minority/Women in Business Enterprise) goals for the project incorporated into the criteria for bid evaluation?

- Yes, this is considered under the subcontractor qualifications which falls under the evaluation criteria of 'Organization & Qualifications'. However, this could be more clearly articulated in the RFP and such clarification may appear in a future addendum.

Once the A/E firm is selected, will that firm serve as project management representative for oversight in the construction phase?

- Construction administration is considered part of the scope of work for the selected A/E firm, as articulated in the RFP. Construction administration is distinct from project management, however, which is not within the current scope of work for the A/E contractor.

Are the parcels indicated in the image/map in the project description the only contiguous parcels owned by the St. Croix Foundation?

- Yes, these are the only parcels currently owned by St. Croix Foundation for the purpose of this project. St. Croix Foundation does own a small parking lot across the street which will likely be of use for theater operations but further development of which is not covered under this RFP.

Which portion of the facility will be used as the safe room and which portion of the facility will be used as a secondary shelter? The design specifications are different, as FEMA P-361 typically only applies to the safe room itself, which is often a smaller part of the structure.

- Answer at the conference: We will seek technical guidance from VITEMA/FEMA and post the answer to this question following the meeting.
- Follow Up Answer (After receiving further technical guidance from FEMA/VITEMA): The St. Croix Foundation is flexible about identifying creative and practical design solutions that maximize the usefulness of the facility while leveraging the resources and tools available including hardening/retrofitting existing structures, new construction, and the multiple parcels that are incorporated into the footprint of the project. FEMA will review drawings at 30%, 60%, 90% and final to proactively and promptly address any concerns or issues with the design and ensure adherence to FEMA requirements and guidance including FEMA P-361. Technical assistance and guidance will also be available in every stage of the A/E process.

If there is conflict between FEMA requirements and acoustical needs from the Theater aspect, is there room for negotiation?

- Meeting FEMA requirements is non-negotiable. However, all stakeholders including St. Croix Foundation, VITEMA, and FEMA are enthusiastic about the multi-purpose nature of this project. It is our hope that with the right A/E contractor, creative design solutions for the multi-purpose nature of the project will be found and incorporated into the design.

Is noise to the neighborhood from the building a concern?

- Yes, as the vision to revitalize Sunday Market Square involves mixed used development that includes some residential units nearby. The neighbors are excited for the opportunities this project will be bringing to the area, but we will want to be respectful.

Is the Theater going to be operated by the St. Croix Foundation or will there be a third-party operator?

- To be determined, but there are three possible options for the non-disaster operations, all of which include handing over disaster operations to the department of human services during times of disaster:

1. St. Croix Foundation will operate all aspects Theater including the performing arts and convening functions directly
2. St. Croix Foundation will lease the Theater to a lessee, in which case the lessee would operate both the performing arts and convening functions
3. A mixture of options 1 & 2 through partnership(s) between St. Croix Foundation and arts/cultural organizations, which is the most likely scenario

Is parking going to be required?

- St. Croix Foundation does own a parking lot across the street from the theater, but further development of that lot is not covered under this RFP. For this RFP and the parcels being developed as part of this project, ingress, egress, and emergency vehicle parking/access must be designed for but we do not anticipate being able to accommodate regular parking with the space available. A loading zone may be a wish list design component if possible.

Are there as built drawings for the properties considered in the RFP?

- No. Any surveys or drawings available will be published as appendices in a future addendum. There was a theater design study conducted in 2007 which may have some useful information, which we are also happy to publish. However, potentially bidders should in no way feel constrained or influenced by the design proposed in that study as it is outdated and did not include the multi-functional safe room/disaster use of the current project.

Are there survey maps of the properties?

- Yes, though limited. We will publish any survey maps St. Croix Foundation has available as appendices in a future addendum.

As the Theater was built in 1950, has asbestos and lead paint testing and mitigation already been conducted?

- Asbestos and lead paint testing and mitigation has not yet occurred. It is likely that both asbestos and lead paint may be present and will require testing and abatement. We will discuss the phasing of this work with FEMA/VITEMA and get back with potential bidders, including publishing an addendum to this RFP if necessary.
- Follow Up Answer (After receiving further technical guidance from FEMA/VITEMA): Regarding asbestos and lead paint testing and mediation: The task to initiate, oversee, collect, and incorporate the results into the final construction scope of work should be included in Phase I (A/E). If lead and/or asbestos is found to be present, the costs associated with the removal will need to be obtained or estimated and incorporated into the construction budget. No construction or mediation can be completed during Phase I (A/E) but sample collection and testing (ie removing paint samples and/or wall ceiling samples) to be tested is appropriate during the A/E process and will be overseen by the successful A/E contractor. A revision to the scope of work for this RFP incorporating these activities is forthcoming and will be published via addendum to the RFP.

Pre-Proposal Conferenced Adjourned and Zoom attendees logged off.

Questions & Answers during the Facility Walk Through (in-person):

Has a hazard mitigation feasibility study already been done or is it part of Phase I?

- That is the first deliverable before design commences as part of Phase I

Is the marquee on the front face of the Theater also considered historic?

- We believe that it is considered historic. This can be further confirmed during the historical analysis/review period covered under this RFP.

Where is the delineation line between the St. Croix Foundation headquarters and the Theater? (Context: The Theater wall abuts the St. Croix Foundation headquarters building next door)

- Everything with red brick exterior is considered part of the Theater building envelope for hardening/wind retrofit purposes. However, some interior rooms (like the interior area above the marquee) were incorporated into the adjacent St. Croix Foundation headquarters during the redevelopment that building (1022/1023 Market Street). Therefore, the A/E design of the interior space for the Theater will not include those spaces which are no longer accessible from inside the Theater building.

Is St. Croix Foundation interested in proposals including the use of solar into the design?

- We welcome proposals that consider additional components, especially as they relate to resiliency so long as those optional costs are clearly broken out and listed as optional for the purpose of the evaluation committee comparing cost proposals across bids. There is a place in the Cost Proposal section of the RFP which states that respondents can list additional, optional costs. St. Croix Foundation will consider additional resiliency components for the design after an assessment of funding availability for those components (i.e., eligibility for HMGP grant or availability of alternative funding such as private philanthropic contributions).

Is this a LEED project?

- This project is not currently a LEED project. We will find out from FEMA/VITEMA if LEED development/certification are eligible HMGP grant expenses and get back to bidders as soon as possible.
- Follow Up Answer (After receiving further technical guidance from FEMA/VITEMA): Both VITEMA and FEMA are supportive of LEED initiatives that will incorporate long-term resiliency, sustainability, and energy efficiency into hazard mitigation projects. However, LEED certification is not a requirement in this project, nor are many of the costs associated with LEED certification eligible under FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). HMGP funding is primarily for the implementation of long-term hazard mitigation measures that will reduce future risks from disasters. HMGP Saferoom funding must conform to FEMA P-361 as well as Hazard Mitigation Assistance Guidance Addendum (February 27, 2015 – see Table 4: Eligible and Ineligible Components of Residential and Community Safe Rooms). If the LEED elements are eligible for FEMA HMGP funding and supported by the project budget and timeline, they would be considered beneficial to the project. The associated costs and associated time would be the driving factors to this allowance. St. Croix

Foundation may be interested in securing alternative funding to cover the non-HMGP eligible additional costs associated with LEED certification and development. However, final determination would be made by St. Croix Foundation in consultation with the successful A/E contractor and will take in to consideration the timely availability of necessary funding. A/E bidders responding to this RFP are welcome to add costs associated with A/E services for LEED certification under the optional costs category in the Cost Proposal section of their RFP response. Please ensure optional costs are clearly delineated and provided via narrative or attachment within the Cost Proposal not reported on the Cost Sheet, Appendix G.

Does the project need to consider the seismic mitigation as well?

- Yes, Appendix A, Project Description of the RFP states that the types of hazards to be mitigated are wind and seismic.