



FAIR PARK
TEXAS DISCOVERY GARDENS
AND
HALL OF STATE
PROSPECTIVE FUTURE TENANT
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION
#9-292023.1

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Response due: November 10, 2023, 2pm

Fair Park First is publishing a Request for Information (RFI) for organizations interested in opportunities for tenancy at Fair Park’s Texas Discovery Gardens (formerly the Hall of Horticulture) and the Hall of State. This RFI is intended to attract business owners and institutions who share a common vision and innovative ideas for activating Fair Park.

Proposals will be considered for uses such as recreational, civic, cultural, educational, entertainment, arts, retail, food and beverage, and other park-activating uses.

FAIR PARK

Fair Park is a 135-year-old public park approximately three (3) miles southeast of downtown Dallas on a 277-acre plot of land. The Park has an impressive list of accolades—the site of the 1936 Texas Centennial Exposition and the 1937 World’s Fair, one of the largest collections of Art Deco art and architecture in the United States, and a National Historic Landmark on par with the Alamo.

Fair Park is a complex site with a complex history. Fair Park was originally established in 1886 as the grounds for the first State Fair of Texas—now the largest state fair in the country. In 1904, the land was acquired by the City of Dallas and became Dallas’s second public park and one of the nation’s largest urban parks at the time. Over the ensuing decades, the campus continued to evolve and grow with the addition of a 3,500-seat theater, livestock coliseum, and the acclaimed Cotton Bowl, which at the time was the largest stadium in the South.

The site’s biggest transformation came in 1936 when Fair Park was selected to host the Texas Centennial Exposition, celebrating the 100th anniversary of Texas’s independence from Mexico. Within fourteen months, the campus transformed from an early twentieth-century fairground into a crowning example of Art Deco and “Texanic” design. The campus saw the addition of several new buildings for the event as well as the renovation of existing structures to match the new Art Deco style of the Park. Among the improvements to the Park, included the addition of hundreds of murals and sculptures by renowned artists and craftsmen from across Texas and abroad. Dallas’s first Cultural District was established on the ground that included an art museum, aquarium, outdoor amphitheater, and a natural history museum, among others. After the 1936 and 1937 world fairs, approximately 40% of the art and architecture were removed or torn down. The remaining structures became event and performance venues, cultural attractions, sporting arenas, and museums.

FAIR PARK FIRST

Since 1988, the City of Dallas’s Parks and Recreation department managed the Fair Park campus. In 2017 and 2018 the City of Dallas fostered a competitive process to select a non-profit organization that would manage Fair Park. Fair Park First was selected through a lengthy evaluation, review, and public process to become the City of Dallas’ partner. Fair Park First, in partnership with Spectra (now OVG360), Biederman Redevelopment Ventures (BRV), and In the City For Good, was selected and awarded the contract on October 24, 2018.

After the transition period, Fair Park First began the daily management of Fair Park on January 1, 2019. Fair Park First engaged Spectra through a sub-management agreement to serve as the daily operator. BRV and In The City For Good are providing defined services and scopes of work related to public programming, community outreach, and park-related project management through sub-consulting agreements.

Fair Park First, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, has entered a 20-year Management Agreement with the City of Dallas as Private Managers of Fair Park. Fair Park is home to many resident institutions, such as the African American Museum, Dallas Summer Musicals, Texas Discovery Gardens, and the State Fair of Texas, in addition to many other major events and daily attractions. As the Manager of Fair Park, Fair Park First sets policy and direction with OVG360 as the Operator.

Fair Park First has adopted four key pillars: Activation, History, Community, and Culture.

- **Activation** involves bringing more visitors to the park on a daily and weekly basis for community programming, recreation, and events.
- **History** respects and protects Fair Park's National Historic Landmark status, with the largest collection of Art Deco architecture on one campus, while also being home to historically significant venues and events.
- **Community** requires a deeper connection to the local neighborhood residents with significant, thoughtful, and sustainable ways of creating a mutually beneficial relationship.
- **Culture** enhances the current resident institutions, the collection of period visual and tactile art, as well as, creating a new destination for residents near and far.

Fair Park and its buildings are owned by the City of Dallas and managed through a Public-Private Partnership. Fair Parks First intends to repopulate various unoccupied historic facilities on campus with unique offerings, unlike anything in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. Fair Park First is seeking organizations and operators that share in the collective vision that Fair Park is the crown jewel of the City of Dallas Park Systems, shining brightly as a destination for locals and visitors alike. Fair Park First desires operators who understand the dynamics of a year-round destination and who maintain and update their operations to attract new and repeat visitors.

Fair Park First asks that all potential organizations include diversity and equity opportunities in all contracting and purchasing activities for the life of the lease term. We are also requesting that organizations understand the importance of inclusion and be willing to welcome all residents and visitors to the Park and their respective venues. It is a new day at Fair Park and our goal is to be representative of the entire community.

To ensure that proposed usages align with the activation, historical preservation, and cultural goals at Fair Park, a process has been developed to evaluate the viability of proposed uses and establish an initial timeline for the Fair Park First Board's consideration and approval. Outlined below is an overview of the process and the anticipated timeline for the Fair Park First Board to review and make its recommendations.

AVAILABLE FACILITIES

The following buildings are currently available for tenancy:

- **Texas Discovery Gardens** Approximately 32,000 square feet
- **Hall of State** Approximately 50,570 square feet

TEXAS DISCOVERY GARDENS

Texas Discovery Gardens is located at 3601 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Dallas, TX 75210. The current facilities are approximately 32,000 square feet and sit on approximately 7.5 acres of organic gardens. The site features a butterfly house and insectarium, a snake and reptile shack, an outdoor playground, a greenhouse, an art gallery, classrooms, offices, and the only remaining “Houses of the Future” from the 1936 Centennial – the Portland Cement House. The building was originally built in 1936 for the Texas Centennial Exposition as the Hall of Horticulture. Designed by Arthur E. Thomas and M. C. Kleuser, it is made of Cordova cream limestone and San Saba marble. The building has seen extensive remodeling that was carried out in the 1950s, the late 1980s, and the mid-2000s.

The building and grounds are currently tenanted by Texas Discovery Gardens, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational organization. The building is available to rent for events of all kinds.

HALL OF STATE

The Hall of State is located at 3939 Grand Ave, Dallas, TX 75210, and is approximately 50,570 square feet. The Hall of State was built in 1936 to commemorate the Texas Centennial and is considered the “crown jewel” of the Centennial. The structure, designed by eleven Texas architects, is dedicated to four centuries of Texas history and is considered one of the best examples of Art Deco architecture in the State. The walls are surfaced with Texas limestone and numerous works of art are found along the exterior and throughout the interior of the building. The building includes the Great Hall, the Hall of Heroes, four regional rooms of Texas, a library, a reception room, a lecture hall, offices, and workrooms. Each of the regional rooms is decorated with murals reflecting the character and history of its area. The Great Hall, or the Hall of the Six Flags, has a forty-six-foot-high ceiling with murals on the north and south walls depicting the history of the State and its industrial, cultural, and agricultural progress. The Hall of State underwent renovations in 1989 and was fully restored in 2021.

The building is currently tenanted by the Dallas Historical Society, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The building is available to rent for events of all kinds.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

To be considered as a possible long-term tenant at Fair Park respondents are required to provide Fair Park First with the following:

- The official name, address, contact information, and type of business/entity that is applying for a potential lease at Fair Park
- Vision and Mission Statements

- An Executive Summary, detailing the anticipated usage and purpose for the specific property they are interested in occupying (facility usage concepts should look to drive incremental attendance and/or enhance the cultural, recreational, and entertainment offerings at Fair Park)
- Proposed renderings and/or plans, including anticipated square footage needs, for facility improvements
- Demonstrated ability to fund all costs related to submittal of a proposal including, but not limited to, permit, design, application fees, etc. arising from the RFI process
- The minimum requested lease term
- A detailed business plan inclusive of the following:
 - Management Team – Bios and resumes
 - Partners
 - Consultants
 - Investors
 - Financiers
 - Company history – list of all current locations
 - Products and Services
 - List and description of offerings
 - Price Points
 - Strategy
 - Financial plan
 - Revenue Forecast
 - A proposed organizational chart for full and part-time positions including administrative, operations, marketing, event coordination, and security
 - For foundations and institutions:
 - An outline of anticipated fundraising initiatives and a list of potential or existing supporters/donors
 - Last year's 990 Form, if applicable
 - 5-year Profit and Loss projections
 - Budgets: Buildout, startup runway, operational
 - Sources of capital
 - Marketing plan – Position, pricing, promotions, etc.
 - Anticipated annual attendance
 - Target Markets
 - Market overview and needs assessment
 - Market competition and SWOT analysis
 - Design Philosophy
 - What is the look, feel, and aesthetic of your proposed business?
 - Mood Board encouraged
 - Milestones
 - Proposed timeline to opening date and operations
- An operational sustainability plan to ensure proper facility maintenance and operations

- A contingency plan for potential shortfalls in funding and/or revenues
- Acknowledgement that the potential tenants will be solely responsible for their own event-related expenses including parking/street closures, security, and cleaning/janitorial. In addition, tenants must be willing to share in expenses related to coordinated events on the Fair Park campus
- A demonstrated ability to adhere to National Historic Landmark and City of Dallas Landmark Commission rules, regulations, and historical preservation requirements
- Acknowledgement that potential tenant understands Fair Park is a multi-purpose entertainment complex and their anticipated usage must work within/complement the revised Master Plan and new neighborhood park(s). As such, access to facilities and parking areas may be limited during certain events/times
- The ability for Fair Park First/OVG360 to utilize, and/or rent to a third party, any leased facility, free of rental charges, for a mutually agreed-upon number of annual events
- Applicants should respond to each of the requests outlined above

QUESTIONS AND REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Questions, requests for clarification, additional information, etc. should be addressed in writing to: Alyssa Arnold at alyssa.arnold@fairparkfirst.org

SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

Submit your proposal packet in PDF format to Alyssa Arnold at alyssa.arnold@fairparkfirst.org

REVIEW PROCESS

- Fair Park First will determine, through a third-party commercial real estate firm, the market value of select unoccupied buildings on the Fair Park campus
- Fair Park First will review the RFI submissions, determine if the appropriate information has been provided, and notify respondents if additional information is required
- Fair Park First, in conjunction with its partners OVG360, will assess the submitted materials to determine the feasibility of each proposed usage based on the following general criteria:
 - Integration into the updated Master Plan for Fair Park
 - Commercial viability and the ability to increase Fair Park visitors and revenue opportunities
 - Enhancement of cultural offerings and unique entertainment options
 - Long term sustainability
 - Alignment with City of Dallas BID goals
 - Completeness of response to the RFI process as outlined in this package

SELECTION AND NOTIFICATION

- Fair Park First will make its recommendations to the FPF Board for approval
- Selected and Non-selected respondents will be notified of the status of their proposal via email

FINAL APPROVAL

- Upon Fair Park First Board approval proposed plans will be submitted to the City of Dallas Park and Recreation Department and/or Landmark Commission for review and recommendation with final approval by the Dallas City Council
 - Timeline for review and final approval by the above TBD
 - Once a final selection has been vetted and approved by the above, all decisions are final and not subject to dispute or appeal