

**RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR LEASE OF
THOMAS STREET GATEWAY RETAIL SITE ON
SEATTLE CENTER CAMPUS**



**SPACE NEEDLE, LLC
SEPTEMBER 17, 2025**

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A. ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Provide a general overview of your organization, including the organization’s structure and purpose, names and professional biographies of key personnel and their role related to your proposal, and descriptions of other retail, hospitality, or entertainment projects your organization has developed and operated.

Provide two references external to your organization who can speak to your prior experience relevant to your proposal.

Space Needle

As the most iconic and visible landmark in the Pacific Northwest, the Space Needle stands as a global symbol of Seattle’s innovation and identity. Privately owned by the family of its builder, Howard S. Wright, the Space Needle is operated and maintained as a world-class attraction, reflecting the spirit and values of the city it represents.

Originally constructed as the cultural centerpiece of the 1962 World’s Fair— themed as *The Age of Space*—the Space Needle soars 605 feet above the city, embodying humanity’s aspirations during the Space Age. Since its grand opening on April 21, 1962, it has continued to “inspire wonder” and remains a powerful emblem of Seattle’s forward-thinking energy.

At 520 feet, the tower’s distinctive saucer-shaped “top house” provides the only 360-degree indoor and outdoor panoramic views of downtown Seattle, Mount Rainier, Puget Sound, and the Cascade and Olympic Mountain ranges. Most recently with the enhancements of the Century Project Renovation and the ongoing elevator modernization project, the Space Needle continues to reflect innovation and design that enhances guest experiences for those visiting from around the world.

With over six decades of operation and more than 60 million guests welcomed, the Space Needle remains a major tourism driver and a model of sustainable attraction management. Our operation includes food and beverage services, retail offerings, and technology-driven guest experiences—all executed with exceptional service and care. The Space Needle employs over 300 dedicated team members, some with tenures exceeding 40 years, supported by a strong and experienced leadership team with backgrounds at some of the most respected names in the industry.

As a foundational organization at Seattle Center, the Space Needle has participated in countless civic celebrations and initiatives spanning government, sports, arts, and education. Jeff Wright, board member and member of the founding family, co-chaired the 2008 Century 21 Committee, which developed the Century 21 Master Plan—designed to revitalize Seattle Center as a more vibrant and inclusive community hub.

Beyond its physical presence, the Space Needle plays a meaningful role in the community, supporting a wide range of local causes and civic celebrations. Our ongoing mission is to partner with Seattle Center to sustain and expand our collective legacy as we move further into future years hinging on innovation and impact. We believe that strong public-private partnerships are essential to the campus's vitality, and we are committed to exploring opportunities that enhance both the visitor experience and community benefit.

At the Space Needle and Chihuly Garden and Glass, our core values prioritize innovation, people-first practices, and a problem-solving mindset. We aim to make a lasting, positive impact on our Guests, our Team, and our Community. This approach supports vibrant Guest experiences grounded by a respected local employer. Our compensation and benefits exceed local requirements, including wages above the Seattle Minimum Wage and comprehensive employee support.

The Space Needle contributes significantly to the broader community. Notable annual impacts (2024) include:

- **\$7.3M** in taxes to the City, County, and State
- **\$635,000+** in direct community support through the Space Needle Foundation
- Employment of **300+ Team Members**
- Ongoing operation under **LEED Silver Certification**

Chihuly Garden and Glass

Opened in 2012 through a partnership with the City of Seattle and Seattle Center, Chihuly Garden and Glass offers guests an immersive, world-class art experience. The exhibition has welcomed millions of visitors, earning its reputation as one of Seattle's top attractions and consistently ranking as the "#1 Thing to Do in Seattle" on TripAdvisor.

Since opening, it has strengthened Seattle Center's appeal and helped increase campus-wide visitation and engagement, including the addition of the Artist's Playground and three significant art installations: Feminine One II, Water's Edge and Walking Round Thing.

The exhibition contributes significantly to Seattle Center and the broader community. Notable annual impacts (2024) include:

- **\$3.3+ million** in financial contributions to the City, County, and State via taxes, rent, and fees
- **10,000+ free tickets** donated to local youth, education, and social service organizations
- **\$130,000+** in direct support to community and arts partners
- Employment for **130+ Team Members**
- Over **\$75,000** invested in a public art platform at Seattle Center
- Ongoing operation under **LEED Silver Certification** and active membership in the **Seattle 2030 District**, with recognition as a **Salmon-Safe** certified organization

Financial Soundness & Future Commitment

Both the Space Needle and Chihuly Garden and Glass are financially sound, consistently operating with long-term profitability. Should this proposal advance, we are prepared to discuss additional documentation required to demonstrate our financial strength.

Together, the Space Needle and Chihuly Garden and Glass are committed to supporting the future of Seattle Center as a vibrant, inclusive, and world-renowned destination. We look forward to continued collaboration, investment, and innovation for the benefit of our city and its residents.

References

Robert Nellams, Prior Seattle Center Director
nellamsr2007@comcast.net

Bob Donegan, Ivar's President & CEO
bobd@keepclam.com

B. PROJECT VISION

Provide a narrative that describes the project vision, and answers the questions, “why this project, why at Seattle Center, and why now?”

Explain how your proposal contributes to Seattle Center’s Purpose, complements the existing mix of attractions and partner organizations at Seattle Center, and enhances the Thomas Street gateway to the Seattle Center campus.

Our proposal aims to establish a vibrant open street market environment that invites visitors to extend their time at Seattle Center through delightful installations including artist activations through intentional performance spaces, shopping, and memorable local food.

Seattle Center’s current and future improvements, including Climate Pledge Arena, Memorial Stadium, and the Space Needle renovations draw increasing numbers of visitors to campus on a daily basis and warrant pedestrian corridors that are more than just a thoroughfare between venues. The Monorail and immediate surrounding attractions make Thomas Street the main connecting pedestrian corridor which can become an experience in itself. By intentionally activating this section of Thomas Street with the sights, sounds, and tastes of the Pacific Northwest, it underscores Seattle Center as a destination unto itself, supporting any other reason to visit for both tourists and locals alike.

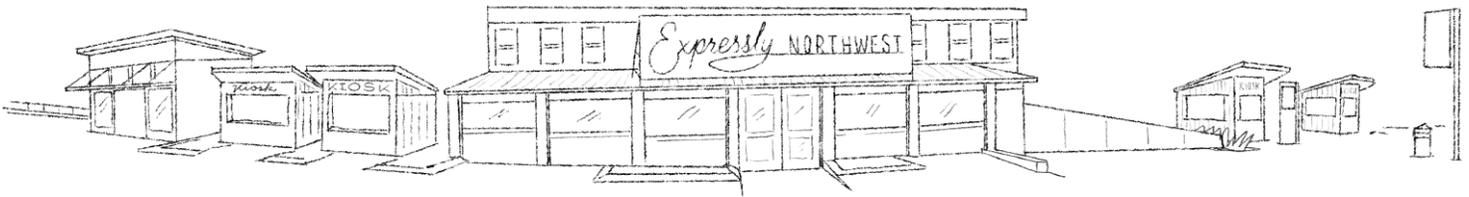


THOMAS STREET OPPORTUNITY



Thomas Street Updates

- 1** Two 10' kiosks added to the site, nestled between existing buildings.
- 2** Facelift to Expressly Northwest. New signage added and on the same plane as the front of the building. Potential new doors added facing the street. Re-sided and/or painted.
- 3** Retaining wall added to buffer sightlines and create a more welcoming side-door.
- 4** Replace existing kiosks with standardized versions that have stricter signage guidance.



Landscaping updates could include significant trimming and sculpting of trees – including removal – and additional planter boxes, seating, and hardscaping.



C. DEVELOPMENT PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Provide a narrative that describes the project vision, and answers the questions, “why this project, why at Seattle Center, and why now?”

Explain how your proposal contributes to Seattle Center’s Purpose, complements the existing mix of attractions and partner organizations at Seattle Center, and enhances the Thomas Street gateway to the Seattle Center campus.

A seasoned and passionate group of internal stakeholders familiar with the current Thomas Street experience conceptualized this proposal and will direct all aspects of development. This includes a dedicated Project Manager, VP of Food & Beverage, VP of Retail, Director of Marketing, Director of PR, and more. To support the design and implementation of the vision, the Space Needle will contract third party design firms and contractors familiar with work on Seattle Center campus and Space Needle operations.

Enhanced hardscape and landscaping will guide visitors along Thomas Street from MoPop to the Armory. Pacific Northwest-themed kiosks will be activated with local food offerings, while intentional settings for performance art will enhance the experience for the artists, the energy of the street market scene, and the audience passing by. A new facade on the Expressly Northwest retail store will integrate this existing structure into the sense of place created by these new installations.

Project design focuses on these key features:

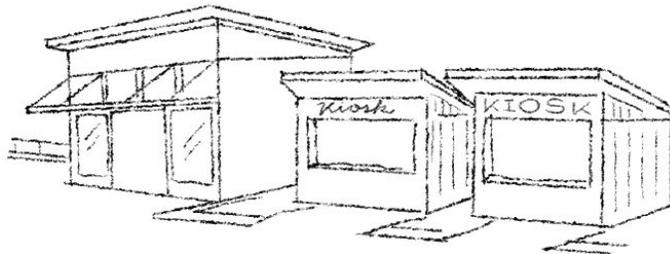
- Enhanced hardscape and landscaping will guide visitors along Thomas Street from MoPop to the Armory via an open street-market experience.
- Custom kiosks reflecting Pacific Northwest design will be placed within this space to draw visitors through the market area, each offering a unique experience of local food or retail offerings. Kiosks will be architecturally aligned with existing structures for a cohesive and elevated pedestrian-friendly experience that invites visitors to stop and engage in the market’s activities. Kiosks will be strategically placed to allow for ease of pedestrian flow and guide visitors into the corridor connecting Thomas Street to Artists at Play and Memorial Stadium. We are proposing either 4 or 6 kiosks depending upon a 5 or 10-year approach to this plan (see Lease Terms).
- The existing Expressly Northwest building will receive an upgraded facade and lighting to bring a new and refreshed feel, supporting the vibrancy of the Thomas Street enhancements.
- Intentional areas for performance art will be incorporated throughout, providing a quality experience for both artist and audience.

- New hard and softscape will provide visitors opportunities to sit and enjoy the environment of the market thus increasing dwell time and spend on Seattle Center campus.
- A new main entrance “gateway” welcoming visitors to campus that can be located on Thomas Street close to 5th Avenue or further west nearer the bollards between MoPop and the Space Needle with the opportunity to relocate upon further expansion of Thomas Street. This is an option available through the capital funds provided as part of this proposal.

Kiosk construction will take place primarily off-site. No onsite work will be planned until after Labor Day of 2026 so as to not disrupt pedestrian flow or building operations during the summer months.

In our proposal, there is no need to relocate the Monorail offices during or after construction.

Kiosks will be wood and steel-clad modified containers with pitched roofs that mimic the architecture of Essentially Seattle which exists west of Expressly Northwest on the site.



Existing **Space Needle TipTop** kiosk to be relocated to Thomas Street.



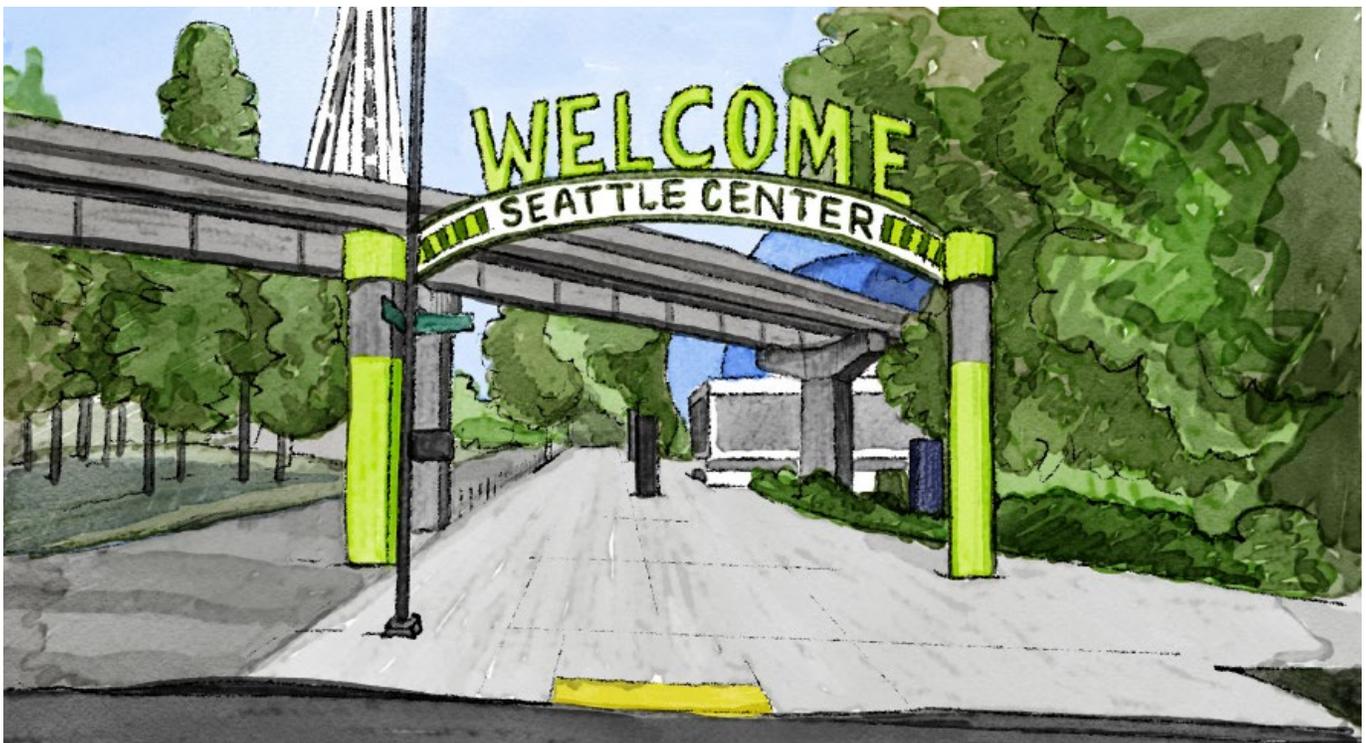
Hardscape and landscape that invites visitors to dwell while they shop, eat, and are entertained.



Possibility for a new **art installation** that is central to the Thomas Street Gateway and engages visitors.



A new welcome sign at the east entrance of Thomas Street makes a grand statement and establishes this entrance as a key hub of activity.



D. DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS

Describe how you will manage your proposed business and facility, including:

- *Days and hours of operation, staffing and activity plan, and/or event schedule.*
- *Your plan for communications, marketing, and branding.*
- *Your plan for routine and capital maintenance.*
- *Your vision for how your business and operations will interface with the operations of the Seattle Center campus and immediate surroundings at the site.*

Operation

The Space Needle team will oversee all day-to-day operations of the spaces it leases and will steward the strategic vision of the Thomas Street Experience. The core team will be a mix of our existing management team and dozens of full and part-time hourly Team Members who reflect the diversity of Seattle and the Pacific Northwest.

We propose a highly active operational plan for the permanent retail building space and kiosks with public hours extending from mid-morning to late evening. During winter, we anticipate our retail building and kiosks will be opening at 10 a.m. and closing at 7 p.m. During the shoulder seasons of the late spring and early Fall, we expect to operate from 9:30 a.m. – 8 p.m. The summer months, generally from Memorial Day to Labor Day, will see operating hours from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. Public hours may be adjusted to align with visitor demand. From time-to-time for special events or events at Climate Pledge Arena, we may implement earlier openings or later closings. Actual operating hours for the other kiosks will be determined by their leased tenants, although we anticipate those will closely mirror our planned operating hours.

Events

Special events will typically be scheduled well in advance in coordination with the leadership of Seattle Center. Programming of performance / busker locations would be managed, as it has been, by Seattle Center.

Marketing & Branding

In collaboration with Seattle Center, we will support the development of a strategic marketing plan to create awareness and visitation to this enhanced feature of the campus.

Maintenance

Our team includes 24/7 on-site security and facility support that will oversee our leased spaces and coordinate closely with Seattle Center to enhance year-round security in this portion of the campus.

Interface

Our goal is to invest in the future of Seattle Center by creating additional magnet areas and activities on the Seattle Center campus. Our proposal envisions a uniquely Seattle “Thomas Street Market” curated by the Space Needle and Seattle Center with kiosks featuring locally sourced food and retail, and the addition of accessible public art and garden vignettes. This would complement the current mix of seasonal, festival, and event programming by Seattle Center and campus residents.

E. LEASE TERMS

Outline the proposed lease terms and financial return to Seattle Center, including the one-time contribution to the public Thomas Street improvement project, per the Key Lease Terms outlined in Section 4.A.

This proposal includes the following investment assumptions:

- Space Needle fully funds the exterior improvements to the Expressly Northwest retail space.
- Space Needle fully funds the construction of kiosks, including electrical connections.
- Space Needle fully funds the creation of designated live performance areas.
- Space Needle provides Seattle Center with a one-time capital contribution to improve Thomas Street through landscaping and hardscaping, and other area improvements consistent with the Seattle Center campus vision. The Space Needle team will collaborate in the development of the plan utilizing this allocation.
- The resulting improvements will provide a dependable revenue stream to Seattle Center comprised of:
 - Annual base rent from the Expressly Northwest retail lease
 - Annual percentage rent from sales at Expressly Northwest
 - Annual base rent from each kiosk operation
 - Annual percentage rent from each kiosk operation
 - 2% of annual sales revenue from Expressly Northwest
 - 2% of annual sales revenue from each kiosk operation

We have approached our proposal from both a 5-year and a 10-year perspective, giving Seattle Center the option for the time frame that best supports the Seattle Center 10-year vision.

Financial compensation to Seattle Center from each of these revenue streams is detailed on the next page.

5 YEAR PLAN

All terms are open to negotiation and are offered as a framework for discussion.

EXPRESSLY NORTHWEST

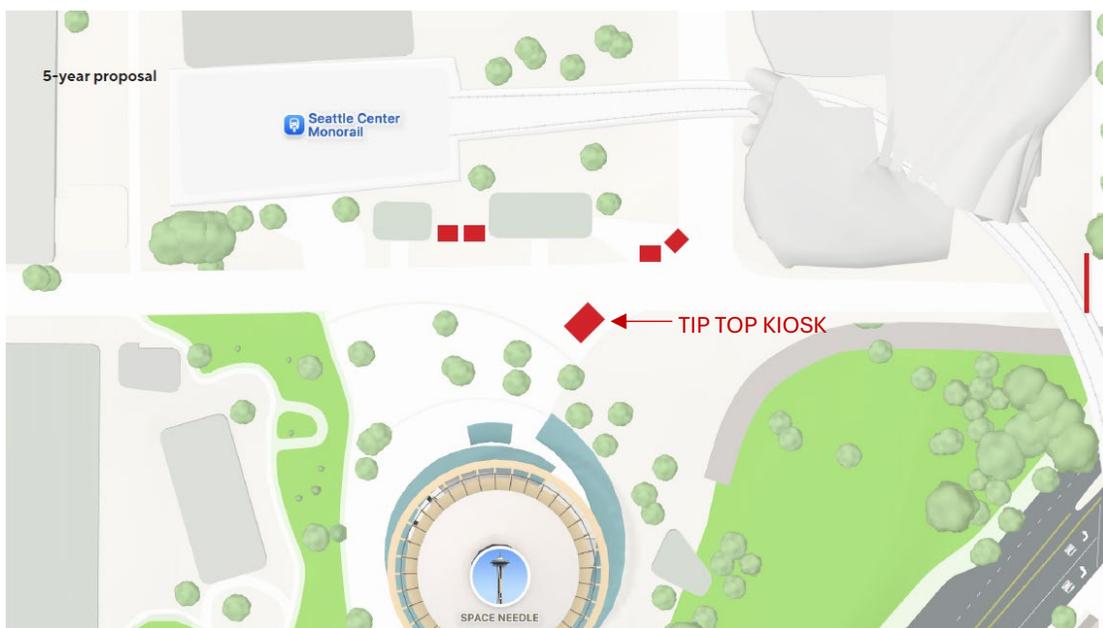
- Annual Base Rent: \$100,000 in 2026 plus annual increases linked to the Seattle area CPI
- % of Revenue Rent: 18% of Expressly Northwest revenue + 2.0% campus fee
- We estimate that this rent structure would result in total payments to Seattle Center of \$1.29M from Expressly Northwest over the 2026-2030 period

KIOSKS

- Space Needle to construct four (4) Kiosks. The Space Needle would operate two kiosks and provide two kiosks to Seattle Center
- Annual Base Rent: \$20,000 per kiosk beginning in 2027 plus annual increases linked to the Seattle area CPI
- % of Revenue Rent: 12% of revenue from the Kiosks the Space Needle operates + 2.0% campus fee
- We estimate that this rent structure would result in total payments to Seattle Center of \$725,000 from the two Kiosks the Space Needle operates

ONE TIME CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT

- The Space Needle proposes making the following one-time capital investments:
 - ✓ Thomas Street Redevelopment Fund: \$500,000
 - ✓ Expressly Northwest Building Freshening: \$150,000
- The Space Needle is open to increasing the up-front capital commitment in exchange for lower annual rents



10 YEAR PLAN

All terms are open to negotiation and are offered as a framework for discussion.

EXPRESSLY NORTHWEST

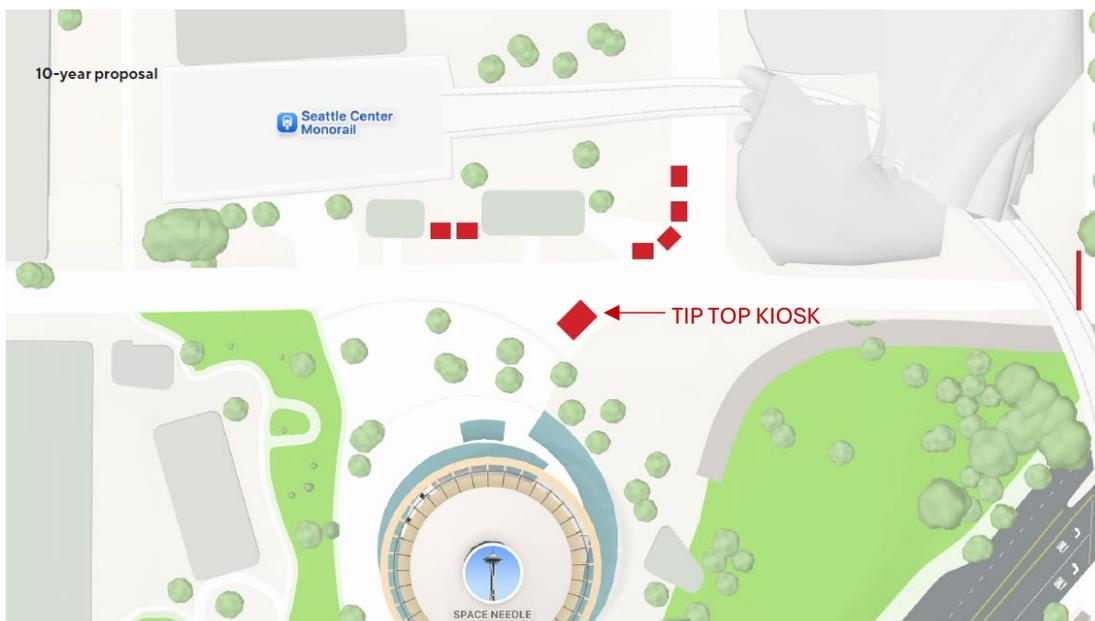
- Annual Base Rent: \$100,000 in 2026 plus annual increases linked to the Seattle area CPI
- % of Revenue Rent: 18% of Expressly Northwest revenue + 2.0% campus fee
- We estimate that this rent structure would result in total payments to Seattle Center of \$2.87M from Expressly Northwest over the 2026-2035 period

KIOSKS

- Space Needle to construct six (6) Kiosks. The Space Needle would operate three kiosks and provide three kiosks to Seattle Center
- Annual Base Rent: \$20,000 per kiosk beginning in 2027 plus annual increases linked to the Seattle area CPI
- % of Revenue Rent: 12% of revenue from the Kiosks the Space Needle operates + 2.0% campus fee
- We estimate that this rent structure would result in total payments to Seattle Center of \$2.22M from the three Kiosks the Space Needle operates over the 2027-2036 period

ONE TIME CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT

- The Space Needle proposes making the following one-time capital investments:
 - ✓ Thomas Street Redevelopment Fund: \$1,000,000
 - ✓ Expressly Northwest Building Freshening: \$150,000
- The Space Needle is open to increasing the up-front capital commitment in exchange for lower annual rents



F. PROJECT FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Provide specific information about the financial strategy to implement your proposal from development through operations, including the following elements:

- *Development budget detailing all anticipated costs including hard costs, soft costs, and contingencies.*
- *Sources and uses statement that identifies all funding sources (equity, debt, grants, revenues) and their specific applications within the project.*
- *Operating pro forma detailing projected income and expenses over the specified period, accounting for factors like rent escalations, staffing, and maintenance costs.*
- *Financing strategy outlining your approach to securing necessary funding, including timelines for obtaining commitments and any assumptions made.*

Capital funding for this project including all of the elements previously outlined will come from existing operating revenues without the need for separate funding.

The Space Needle and Chihuly Garden and Glass will operate its leased spaces in the Thomas Street corridor with the same approach as we do for our core businesses. All other leased spaces will be managed by Seattle Center, in accordance with its current leasing policies for campus vendors.

G. PROPOSER FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Provide audited financial statements for each of the last five years as proof of financial stability.

If you have experience with the type of programming being proposed, we ask that you submit related financial data for the past experience(s) to strengthen your proposal.

Both the Space Needle and Chihuly Garden and Glass are financially sound privately held entities, which consistently operate with long-term profitability. Should this proposal advance, we are prepared to provide additional documentation as required to demonstrate our financial strength.

H. PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

Under the State of Washington’s Public Records Act (reference RCW Chapter 42.56, the “Public Records Act”), all materials received, used, or created by the City of Seattle are considered public records. These records include, but are not limited to, the Proposal submittals, agreement documents, contract work product, or other Proposal materials.

The Public Records Act requires that public records must be promptly disclosed by the City upon request, unless the records are specifically exempted under the Public Records Act. A list and description of records identified as exempt by the Public Records Act can be found in RCW 42.56 and RCW 19.108. If you believe any of the records you are submitting to the City as part of your Proposal are exempt from disclosure, you can request that the City notify you before releasing the records. To do so, you must very clearly and specifically identify in your submittal each record and the exemption(s) that may apply. If the City receives a public disclosure request for any records you have properly and specifically identified, the City will notify you in writing of the request and will postpone disclosure. While it is not a legal obligation, the City, as a courtesy, will allow you up to ten business days to file a court injunction to prevent the City from releasing the records (reference RCW 42.56.540). If you fail to obtain a Court order within the ten days, the City may release the documents. The City will NOT assert an exemption on your behalf.