

Request for Letters of Interest in a Parcel Located on Tamiami Trail South at Venice Municipal Airport, Venice, Florida For Commercial Development

The City of Venice (City) is hereby soliciting Letters of Interest to determine whether there are parties interested in developing an 11-acre parcel of land at the Venice Municipal Airport (Airport) commonly known as the Circus Arena Property. The parcel is located on Tamiami Trail South, near the southern gateway to the Island of Venice.

The purpose of this invitation to submit Letters of Interest is to assist the City in identifying the highest and best future use, improvement to and/or development of the property. The City desires to establish an attractive gateway that exhibits the charm of Venice, provides amenities for the public, draws visitors and supports the local economy.

About Venice Municipal Airport

The Airport serves general aviation (all civilian aviation other than scheduled airline service) in Sarasota County, Florida with two 5,000-foot all-weather runways. The Airport has over 220 based aircraft and handled more than 60,000 takeoffs and landings in 2013. Aviation fuels, aircraft maintenance, avionics and storage are among the services provided by businesses on the airfield. The Airport is owned and operated by the City of Venice.

General Property Description

The Circus Arena Property was formerly part of the Venice Army Air Base. The federal government transferred ownership of the facility to the City in 1947 following World War II and it became the Venice Municipal Airport. The Circus Arena Property was leased to the Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus from 1960 until about 1993 and was leased to other businesses thereafter. The Circus Arena Property is part of the Airport, as shown in Exhibit A, but is located outside the air operations area.

The property is listed at 1401 Ringling Dr., Venice, FL 34285 on the Sarasota County Property Appraisers web site at www.sc-pa.com. A month to month land lease is currently in place for an 8,400 sq. ft. portion of the parcel with the Tito Gaona Trapeze Academy, Inc.

The parcel is conceptually designated on the 2011 Airport Layout Plan as a Future Airport Commerce Park. Any future use must be compatible with Airport operations. More information about the Airport Layout Plan is available at www.flyvnc.com.

In 2013 the City removed the roof, walls, all hazardous materials and an underground storage tank from the 65,000 sq. ft. circus arena and adjacent octagon building. A 5,000 sq. ft. metal storage building was completely demolished. The City must decide whether or not to exercise an option to remove the remaining structures by September 20, 2014.

Zoning and the Southern Gateway Corridor

The Circus Arena Property is currently zoned Commercial Intensive (CI) and is located within the 2010 City of Venice Comprehensive Plan planning area called the Southern Gateway Corridor. The intent of the Southern Gateway Corridor is to:

Establish a welcoming “front door” to Venice by creating a pedestrian-oriented streetscape and mixed use corridor. The corridor shall support existing residential uses, promote redevelopment of underutilized office and commercial properties, and establish new infill developments that support the corridor’s purpose. The intent of this corridor is to develop a mixed use area with medical facilities, professional and medical office space, multi-family residences, mixed-use commercial areas, retail shops, entertainment, marine services, hotels, and restaurants. Auto-centric uses would be discouraged in order to improve the corridor’s pedestrian access, bikeability, and transit opportunities.

More information about the Southern Gateway Corridor is available in the Future Land Use & Design Element of the Comprehensive Plan at www.venicegov.com.

Conditions

Interested parties should take note that, in addition to any other applicable laws, development of the property will be subject to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requirements, the City’s comprehensive plan, land development regulations, local ordinances and building codes. The City’s code of ordinances is available at <http://library.municode.com/index.aspx?clientId=11650>. Additionally, interested parties should take note of the following:

Development Site(s): +/- 11-acres are available for development and the parcel is bordered by Tamiami Trail South, Ringling Drive and Airport Avenue. The City may consider dividing the parcel into smaller development sites.

Access Road: The City has tentatively planned to develop an access road between Tamiami Trail South (US 41) and Airport Avenue in 2015. Three preliminary concepts for the alignment of this road are shown in Exhibit A. Additional alternatives may be considered.

Compatible Use: Any future improvements and/or development must be compatible with airport operations and may be subject to the FAA notification requirements as required by [14 CFR Part 77 – Safe Efficient Use and Preservation of the Navigable Airspace](#).

Traffic Count: The Florida Department of Transportation “Average Annual Daily Traffic” for Tamiami Trail South near the subject parcel in 2012 was 28,000 vehicles daily.

Historic Significance – The circus is significant to the history of the City, but is not certain whether it is feasible to maintain the existing structures. The City encourages interested parties to develop innovative solutions to honor the history of the circus in Venice, particularly the octagon building.

Land Lease: The City intends to lease the property or a portion thereof. Any land lease would be triple net, with the City providing only the land, in “as is” condition, during the term of the lease, and the lessee being responsible for design, permitting, construction, financing, and operation. **Please be aware that the City cannot subordinate the fee interest in the land to a tenant’s leasehold mortgage or other financing.** The City reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to finance development of the property.

Rental Rate: The rental rate shall be negotiated. The estimated annualized market rent (for the land only) was appraised to be \$0.80 per square foot in October 2010. An updated appraisal is anticipated to be completed as part of the negotiation process. The FAA requires fair market value rent for non-aeronautical use of Airport property.

Property Rights Reserved: The lease of all or a portion of the parcel is subject and subordinate to the terms and conditions of the agreements under which the City acquired the property from the United States of America. FAA consent shall be required prior to any lease of the parcel.

Letter of Interest Format

To facilitate review, Letters of Interest should be organized in the following format and should contain information responsive to the following items:

- 1) Identify the entity submitting the letter of interest and, if different, the entity which would ultimately be expected to be the occupant;
- 2) Describe your current operations and locations. Include branding affiliation(s) as may be applicable and any other pertinent qualifications to achieve the intended use of the parcel;
- 3) Explain in as much detail as possible the type of development, franchise, and branding affiliation(s), if any, you intend to operate;
- 4) State whether you are interested in leasing all or a portion of the parcel, and include the minimum term you would consider necessary for a land lease from the City (Include any options to extend);
- 5) Identify how the anticipated use of the property would be consistent with the intent of the Southern Gateway Corridor and the 2010 City of Venice Comprehensive Plan;
- 6) Include what benefits the City, Airport and general public would derive from the intended use of the parcel;

- 7) Outline any proposed innovative solutions to honor the history of the circus in Venice as part of the intended use;
- 8) Describe your financial capability to develop and operate the intended use;
- 9) Provide a general time frame for the improvement, development and/or occupancy of the property.

Add any additional information that may be beneficial for the City to indicate your interest in the use, improvement and/or development of the parcel, and any items you would suggest the City consider in its (potential) preparation of a Request for Proposals to lease and/or develop the property, or a portion thereof.

Disclaimers

This Request for Letters of Interest does not waive the City's rights to subsequently issue a Request for Proposals, or commit the City to lease the subject parcel, or otherwise bind the City in any way. This Request for Letters of Interest constitutes only an invitation to present Letters of Interest and confers no rights of any kind on responding parties. The City reserves the right to take no action on received Letters of Interest, and reserves the right to lease or not to lease the subject parcel with or without a Request for Proposals or other invitation for a specific use. The City reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to finance development of the property.

The City does not guarantee that the information contained herein is current or accurate; all information provided should be independently verified.

The City will not be responsible for any costs incurred by interested parties in the preparation of Letters of Interest.

Schedule and Deadline

A site visit will occur on X, 2014 at X AM/PM. Execution of a waiver will be required. The site visit escort will not answer any questions.

All questions must be submitted in writing to Peter Boers, Procurement Manager, at pboers@venicegov.com by X, 2014 at X AM/PM.

Letters of Interest shall be submitted by 2:00 PM, X, 2014 to: Peter Boers, Procurement Manager, City of Venice, 401 W. Venice Ave., Venice, Florida 34285; Phone # (941) 486 – 2626, x26017.