



## **RFP 06-2021A**

### **Architectural & Engineering Design Services *Alexander Theater Safe Room/Building Retrofit Project***

#### **Submitted Questions & Answers**

The list below includes questions submitted by potential respondents to the RFP and answers provided by St. Croix Foundation:

1. The RFP documents state that the pre-proposal conference can be attended on zoom. However, the site walkthrough will take place immediately after the conference. Am I correct to assume that attendance at the site walkthrough is encouraged, but not required to submit a proposal?

**Answer: Attendance at the pre-proposal conference and/or site walk through is encouraged, but not required to submit a proposal.**

2. Will there be additional opportunities to visit the site prior to submitting a proposal if I am unable to attend tomorrow's walkthrough?

**Answer: The facility walk-through on Wednesday, July 28, 2021 immediately following the pre-proposal conference is the only guaranteed opportunity to tour inside the facility or be granted access to exterior portions of the site that are behind gates and fences prior to submitting a proposal. In the event that a second facility walk-through opportunity is scheduled, it will be published via addendum to the RFP on our website at the following link: <https://www.stxfoundation.org/community-revitalization/the-new-alexander-theatre/>. Potential bidders and members of the public are welcome to visit/view the exterior portions of the buildings/site that are accessible for viewing from public roadway/sidewalks anytime.**

3. In several places the scope of work appears to include only those items that would be funded by a typical HMGP grant (exterior work and related hardening). However, in appendix A there is some discussion of interior finish work and theater specific items that suggests that proposals should be all-inclusive to design a turn-key, ready to operate theater space. Could you clarify whether this "non-hardening" work is to be included in the A/E scope of services?

**Answer: Proposals should be all-inclusive to design a turn-key, ready to operate multi**

purpose facility that will serve as a performing arts center and convening space during "blue skies" and a disaster safe room during times of disaster. Scope of services should include all hardening requirements but should not be limited to such. Proposals should include complete design services for the theater/multi functional intended use of the facility. We anticipate that specialty consultation may be a necessary component of the proposal and request that bidders outline this in the Project Approach and Cost Proposal sections accordingly.

4. The acknowledgement of Addenda form asks that we provide the date an addendum is issued. Addendum 1 has been issued but there seems to be no date in the document or on the website indicating when it was issued. Please clarify/advise.

**Answer: Thank you for bringing this issue to my attention. It will be remedied today. I will notify you when an updated, dated, addendum document is posted.**

**Answer Update: Please note the dated Addendum 1 is now available on the RFP Package for Download section of the St. Croix Foundation website**

**here: <https://www.stxfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/RFP-06-2021A-Appendices-Addendum-1.pdf>.**

5. I'm writing to ask if it would be possible to stop by the theater to take some quick photos of the interior of the Alexander Theater.

**Answer: The facility walk-through on Wednesday, July 28, 2021 immediately following the pre-proposal conference was the only guaranteed opportunity to tour inside the facility or be granted access to exterior portions of the site that are behind gates and fences prior to submitting a proposal. Unfortunately, I am unable to accommodate your request for private access to the interior of the facility for photos. In the event that a second facility walk-through opportunity is scheduled, it will be published via addendum to the RFP on our website at the following link: <https://www.stxfoundation.org/community-revitalization/the-new-alexander-theatre/>. Potential bidders and members of the public are welcome to visit/view the exterior portions of the buildings/site that are accessible for viewing from public roadway/sidewalks anytime.**

6. Can you please provide the construction budget and/or anticipated construction cost?

**Answer: An accurate construction budget is not currently available. Developing the Cost Estimate for construction is part of the scope of work for the successful A/E contractor under this RFP.**

7. Can you please provide an ideal start date?

**Answer: The ideal start date for the scope of work covered under this RFP would be as soon as possible. We anticipate A/E contractor selection and contract execution will be completed by no later than September 30, 2021. The ideal start date is immediately upon contract execution, and no later than October 1, 2021.**

8. Is there a target date for construction completion?

**Answer: I have solicited guidance from FEMA/VITEMA and will get back with you as soon as this information is available.**

9. Must a firm have completed work in the USVI to be eligible?

**Answer: No. However, a firm must be licensed to provide the services being**

**advertised in the USVI and have a Certificate of Good Standing to practice business in the USVI.**

10. Are you able to share any additional photos of the site/building?

**Answer: Any available photos of the site/building(s) will be published in a forthcoming addendum.**

11. Are you able to share any plans/drawings of the existing building?

**Answer: Any available plans/drawings/surveys of the existing buildings/parcels will be published in a forthcoming addendum. However, please note that no as-built drawings exist to be provided.**

12. Is there a page limit for the submission?

**Answer: There is no page limit for the submission.**

13. Please confirm that sub-consultants are not required to submit appendices C,D, E AND H?

**Answer: Correct. Only prime applicants are required to submit appendices C, D, E, and H. Ultimately it is imperative that no sub-contractors or sub-consultants be debarred from working on federal projects which will be confirmed via Sam.gov prior to contracting. Therefore, while submission of that proof is not required as part of the RFP response for anyone but the prime, that will need to be confirmed prior to contract execution. For that reason, it is recommended that as the prime applicant you confirm the eligibility of your intended sub-contractors or sub-consultants for this project prior to including them in your Sub-Contractor Participation Plan.**

14. Will teams get credit for having sub-consultants who meet the preferred bidder status?

**Answer: Preferred bidder status only applies to the prime applicant.**

15. Regarding cost proposal, In addition to Appendix G and hourly rates, the RFP is requesting "Fee structure and schedule". Please clarify what information you would like included under "Fee structure and schedule"?

**Answer: Clarifications to the Cost Proposal section of the RFP requirements will be published in a forthcoming addendum.**

16. Is selected A/E group expected to provide turn-key design for new commercial kitchen and restaurant, including FFE?

**Answer: Yes. However, it will be primarily designed as the commercial kitchen and dining room for the Safe Room/Shelter with a secondary, multi-functional, regular use as a restaurant during "blue skies".**

17. What is the required capacity of the new restaurant?

**Answer: I am seeking technical guidance regarding any requirements for dining capacity for the Safe Room/Shelter operations from FEMA/VITEMA and will align that with the needs for "blue sky" operations, then will get back to you as soon as possible with this information.**

**Follow Up Answer (After receiving further technical guidance from FEMA/VITEMA): FEMA P-361 states that provisions for food and water will be needed for hurricane safe rooms that may be occupied for more than 24-hours.**

**The food preparation area and storage should be sized according to the planned maximum occupancy of the safe room. Per the Alexander Theater HMGP Application and FEMA's Phase I approval, the AE will provide an "Updated floorplan and construction design to maximize shelter capacity".**

**FEMA's saferoom guidance for community saferoom, FEMA-P361 ([https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema\\_safe-rooms-for-tornadoes-and-hurricanes\\_p-361.pdf](https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_safe-rooms-for-tornadoes-and-hurricanes_p-361.pdf)) and ICC 500 Section 502.2 requires Community Hurricane Safe Rooms to have a minimum of 20 square feet per standing, seated, or wheelchair-using occupant.**

**Please refer to FEMA-361 for guidance in determining the usable floor area (see page B5-4). One method for determining usable safe room floor area is to reduce the gross floor area by 50% for safe rooms with concentrated furnishings or fixed seating.**

**Based on these rough calculations the Alexander Theater's gross SF of 12,000 SF would be reduced to 6,000 SF divided by 20 SF/person for an estimated 300-person safe room capacity. These calculations and space allocation will need to be verified by the successful A/E contractor. The successful A/E contractor will then assist the St. Croix Foundation in determining the appropriate needs for food preparation and storage based on the maximum occupancy described above, and incorporate those components in to the design. Design decisions regarding the capacity of food preparation areas for the multi-purpose "blue sky" functions as a theater/convening space/restaurant will be made through consultation with the successful A/E contractor during the design process.**

18. Will all dining take place in proposed restaurant or will the kitchen be expected to serve visitors on the theater/house floor?

**Answer: I am seeking technical guidance regarding any requirements for dining capacity for the Safe Room/Shelter operations from FEMA/VITEMA and will align that with the needs for "blue sky" operations, then will get back to you as soon as possible with this information.**

**Follow Up Answer (After receiving further technical guidance from FEMA/VITEMA): During disaster operations as a safe room, (i.e. during a hurricane event), it is assumed that people would eat in the main auditorium or whichever portion of the project is deemed the safe room. Design decisions regarding the multi-purpose "blue sky" functions as a theater/convening space will be made through consultation with the successful A/E contractor.**

19. In addition to structural upgrades on the existing restaurant (Singh's Fast Food) will the selected A/E firm be expected to re-design/re-use this building in this project?

**Answer: Please refer to Appendix A, Project Description, section referencing Parcel D.**

20. There appears to be "Safe Room" operations proposed on both the Theater parcel and "Parcel D". Please confirm whether the intent is to have one functioning safe room that will utilize both lots to fulfill program requirements or if two stand-alone "safe rooms" will be required.

**Answer: We anticipate that the design will include one functioning safe room that will utilize both lots to fulfill program requirements. We anticipate that new**

**construction on "Parcel D" will be contiguous and tie in to the existing Theater structure. We are also flexible regarding the final design, so long as it meets all of the programmatic and operational needs of the project. Final design solutions will be developed in consultation with the successful A/E contractor based on their experience and the findings of the requisite Feasibility Analysis.**

**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.**

21. Can the St. Croix Foundation provide copy of the FEMA assessment report for this property?

**Answer: I am unclear what type of FEMA assessment report you are inquiring about, please clarify. If it is the HMGP Feasibility Analysis, please note that one has not been completed yet and is covered in the scope of work for this RFP.**

22. Can the St. Croix Foundation provide a copy of any surveys in their possession of the subject lots?

**Answer: Any available surveys will be published in a forthcoming addendum.**

23. Can St. Croix Foundation share electronic copies of historical pictures in their possession of the Theater?

**Answer: Electronic copies of historical photos are not available at this time.**

24. What is the date of issuance for Addendum #1?

**Answer: 7/26/2021**

25. Scope of Work section detailed on page 4 of Appendix A states that "The A/E firm will prepare design documents for review and approval to FEMA/VITEMA at 30%, 60%, 90% and 100% of design completion...". Would this determine the payment schedule for the entirety of the A/E services contract? A&E services are procured at different percentage phases of the process that may not necessarily align with this completion schedule, and this may cause delayed payments and hardship in providing A&E services in a timely manner. It is our understanding that some local FEMA projects are operating with this same construct, and it is leading to long lead times with firms having to front substantial costs and await reimbursement.

**Answer: No. The payment from St. Croix Foundation to the A/E contractor will not be linked to FEMA's review and approval of design drawings. The payment schedule that will be outlined in the contract will have payment tied to deliverable completion by the A/E firm (deliverables outlined in the scope of work). We understand that the A/E firm does not have control over FEMA's review/approval process and the associated timeline for that. We expect that the A/E contractor will provide submission ready materials for FEMA review and will engage in correspondence and consultation as necessary to address and incorporate FEMA**

**feedback in the design process. However, that process will not be linked to payment approval for work completed.**

26. In Appendix G, it is stated that firms should “Clearly specify what percent of total cost is a) contractor overhead, b) profit, and c) insurance/ bonding...”. While we are familiar with bonding requirements for construction contractors or even for design-build projects, this RFP is specifically for A&E services. So, is the bonding requirement applicable?

**Answer: There is no bonding requirement for this contract**

27. In Appendix F – the Subcontractor Participation Plan – the second column stating “MWBE Certified”. Is official MWBE Certification through the SBA/federal government the request here, or simply that firms have 51% or more ownership by Minority or Women owners, which would potentially qualify them for the status?

**Answer: The latter. For the Subcontractor Participation Plan, please utilize the same definitions of Minority Business Enterprise and Women Business Enterprise defined on F.1 in the appendices to the RFP which defines Women Business Enterprise and Minority Business Enterprise for the purpose of this RFP (which is based on 51% ownership).**

28. For the contents of Proposal, you request "names of key personnel" in Section 1a, and you also request a "list of staff available for the project" in Section 1b. Please clarify what information should be included in each of these sections. If Section 1b does not refer to key personnel dedicated to this project, please provide clarity on who it refers to.

**Answer: 1a refers to key personnel that will be the core A/E team members for the project. For 1b, Please list any additional auxiliary staff that will support the project. For 1b, it is appropriate to state that there are no additional personnel available to the project beyond the key personnel outlined in 1a if that is true.**

29. Must appendices C, D, E be notarized within the USVI, or is it acceptable to use a notary from a US state?

**Answer: A notary from a U.S. State is acceptable.**

30. What is the project's estimated budget?

**Answer: An accurate construction budget is not currently available. Developing the Cost Estimate for construction is part of the scope of work for the successful A/E contractor under this RFP.**

31. What is the target opening date?

**Answer: The original Period of Performance Date (completion date) for our HMGP grant is March 6, 2022. However, all stakeholders understand an extension request will be forthcoming. We are in active discussions with FEMA/VITEMA regarding the new, realistic target completion date based on the scope of work for the A/E design phase (Phase 1) and the realities of construction timelines in the USVI once Phase 2 (construction) commences. The selected A/E firm will join the team engaging in the development of the revised project timeline. This project is a high priority project for the Territory and the St. Croix Foundation. We are committed to pushing the project forward as expediently as possible.**

32. Can you share a timeline for the selection of the A/E team?

**Answer: It is our goal to select the A/E firm, present the successful firm with a contract and notice of award, and provide notice of non-award to other bidders by September 30, 2021. The selected A/E firm will have 10 days from the day it is presented to return the signed contract with all required documents. The anticipated start date for the A/E firm is in October, 2021.**

33. Are there drawings of the existing buildings/Structures that you can provide?

**Answer: We have previously stated that no drawings were available beyond the maps that were published in the most recent RFP appendices addendum. However, we have just found a drawing of the theater building. We can not warranty its accuracy. We will have it scanned and will post it on the RFP website as soon as possible.**

34. We are certified WBE in several US states, but not USVI. Does our participation count towards the MWBE participation goals for this project?

**Answer: Yes. Please note that the Minority & Women Owned Business Enterprise Disclosure Form (Appendix F.1) provides definitions of Minority Business Enterprise and Women Business Enterprise for the purpose of this RFP and does not rely on a Stateside or Territorial certification process. If your business meets one or more of these criteria, please certify to that effect using this form.**

**NOTE: Questions and Answers from the Pre-Proposal Conference and Walk Through, including follow up answers to questions asked at the conference, are available in the posted minutes from that event.**