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City seeks ideas for office-to-residential conversion projects

By [JOURNAL STAFF](#)

The Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development is asking building owner/architect teams to submit ideas for commercial office-to-residential conversion projects, with added activated ground floor uses, in downtown Seattle. The deadline for entries is April 28.

This Call for Ideas is being initiated to explore the potential for development downtown and comes at a challenging time for the office market which is dealing with the after effects of the pandemic and the new world of hybrid work. It also follows on the heels of recent legislation in Portland aimed at encouraging and making office-to-residential conversions more streamlined.

In a blog post, OPCD said “teams are invited to share innovative solutions that will identify obstacles to conversion and lead to potential policy and regulatory changes.” All qualified entries will be displayed at the Seattle Convention Center in late May. Every submittal meeting the minimum required contents will also receive a nominal honorarium. The top three scoring submissions will be honored with the following amounts: highest scoring submittal will receive \$10,000 and the two second place entries will receive \$7,500.

“We seek visions for Downtown that celebrate the intersection between residential, business, and civic activities,” Rico Quirindongo, Acting Director of OPCD, said in the blog post. “We will foster ideas that expand the concept of Downtown as a vibrant residential neighborhood, in addition to its history as a place of commerce, entertainment and tourism. Together we can foster a bright future for Downtown residents and a neighborhood welcoming to all.”

Competition details and submittal criteria is at <https://www.seattle.gov/opcd/office-to-residential>.

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