INTRODUCTION

Louisville/Jefferson County Metro Government (LMG) seeks a proposal to create and implement an innovative and sustainable development plan for all or a portion of the property at 3029 W. Muhammad Ali Boulevard. This property was historically used as a warehouse and processing facility for the Lorillard Tobacco Company, and subsequently, the National Tobacco Company. The site was rebranded as "Heritage West" in partnership with the West Louisville Community Council (WLCC), an independent community-led organization made up of residents from all nine west Louisville neighborhoods and others interested in west Louisville’s future. The WLCC is dedicated to supporting responsible and sustainable development in west Louisville.

The development plan should model outstanding environmental values and incorporate current and innovative development trends while:

- reflecting the historical character of the area;
- offering opportunities for neighborhood retail or other business development;
- providing green space and amenities for community and neighborhood activities;
- complementing area development activities, including those taking place under Louisville’s Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant;
- enhancing access and connectivity to surrounding commercial, educational and cultural resources; and
- creating jobs and opportunities for community wealth building.

The redevelopment of Heritage West should reflect the goals established in Vision Louisville, a city-wide visioning process, and reflect the ambitions of the neighborhood and greater community. These include:

- **Sustainability** – Showcase sustainable planning and building technologies that demonstrate outstanding environmental values.
- **Economy** – Provide and attract local retail/commercial opportunities that serve the needs, in both products and price points, of neighborhood residents, and that create job opportunities that pay a living wage.
- **Livability** – Create inclusive mixed-income housing options and other neighborhood design solutions that promote health, safety, innovation, sustainability and activity.
- **Connectivity** – Create a distinctly walkable, well-connected, multi-modal community.
- **Creativity** – Allocate space for community activities and organizations as well as for educational opportunities.
- **Health** – Provide accessible green and open spaces with opportunities for recreation, reflection and relaxation.
- **Authenticity** – Reflect the unique character and history of the surrounding neighborhoods in the design.

For more information about Vision Louisville, see https://louisvilleky.gov/government/advanced-planning/vision-louisville.

Vision Russell, a planning and visioning effort focused on the Russell neighborhood, includes a number of specific goals and priorities to be achieved through neighborhood redevelopment, including:

- improved educational outcomes;
- new retail/service centers and expanded economic opportunity for all residents;
- increased availability of high-quality, mixed-income housing;
- improved community connectivity; and
- improved health.

For more information about Vision Russell, see http://visionrussell.org/.

The redevelopment of Heritage West also should reflect community priorities established through a series of visioning meetings held by the WLCC in 2016. A summary of these priorities is available at http://wearewestlouisville.weebly.com/heritage-west.html.
THE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

A. Neighborhood and surrounding area

Heritage West totals 23.86 acres, as shown below, and is located on the western border of the Russell neighborhood.

Heritage West is bounded on the west by an elevated rail line, to the south by a 6-acre property featuring a historic multi-story warehouse, to the east by single-family residences, a community orchard called “Produce Park,” and various light industrial uses, and to the north by a variety of single- and multi-family residences and neighborhood commercial uses. The property was most recently proposed as the location of the West Louisville FoodPort. For more information about the FoodPort, see http://oma.eu/projects/west-louisville-food-port.

Russell is a 1.4-square mile neighborhood located just west of Louisville’s Central Business District, and is bounded by 9th Street to the east, Broadway to the south, 32nd Street to the west, and Market Street to the north. Russell is made up of nearly 4,000 households including several larger multi-family residential developments, and is home to a number of commercial and industrial uses. It is well served by transportation, with easy access to I-64 and I-264, and features multiple bus lines, as well as several commercial rail corridors.

Russell was one of Louisville’s earliest and most desirable neighborhoods for the African-American middle class of the early 20th Century. Evidence of its history is preserved in nearly 1,400 structures that have been identified as potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. In the 1940’s, Russell was known as “Louisville’s Harlem” for its strong African-American business corridor along Walnut Street (now Muhammad Ali Boulevard), which included theaters, restaurants, professional offices, nightclubs and neighborhood retail between 6th Street and 13th Street.

Today, Russell is home to a number of important community anchors, including Louisville Central Community Centers, the Louisville Urban League, the Kentucky Center for African
American Heritage, the Chestnut Street YMCA, the Western Branch of the Louisville Free Public Library, and Central High School, as well as numerous manufacturing operations and commercial uses. It also is a neighborhood targeted for substantial redevelopment following the award of three U.S. Housing and Urban Development Choice Neighborhood Grants, the most recent of which awarded Louisville nearly $30 million to redevelop one of two remaining 1940's-era public housing complexes, Beecher Terrace, and to invest in broader neighborhood transformation. This initiative, known as “Vision Russell,” is the product of substantial community engagement and visioning.

Other notable activities in Russell include the formation of a neighborhood association called “Choose Russell” and the construction of an LMG-supported market rate housing development on Cedar Street. Community Ventures, a Kentucky-based Community Development Entity that provides business development, lending and community development services and financing, manages a culinary business incubator known as “Chef Space,” from which a number of restaurants, caterers and other food businesses operate. Louisville Central Community Centers leads an effort to redevelop West Muhammad Ali as an arts and cultural corridor, reviving the historic business district that once stretched from 6th Street to 13th Street. See http://aiad8.prod.acquia-sites.com/sites/default/files/2016-04/LouisvilleSDAT.pdf.

For more information about the Russell neighborhood and Vision Russell, see http://visionrussell.org/ and 55.3: Strategies for Vacant Property ReUse in the Food Port Area.

Two (2) urban neighborhoods border Heritage West, each with its own distinctive character.

To the immediate west of Heritage West is the Shawnee neighborhood. After the construction in the 1890s of Shawnee Park, part of Louisville’s famous Olmsted Park system, the farms that comprised much of the area were quickly developed for single family homes, including a number of mansions, for affluent whites who wanted to be near the river and the park. Many of these homes remain today, particularly along historic Northwestern and Southwestern Parkways, linear parks designed to connect the Olmsted Park system. Additionally, Shawnee Park features a city-owned golf course with sweeping river views and wooded areas. Shawnee is unique in that it has predominately retained its single-family character and has not experienced a significant division of single-family homes into multi-family units. Today, roughly one-half of these single-family residences are owner-occupied. Pockets of small commercial uses exist throughout the neighborhood. Recent activity in Shawnee includes investment in streetscape improvements along the commercial West Market Street corridor, a city-sponsored down-payment assistance program aimed at creating new homeowners in the neighborhood, the construction of a large community garden and orchard across from Shawnee Park, and the development of plans to construct the Shawnee Outdoor Learning Center, an environmental education facility, in Shawnee Park. The Louisville Loop, a 100-mile multi-use paved trail that circles the city, has a trailhead connection in Shawnee and passes through Shawnee Park along the river. For additional information about Shawnee, see https://louisvilleky.gov/sites/default/files/advanced_planning/shawneeplan_final7_23_13.pdf.

To the north of Heritage West lies the Portland neighborhood. Originally founded as its own city, Portland was a destination for travelers along the Ohio River. Located at the Falls of the Ohio, barges and other boats stopped in Portland to offload cargo in order to float over the Falls. Remnants of this history remain intact in the Shippingport warehouse district of the neighborhood. The construction of a canal that opened in 1830 and the subsequent construction of the McAlpine Locks led to Portland positioning itself as a stop along the railroad, and eventually its annexation to Louisville. Today Portland features the largest collection of shotgun-style homes in the nation, a former Marine Hospital that overlooks the Ohio River, and the Portland Museum, dedicated to preserving and celebrating the neighborhood’s history. Projects including a relatively new collection of arts and food-related uses in the East Portland warehouse district, a collection of modern shotgun-style homes (21st Century Shotguns) and artist residences (Artist Row Portland), and an enhanced “Portland Stroll” business district have been spearheaded by local development team, Portland Investment Initiative (http://wearepii.com/).

For more information about Portland, see https://louisvilleky.gov/sites/default/files/advanced_planning/portland_neighborhood_plan.pdf.
B. Existing Buildings on Site
Heritage West has been cleared of all structures and is predominately covered in at-grade, concrete or asphalt materials. A partial fence exists at the perimeter, particularly along West Market Street to the north and 30th Street to the east. The western property boundary consists of an active, elevated Norfolk Southern rail line. Some remnants of loading docks remain along 30th Street, but generally the site is flat and ready for redevelopment.

Environmental conditions at the property are not favorable for residential development without substantial remediation, due to the site’s industrial history. Any development proposal that includes residential reuse should include information about the development team’s specific experience in remediating and repurposing contaminated industrial property for residential purposes. A previously-performed environmental assessment can be found on the Advanced Planning website under the Heritage West tab: https://louisvilleky.gov/government/advanced-planning.

C. Zoning
Heritage West is currently zoned EZ-1, Enterprise Zone, a mixed-use zoning district that allows most industrial and commercial uses. The site is located in the Traditional Workplace Form District. To achieve redevelopment of the property, and particularly to achieve some aspects of the community vision expressed in the linked summary, it may be necessary to change the property’s zoning designation. All costs associated with obtaining any required zoning change and development approvals are expected to be borne by the developer of the property.

D. Connectivity
Heritage West has frontage on two important corridors, West Market Street and West Muhammad Ali Boulevard. It is located approximately one-quarter (1/4) mile from the River Park Drive/West Muhammad Ali interchange at I-264 at the Shawnee Expressway. The site once featured two rail spurs that entered from the north; one of these spurs brought train cars into the middle of the site where they could be loaded inside tobacco warehouses. These spurs no longer exist, but the elevated rail remains a prominent landmark in the immediate area.

LMG is working with consultants and engaging the community to reimagine Roy Wilkins Boulevard (9th Street) as a connecting point between Russell and downtown Louisville. Bus Rapid Transit service, which features real-time bus tracking, enhanced transit stops and more frequent bus arrival times, is being developed along Roy Wilkins/9th Street, and being planned along West Broadway. Other connectivity enhancements under consideration will create better improved safety and accessibility features for pedestrians of all ages, cyclists and motorists.

TARC lines 12, 15 and 21 run adjacent to Heritage West. Most area sidewalks are intact, making the neighborhood very walkable.

E. Community Review Process
LMG partnered with the WLCC to gather information on the community’s vision for the redevelopment of Heritage West, and is committed to facilitating redevelopment that best reflects the needs and desires expressed by residents and other stakeholders during this process. To that end, members of the community will be involved in the selection of a development team and will have access to all materials provided as part of a response to this Solicitation of Interest.