

Developers bid on Tampa residential, hotel projects

By [Michael Sasso](#)

TAMPA — Two developers who already have ambitious projects in downtown Tampa are shooting for their second act, by planning separate hotel and multifamily residential projects in Ybor City.

The would-be hotel developer, [Liberty Group](#), already is busy developing the boutique [Aloft hotel](#) on the Hillsborough River. Meantime, the would-be multifamily developer, Intown/Framework Group, is already working on the 36-story [Residences at the Riverwalk](#) near the David A. Straz Jr. Center for the Performing Arts.

In the fall, the city of Tampa invited developers to bid on two city-owned pieces of land in Tampa's historic Ybor City district. The city pitched a parcel at the northeast corner of Nuccio Parkway and Seventh Avenue as a hotel site. It's next to the Volunteers of America building and the Marti-Maceo building.

The second parcel is at the northwest corner of 12th Avenue and North 17th Street in Ybor City, suitable for apartments or condominiums, the city said.

The idea is to generate some activity on underutilized city land and also to bring new residents into Ybor City, said Bob McDonough, the city's administrator of economic opportunity.

On Tuesday, the city announced it received two bids for the potential hotel property, from Liberty Group and a new entity called YC Hospitality. The latter company is a joint venture between a hotel developer, the Phoenix Group, and the adjacent landowner, Volunteers of America, said Phoenix Vice President Arnold Gitten, who's based in Miami.

No one was sharing information on the bids Tuesday. The city cited a state statute keeping sealed bids confidential for a period of time, an official from Liberty Group couldn't be reached for comment and Gitten said he wasn't at liberty to comment.

Gitten did say Ybor City needs more hotels, but he wouldn't say how high-end his potential hotel would be.

The multifamily land received just one bid from Intown/Framework Group, a partnership between Phillip Smith and his Framework Group and Greg Minder and his intowngroup. The partnership already is behind the Residences at the Riverwalk, a 36-story apartment tower that overcame strong opposition to win city approval last year. Intowngroup also developed the Skypoint and Element towers downtown.

McDonough, the city official, said he and a group of other city officials including Mayor Bob Buckhorn may choose the winning bidders for the two projects within a couple weeks.

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