

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Executive Office of the Mayor
Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Monday, February 3, 2014

CONTACTS: Chanda Washington (DMPED) [202.727.6365](tel:202.727.6365); chanda.washington@dc.gov

Mayor Gray Announces Selection of Team to Redevelop the Historic Franklin School

Institute for Contemporary Expression-DC Team Wins Bid

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) – Mayor Vincent C. Gray today announced the selection of the team of Institute for Contemporary Expression and EastBanc Inc. (ICE-DC) to rehabilitate and reuse the historic Franklin School, located in Downtown D.C. in Ward 2. The proposed development will bring an exciting new cultural use unlike any other in the District to a building of great historic and architectural significance that has sat fallow for too long.

“Franklin School is a historic treasure, and we are excited to have a team that will preserve its character while also creating an innovative, cultural experience for the surrounding community and the District as a whole,” said Mayor Gray. **“It will complement and enhance the District’s already vibrant cultural offerings.”**

ICE-DC will restore the building’s exterior and original interior details, while transforming the rehabilitated building into exhibit space for contemporary art, sculpture, installations and performances. The proposed development also includes adult and student art education programs, a new restaurant and café, and an arts bookstore. Further, ICE-DC plans to work closely with the National Park Service (NPS) and the District to integrate art and to coordinate educational programs and events in the redesigned Franklin Square Park. The team demonstrates the skills and experience to successfully lead the rehabilitation and reuse of the Franklin School, and offers learning and training opportunities for District residents interested in contemporary art, curatorial practice and culinary art.

“With the completion of this selection process we are now a step closer to revitalizing Franklin School and giving it a new life,” said Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development Victor L. Hoskins. “It will create new jobs and provide educational and mentoring programs as well as new retail amenities. It will also create a new destination and tourist attraction in synergy with Franklin Square Park.”

The Franklin School, located at 925 13th Street NW, is listed on the DC Inventory of Historic Sites and the National Register of Historic Places at the highest level of designation as a National Historic Landmark. Built in 1869, the Franklin School was the flagship school in a group of seven modern urban buildings constructed as the first to house a comprehensive system of free universal public education in the District. The building was the site of Alexander Graham Bell’s photo-phone experiments in 1876, housed the city’s first high school in 1880, and became the administrative headquarters of the District school system from 1928 until 1968. From 1969 until 1990, the building served as an Adult Education Center. Currently vacant, the District’s goal is to restore the building to showcase this unique structure and pay homage to its history.

The Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was issued by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) in April of 2013. DMPED then issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) in July of 2013 to qualified teams who responded to the RFQ. Responses were received in October of 2013 and community presentations were made at the end of October. As part of the first steps of the disposition process, the District will commence negotiations with the selected team over the next several weeks.

For additional information on the original RFQ and RFP, please visit [here](#).