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Wheeling Gateway Center Releases Design and Engineering Request for Proposal

WHEELING, W.Va. – August 23, 2023 – The Wheeling Convention Visitor's Bureau (CVB) released the highly anticipated Wheeling Gateway Center request for proposal for architecture and engineering professionals for the redevelopment of the former Knights Inn / Wheeling Inn Motel at 949 Main Street, Wheeling, WV.

A site tour for professionals interested in forming a project team, and providing a proposal is scheduled for Tuesday, August 29th at 2:30 PM until 5:00 PM. Interested parties are asked to RSVP to createchange@tippingpointdev.com so that the project team can ensure all have equal time and access to the property.

The site is immediately next to the City's most iconic landmark, the historic Suspension Bridge which will set the stage for enhanced tourism and economic growth in the panhandle region of West Virginia. The redevelopment effort will transform the City of Wheeling's primary entrance from the I-70 corridor.

The CVB is also collaborating with the City of Wheeling, Regional Economic Development Partnership (RED), Wheeling Heritage, the Wheeling National Heritage Area Foundation and have hired Sustainable Strategies DC to help secure the necessary funds that will make this project possible.

Frank O'Brien, Executive Director of the CVB, shared the enthusiasm to expand the Northern Panhandle's contributions to West Virginia's tourism and economic development strategy.

"The redevelopment of this site into a Visitor's Center is expected to have a profound state and regional impact, boosting tourism, fostering economic development, and preserving Wheeling and West Virginia's historical legacy. Wheeling's history is rich, and this project will ensure it's showcased for generations to come, said O'Brien."

Robert Herron, the City Manager of Wheeling added, "We're absolutely thrilled the Gateway Center is moving forward, and will serve as a key element to compliment Governor Justice's 2020 streetscape project along the Main and Market Street corridors. The Center will be the first experience people have when they exit from I-70 onto Main Street, and now our top priority is to remove this blighted structure, while properly preparing the site and identifying the building footprint for the future Visitor's and Heritage Center. These are exciting times."



The future Wheeling Gateway will also contain a major Heritage component, which will celebrate Wheeling's rich history dating all the way back to America's colonial era. The Wheeling Suspension Bridge is a National Historic Landmark and the oldest of its kind in use.

"As one of 62 National Heritage areas in the United States, it is important we provide visitors to the center with an experience that is memorable and celebrates the city of Wheeling's rich history, and relationship to the National Park Service. The Wheeling National Heritage Area strategically works hard to shape our future through historic preservation, community development and the arts. We have an opportunity to create an experience unlike any other in the State of West Virginia," said Scott Schenerlein, Executive Director of Wheeling Heritage.

The project has garnered significant support from various stakeholders, including members of Congress, which is underscored by Senator Joe Manchin's allocation of \$5 million from the Senate Appropriations Committee. This investment, coupled with the state's recent focus on enhancing state parks and forests, highlights Wheeling's potential as a hub for ecotourism and historical exploration.

The CVB purchased the hotel at 949 Main St. in January of 2023. In July, the Wheeling National Heritage Area Foundation announced it entered into a contract in partnership with the CVB and real estate development consultant Tipping Point for the project.

Tipping Point's expertise in community engagement, financial modeling, familiarity with Wheeling through the completion of other projects, and ability to integrate all project stakeholder's requirements into a redevelopment plan will be instrumental in steering the project through all phases of the project.

However, the project is not without its challenges. The proximity of the five-story structure to the historic Wheeling Suspension Bridge, coupled with its location near a cliff, presents unique structural and environmental challenges.

"This project represents a pivotal moment for Wheeling, Ohio County and the State of West Virginia's future," expressed Jim Ambrose, President of Tipping Point. "We are honored to be running point on all necessary steps to properly advance the project moving forward. Right now, it is the community's number one objective to safely remediate and demolish the existing structure next to the Suspension Bridge, and this request for proposal is the first step in achieving that."

About Wheeling Heritage:

[Wheeling Heritage](#) is a catalyst for the revitalization of Wheeling. Through historic preservation, community development, and the arts, we help to tell Wheeling's story and shape its future. We seek to improve the quality of life in Wheeling by preserving and investing in our city, collaborating with others, and engaging the citizens of Wheeling in our work.



About Tipping Point

Tipping Point is a commercial real estate developer that acts as a catalyst for real change by celebrating public funding, job creation, and community impact. By putting city officials and their constituents ahead of investments and ROI, we aim to unlock a neighborhood's highest potential through real estate development. For areas that need revitalization, we believe the power to rebuild starts with the people and its representatives. More information is available at <https://www.tippingpointdev.com>.