



REQUEST — for — PROPOSALS



The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to enter into a contractual agreement with a qualified developer for the acquisition and redevelopment of 108 N. 4th Street, Norfolk, Nebraska, more commonly known as The Kensington.

The Norfolk Housing Agency (NHA) has owned the property since 1998 and is seeking to return The Kensington to its initial use when built in 1926; and that is as a “Boutique Hotel” to accent ongoing Downtown Norfolk development.

Norfolk Housing Agency
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THE KENSINGTON

The Kensington was designed to be an eight-story tall hotel. After numerous delays, setbacks and bankruptcy; the building was scaled back to a five-story, 150 room hotel constructed of reinforced concrete with concrete floors and roof and brick and stone exterior. The building rests on a limestone foundation. Beautiful terrazzo floors are located in the lobby and other areas of the building. There are two beautiful marble staircases with wrought iron bannisters and walnut handrails that lead from the basement to the second floor mezzanine. The mezzanine has wrought iron railing and walnut top rail; which overlooks the spacious lobby area.

There is also a second basement entrance with a marble staircase. There are other areas of “original” history abounding throughout the building. There is a passenger elevator as well as a freight elevator in service in the building.

The Kensington site was selected in 1917 as the “choicest” development site in Norfolk’s business section to build “one of the most beautiful hotel building in the state.” The building has been many things over 100 years and always seems to house people. Completed in 1926 as the Hotel Norfolk, this large rectangular building of Georgian Revival architecture in brick is located at a major downtown Norfolk intersection. The Kensington is on the National Historic Registry.

Currently, the main floor has four commercial tenants: Norfolk Housing Agency, Parent to Parent offices, Added Blessings and Legends of Liberty coin shop. The upper four floors is comprised of 53 apartment units: sleeper, efficiency, 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments.

Details

- **67,005 SF**
- **Dimensions - 175' x 75'**
- **Appraised at \$1,500,000**
- **Built in 1926**
- **Direct access to 60 City-owned parking spaces**
- **Listed on the National Register of Historic Places**

TIMELINE:

RFP Distributed
January 24, 2022

Developer Deadline for RFP Submission
March 15, 2022

NHA Board of Directors Review RFPs
April 13, 2022

The Norfolk Housing Agency (NHA) has owned the Kensington since 1998 and maintains the property as a mixed-use building. The NHA is a non-profit organization whose mission is to administer the Section 8 Rental Assistance Voucher program, coordinate City of Norfolk grant programs as well as manage 14 Crown rental home projects, a 24-unit apartment building at Meadow Ridge Estates, and the Kensington.

The NHA has explored several options as to the best use of the Kensington over the past several years. With the recent North Fork Development Project, the redevelopment of the Riverfront Overlook site, increased business activity, and upcoming housing projects now would be an excellent time for the “rebirth” of the Kensington.

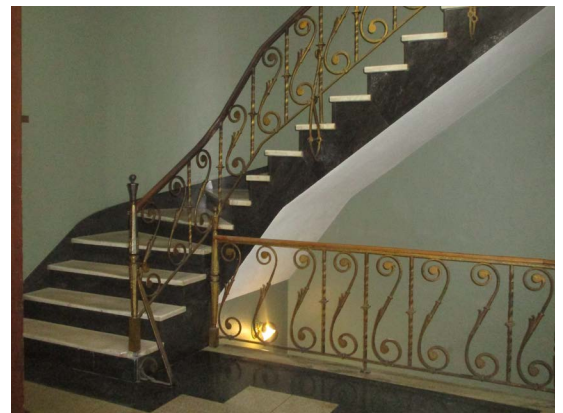
The Kensington is currently zoned C-2 which is a Central Business District. The building has natural gas, electricity, city water and city sewer, along with various telecommunication vendors. The desire of the NHA and the City of Norfolk is for this property to be developed as a “Boutique Hotel”. The City Economic Development Division will assist in answering what questions a prospective developer may have.

Interested firms should submit one electronic copy in pdf format on a flash drive and provide 10 printed copies of submittal. Deliver RFPs to Norfolk Housing Agency 110 N. 4th Street, Norfolk, NE. 68701. The NHA will accept Requests for Proposals until 2:00 p.m. on March 15, 2022.

Criteria on which RFPs will be reviewed include:

- Demonstrated Boutique Hotel experience
- Demonstrated experience for downtown development
- Desire to compliment the potential of the North Fork Development Project and surrounding downtown projects
- Ability to describe the project approach including acquisition (price), design development, relocation of tenants and construction
- Experience with and the ability to adhere to the Nebraska Community Development Law
- Ability to communicate approximate timeline for redevelopment project
- Perceived positive value and impact the “Boutique Hotel” will have on downtown and Norfolk in general

For additional information, please visit the website at:
<https://www.norfolknebraskaed.com/kensington>



INCENTIVE OPPORTUNITIES

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF)

The proposed property is located in an area that has been declared blighted and substandard thereby making it eligible for Tax Increment Financing (TIF). TIF has been used within the City of Norfolk for property acquisition, demolition and infrastructure development costs relating to the revitalization of select parcels. Learn more about TIF at <https://www.norfolknebraskaed.com/tax-increment-financing>.

PROPERTY ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY (PACE)

PACE is a financing tool enabling development of clean energy projects and energy efficient buildings and operations. The intent of this program is to encourage the reduction of energy, water, and wastewater in our community as well as encourage the use of renewable energy systems. The City of Norfolk views PACE as a tool to encourage developers and property owners to go beyond the requirements of energy and building codes to achieve meaningful reductions in energy and water use, and to employ renewable energy systems. Learn more about PACE at <https://norfolkne.gov/government/departments/planning-and-development/pace-financing.html>.

ENHANCED EMPLOYMENT AREA

Upon designation of an enhanced employment area, the City of Norfolk may levy a general business occupation tax upon the businesses and users of space within such enhanced employment area for the purpose of paying all or any part of the costs and expenses of authorized work within such enhanced employment area. The City of Norfolk is open to exploring this tool with developers looking at the Downtown District.

HISTORIC TAX CREDITS

The Nebraska Job Creation and Mainstreet Revitalization Act provides up to \$15 million in Nebraska Historic Tax Credits (NHTCs) to be allocated annually, beginning January 1, 2015 and ending December 31, 2022. This credit is equal to 20% of eligible expenditures incurred for improvements to qualifying historically significant real property and is limited to \$1 million of tax credits per project. This credit is transferrable and subject to certain limitations.

Learn more at <https://revenue.nebraska.gov/incentives/historic-tax-credit/general-information>





NORTH FORK DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

According to a study conducted by Riverwise Engineering, the areas by Johnson Park near North First Street and East Norfolk Avenue boast characteristics that have supported some of the most successful whitewater parks in the United States. The community of Norfolk and our partners in economic development are working to invest \$11 million to create this unique attraction which will culminate immediately north of the proposed site. The project is comprised of three main attributes. Learn more by visiting our website at www.NorthForkRiverfront.com.

NORTH FORK RIVER RESTORATION

1 At its core, the North Fork River Restoration project incorporates eight, 18" drop points in a concentrated area, several which will be directly behind the Riverfront Overlook Site. These drop points will introduce white water characteristics to the river, provide beautification along the bank corridors, and enhance aquatic habitats. Additionally, an abandoned railroad bridge will be moved downstream and incorporated into the trail system providing a pedestrian walkway just upstream of the First Street bridge.

JOHNSON PARK REVITALIZATION

2 The Johnson Park revitalization plan focuses on the revitalization of a park that was once considered an integral part of Norfolk's economic and cultural identity. The plan includes varying degrees of grading to provide safe ADA access to the river, the introduction of additional parking, the enhancement of festival space, and the expansion of youth amenities. The plan also includes the introduction of an amphitheater with a permanent stage and a grass seating area with space for a few hundred people establishing yet another unique outdoor venue for concerts, plays, and ceremonies in Norfolk.

FIRST STREET BRIDGE REPLACEMENT WITH UNDERPASS TRAIL SYSTEM & ROUNDABOUT INTEGRATION

3 In order to optimize the improvements made to the North Fork River and Johnson Park, the existing bridge will be replaced. This replacement will remove the concrete obstacles within the river, as well as create a trail underpass thereby removing the dangers pedestrians encounter with the current traffic crossing. Additionally, in order to reduce traffic speeds, promote pedestrian safety, and provide further interconnection to the area, the North Fork Development Project is considering the introduction of a roundabout at North First Street and Braasch Avenue.

WHY INVEST IN DOWNTOWN NORFOLK?

There has never been a better time to invest in Downtown Norfolk. Our current efforts include strategies that are designed to intentionally create density within the downtown district. These efforts, which are supported by regional leaders, have the capacity to deliver residential, lease and new business

1

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

Create an affordable and stimulating living and working environment in downtown Norfolk. Objectives include the creation of 300 high-quality rental units and attraction of a concentration of business enterprises with the goal of locating a core population of 1,000 predominately twenty-something employees.

2

FOUNDERS IN RESIDENCE

Work alongside Invest Nebraska to invite founders of both existing and new businesses to cultivate technology-based innovation and create an ecosystem with co-working opportunities and spaces designed to encourage collaboration.

3

COOPERATIVE SCHOLARSHIPS

Wayne State College (WSC) will offer cooperative scholarships in which students will be required to live in downtown Norfolk during their senior year to complete immersive work-based learning experiences. The first set of 30 students will arrive in Norfolk in the fall of 2023. This group will be followed by a second cohort of 45 students in 2024. After 2025, Downtown Norfolk will host 75 WSC students per year. WSC is working alongside the City of Norfolk, and the Northeast Nebraska Growing Together partners to create student housing to facilitate student immersion in the downtown district and encourage them to stay in Norfolk after graduation.

4

EMERGING ARTS

Increase opportunities for artistic practice and exposure. We are already seeing place enhancing activities through the downtown sculpture walk and the mural projects facilitated by the Norfolk Area Visitors Bureau. Creativity inspires innovation and is a vital component to the overall vision.

5

WORKFORCE RETRAINING

Provide opportunities for residents who are not college-educated and find themselves in jobs that are disappearing or in positions that offer little in the way of career advancement. This program offers employees the opportunity to develop new skills in information technology related fields through a 12-week training program with Northeast Community College.

6

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Families with two working parents are more likely to stay in Northeast Nebraska if they are assured that quality childcare is provided to allow them to work, volunteer, or pursue their dreams. We are working to identify resources that will allow us to establish high-quality care and education programs for children age birth to kindergarten in our region.
