

Request for Proposals

For the Redevelopment of the Riverside Square Site

Issued by City of East Providence, Community Development Office

I. VISION STATEMENT

The Riverside community envisions revitalizing its “Main Street” (Bullocks Point Avenue) with an “Arts District” feel consisting of work/live spaces, galleries, restaurants, small first floor retail, music venues, and dynamic public spaces. It would be a destination for creative expression complementing the existing recreational amenities of Larisa and Sabin Point waterfront Parks, the Loof Carousel (on the National Register of Historic Landmarks) and the most popular bike path in R.I., the East Bay Bike Path which goes right through Riverside’s village styled square and runs adjacent to the back of this property. It would also provide a destination for those that will occupy the 1,500 residential units of current and proposed waterfront development off Veterans’ Memorial Parkway.

II. INTRODUCTION

The City of East Providence is requesting proposals from development firms for the purchase and re-development of city owned land on the corner of Fenner Avenue & Bullocks Point Avenue.

The development of this property into its best and highest use is the city’s main objective, not its sales price. The existing small businesses that support the neighboring residential area are just starting to flourish. A significant initiative is planned to be implemented this fall through the collaboration between the City, RI Department of transportation, and RI Department of Environmental Management. Major landscaping, patios for events with portable stages, statues and decorative lighting are all planned as a part of the improvements to be implemented. This development of this property is seen as a significant influence and accelerator of the Square’s revitalization.

The City's contiguous parcels 20, 21 and 22, on City of East Providence Tax Assessor's Map 312, Block 12 are located at the corner of Bullocks Point Avenue and Fenner Avenue, Providence County, Rhode Island and are collectively herein called "The Riverside Square Site". The purchase and redevelopment of this site is to support the mixed income housing and economic development goals within the City's Consolidated and Comprehensive Plans.

This site consists of approximately 19,089 square feet of land bounded by Bullocks Point Avenue, Fenner Avenue and the East Bay Bike Path. This site has been provided with special zoning to provide parking requirement relief and permits being 3 stories high. It allows for a mixed-use development (See attached Division 18 Riverside Square Mixed Use-District Overlay Sections 359-360 of the Zoning Ordinance). Other dimensional and zoning use descriptions are provided in Section 19-98 and Section 19-145 of the City of East Providence Zoning Ordinance, which is available at City Hall or may be downloaded from the City's website <http://www.eastprovidence.com/> Resources → City Ordinance on-line → City Code → Chapter 19 Zoning. This zoning includes lower parking space requirements and allows for building up to 3 stories high.

Proposals must meet all development standards established under the City's Land Development and Subdivision Review Regulations, and must be in conformance with the City's current Consolidated and Comprehensive Plans.

A mandatory onsite meeting (corner of Fenner and Bullocks Point Avenues) is scheduled for **THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2020 at 11am** with all interested development firms for an opportunity to discuss the project with city officials.

All of the existing structures have been removed and environmental remediation of VOC in the soil completed. A soil Management Plan, Deed Restriction, and an Interim Letter of Compliance from Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) exists for the property as an outcome of the remediation process. The final Letter of Compliance can be issued by DEM only after the redevelopment of the site.

III. DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

The City has the following incentives to stimulate the investment of capital that advances the City's community goals:

1. INVESTMENT IN PRIVATE PROPERTY

Private property owners in the immediate area have indicated significant interest in selling their properties. The City's goal is to have maximum impact toward revitalizing the square thus encourages the inclusion of the purchase and redevelopment of as many other privately owned properties as feasible within their proposals. The City is willing to accept a reduced sales price for its property as an incentive for inclusion of privately owned properties within a developer's proposal. The purchase price that the City will accept will have a direct relationship to the degree that the proposal advances the City's housing and economic development goals in the Riverside Square neighborhood.

2. CITY TAX STABILIZATION

The City offers tax stabilization for expansion or renovation of any existing facility, construction of a new facility, the addition of tangible business property, or leasehold improvements, excepting instances where the proposed taxable improvements are in excess of \$5,000,000, the percentage of new added taxable assessment shall be stabilized in accordance with the tax exemption schedule of 100% in the first year and reducing 20% each subsequent year over a total period of 6 years.

The minimum threshold for participation in the stabilization program by existing eligible properties is \$150,000 in taxable improvements as determined by the city tax assessor. The minimum threshold for new eligible and tangible business equipment is \$500,000. In addition, applicants for stabilization of tangible business equipment must document the creation or relocation of no fewer than 10 full time equivalent jobs (FTE's) to receive stabilization.

3. SMALL BUSINESS LOAN PROGRAMS

The City of East Providence offers a low interest (20 percent below prime) commercial loan program for either commercial or industrial businesses to finance the acquisition, construction and improvements of land or buildings and for the purchase of capital equipment. The Commercial Loan Program is available to business currently located in or relocating to East Providence and provides funding from \$10,000 to \$100,000, at a variable rate adjusted annually, with a maximum payback term of 15 years.

The East Providence also offers a Commercial Microloan Program to finance lease hold improvements, startup expenses, operating expenses and/or to purchase assets for businesses with five (5) or fewer employees, which are unable to obtain a loan through banks and other commercial lending sources. To be eligible for a Microloan, a business owner must reside in the City and meet

HUD income guidelines. Microloans are available for up to \$10,000 at an interest rate of prime rate plus one point, fixed over the term of the loan, with a maximum payback term of 5 years.

4. **SPECIAL ZONING OVERLAY**

This site has been provided with special zoning to provide parking requirement relief, permits being 3 stories high, and allows mix-use. Please refer to Section II above for access to the Zoning Ordinance.

IV. **REGULATORY COMPLIANCE**

Community Development Block Grant Funds have been invested in this project causing housing **and/or** job creation criteria to apply regarding its reuse. Other block grant regulations apply such as prevailing wage rates.

Regarding reuse for-sale or rental housing, at least 51% of all units developed must be occupied by households with combined gross incomes equal to or below 80% of area median income. The 2020 income cap for a household of 2 is currently \$55,700 and \$69,600 for a household of 4.

Regarding job creation, a minimum of 6.5 full time equivalent jobs would have to be created of which 51% would be available to low to moderate income persons based on current published HUD income limits adjusted for household size.

The successful party will be required to enter into a Developer's Agreement with the City that will define in detail the specific obligations and responsibilities of the City and the Developer as it relates to the redevelopment and ultimate transfer of the title of the property to the Developer.

The property is a Brownfields site that has been cleaned and has Interim Compliance with the RI Department of Environmental Management. Full compliance is realized once the property is fully developed.

Additional information on this property is available from the Community Development Office located at 145 Taunton Avenue on the third floor, East Providence, RI 02914. Inquiries should be directed to David Bachrach, 401.435.7536, dbachrach@eastprovidenceri.gov

V. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Responses to this RFP shall include the following information:

1. AGENCY INFORMATION

- Name of firm
- Business address, including city, state, zip code and phone/fax number
- Contact person phone and e-mail who can respond to detailed questions regarding their firm's proposal
- Indicate whether or not incorporated and if so, when
- If not incorporated, name of owner(s)
- Indicate if you ever defaulted on a contract and if so, where and why
- Certify your firm is not currently on the Federal Excluded Parties List

2. DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

Development Options:

Describe why specific development options were chosen over others such as, town houses, apartments, senior living, live/work, artist studios, etc. Provide supporting information & data justifying why the proposed development option will be successfully and sustainably occupied.

Property Description:

Describe in as much detail the buildings envisioned for this site including but not limited to; building layout on the site relative to the bike path and/or square, interior and exterior uses, # and square feet of units, location of various uses (such as residential and retail), access (pedestrian & vehicle), façade style, etc.

Development Benefit:

Describe the benefits the development of this site will create such as: green building, sustainable energy, distinguishing architecture, public amenities, open space, economic opportunity, and affordable housing.

Neighborhood Impact:

Describe the impact that the re-use of this site, as well as the potential of incorporating other area properties as a part of this development, will have on Riverside Square such as: Improve the curb appeal of the square, capital investment in area properties, complement existing commercial/retail space, design gives cohesiveness to existing facades, economic benefits, job creation, affordable rental and/or home ownership, improved access to bike path, etc.

Time-Line:

Provide a time line of all major components of the redevelopment, from design, financing, and site preparation to final disposition and occupancy.

3. PROJECT TEAM

Describe how the project team will internally come to design and other decisions; what relationship or role will the team have with the City and other stakeholders of the project; how public relations will be approached; etc.

Describe the background and relevant experience of the firm along with any sub-consultants to be employed on this project. Describe the background and experience of the designated project manager and other personnel who will participate in the project design and implementation, including a description of the function of each designated participant and their projected time commitments.

4. FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY & LEGAL STRUCTURE

- Preliminary development budget detailing Sources & Uses, Income Budget, Operating Budget, and Cash Flow Analysis as applicable;
- Describe the legal relationship anticipated with the City in terms of: site development, financing, project implementation, ownership, and final disposition/management
- Provide a time-line of major bench marks relating to the one provided within # 2 above (Development Concept) for the financial structure such as when funds are expected to be accessed for specific phases of the redevelopment; long and short term financial obligations, debt service requirements, sales and/or lease up

Respondents may be asked to provide additional information, as needed to assist the City in the decision making process.

VI. SELECTION PROCESS

Proposals will be reviewed by City Planning and Community Development, Engineering, Zoning, and Building staff. Responses will be evaluated on the basis of the relative merits of the proposal. Proposals will be assessed generally on their overall benefit to the City, fiscal impacts, neighborhood compatibility, and quality of design. A brief presentation of the proposal and interview with agency staff will be completed prior to city staff making recommendations to be reviewed by the Mayor. The firm of the selected proposal will be contacted once the Mayor has given approval.

VII. SELECTION CRITERIA

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the responses to this RFP:

- Qualifications of the firm as they relate to the proposed redevelopment
- The degree of which other properties in the area are incorporated into the proposal
- Impact the redevelopment will have on the neighborhood and the degree that the impact will benefit the immediate area
- The long term ownership structure along with the type of relationship being proposed regarding the City and the Developer
- Financial structure and degree of commitments from other private and public funding sources
- Quality and creativeness of design for the project
- The feasibility of the proposed reuse and its implementation timeline
- The feasibility of the development budget and fiscal information provided.
- Degree of details in proposal regarding market studies, finances, design, and zoning

- Degree that CDBG funds are recaptured
- Degree that green building and sustainable energy is incorporated into the redevelopment of the site

VIII. PREFERENCES

The following preferences were established through a combination of citizen participation, regulatory parameters, and goals within the city's Comprehensive Plan:

General Preferences:

- Sustainable building design practices
- Sustainable energy sources
- Smart growth land use
- Sustainable building practices, design, and energy sources along with smart growth land use must be incorporated where feasible within the proposals for re-development.
- Off and on street parking
- Access from Bullocks Point Ave. to the Bike Path

Significant Preferences:

- Additional privately owned properties included as part of the redevelopment plan.
- Attractive curb appeal such as decorative exterior lighting, sidewalk patterns, façade details, low maintenance landscaping
- On site property management by developer/owner if rental
- A minimum of 10% of units are fully accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Affordable Housing in One of the Following Forms:

Artist

Artisan Work/Live

Homeownership

Condo Residential/ Over Condo Retail

- Attractive façade design in keeping with the historic village feel of the Square
- Affordable units must be consistent in design and materials as market rate units and not be concentrated together.

VIII. GENERAL CONDITIONS

- The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive any informality, and to select and negotiate services in the best interest of the City.
- The Firm will abide by all Federal, State and City regulations in the performance of their redevelopment of this site.
- The City reserves the right to accept all or part of any proposal, and to negotiate a contract for services and cost with the selected Firm.
- The Firm shall provide all necessary personnel, materials, equipment and facilities to perform and complete all work under this proposal.
- The City intends to make a decision on choosing a Firm within thirty (30) days of the RFP deadline. The Firm shall be prepared to begin work immediately upon the execution of a contract with the City.
- The City is an EEO/AA Employer

X. SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals are due no later than **THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 2020 at 11am**

Please submit two (2) hard and one (1) electronic copies of your proposal to:

East Providence City Hall

Controller's Office
145 Taunton Avenue
East Providence, RI 02914

XI. CITY CONTACT

Any questions need to be directed in writing to David Bachrach, Community Development Director by **THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2020 at 4pm.**

David Bachrach, Community Development Director

145 Taunton Avenue, Third Floor

East Providence RI 02914

Office (401) 435-7536

E-mail: dbachrach@eastprovidenceri.gov

XII. ATTACHMENTS

- Division 18. Riverside Square Mixed Use/Downtown Overlay
- Interim Remedial Action Closure Letter

DIVISION 18. RIVERSIDE SQUARE MIXED USE/DOWNTOWN OVERLAY^[14]

Sec. 19-359. Purposes and review process.

Sec. 19-360. Standards for development.

Sec. 19-359. Purposes and review process.

(a) *Purposes.* The purpose of this section is to:

- (1) Allow a mixture of complimentary land uses that may include housing, retail, offices, commercial services, and civic uses, to create economic and social vitality;
- (2) Develop commercial and mixed-use areas that are safe, comfortable and attractive to pedestrians;

- (3) Provide flexibility in the siting and design of new developments and redevelopment;
- (4) Reinforce streets as public places that encourage pedestrian and bicycle travel;
- (5) Provide roadway and pedestrian connections to residential areas;
- (6) Encourage efficient land use by facilitating compact, high-density development and minimizing the amount of land that is needed for surface parking; and
- (7) Facilitate development (land use mix, density and design) that utilizes public transit, where applicable;

(b) *Review process.* The Development Plan Review Committee shall review and approve proposals within the Riverside Square Mixed Use/Downtown Overlay District following the process for development plan review identified in section 19-453, Procedure. The DPR Committee may apply such special conditions, restrictions or stipulations as it may deem necessary to maintain consistency with the comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance, and subdivision and land development regulations to maintain harmony with neighboring uses.

(c) *Design intention and functioning.*

- (1) [Reserved.]
- (2) Maximize the building floor area on each lot.
- (3) Locate parking off the street frontage to the rear of parcels so that businesses can move close to the sidewalk and more readily attract pedestrians.
- (4) Place buildings at a minimal front setback line, close behind a sidewalk of adequate width.
- (5) Encourage construction of at least two-story buildings.
- (6) Locate retail uses on the ground-floor street frontage, preferably adjacent to other retail uses.
- (7) Develop sidewalks and building features (e.g. entrances, weather protection) so as to maximize safety, comfort, ease of movement, and convenience for pedestrians.
- (8) Encourage building heights of two and one-half stories (maximum height of 35 feet), with first floor commercial use and second floor residential use. Residential use may also be provided on the first floor but the main entrance of such first floor residential use shall be limited to the rear or side of the structure.
- (9) Floors above ground level shall have independent, separate access to the street.
- (10) Driveway and parking lot surfaces are encouraged to be permeable, using such materials as brick, concrete pavers, "grass-crete" and other similar permeable materials,

but not gravel. Vegetative buffers shall be planted to treat runoff as it percolates into the soil. Use of low impact development (LID) techniques is encouraged.

(11) Walk-up windows to retail uses may be permitted provided that such windows shall be located on the front lot line facing a street, with no curb cut or allowance of any motorized vehicular access.

(Ch. 453, § XXIII, 7-15-08)

Sec. 19-360. Standards for development.

(a) No development plan shall be approved unless it is determined that the following standards are reached to the maximum extent feasible, or to the extent feasible given the circumstances of the property, in accordance with the provisions of these regulations.

(1) *Build-to line requirement.* In no case shall the front setback specified for the underlying zoning district take precedence. All building front setback requirements shall be zero, except under the following circumstances:

a. Where other site requirements such as utility or access easements preclude such building placement.

b. Where it is determined that the use of existing buildings on adjacent parcels would be significantly adversely affected by setbacks from front or side property lines that are smaller than those on the adjoining parcels (e.g., light would be blocked from existing windows on the side of a building).

c. Where minimum required clearance from an overhead electric power line, based on the National Electric Code, must be maintained, especially for buildings of more than one story.

(2) *Setbacks.* For a particular development plan, a determination shall be required that proposed setbacks are consistent with the purposes and design intention of this overlay district.

(3) *Ground floor facade.* At least 50 percent of the ground floor facade of non-residential use shall be constructed of transparent material or otherwise designed to allow pedestrians to view activities inside the building. The ground floor facade shall be composed of windows opening into the interior, display windows (which need not be open into the interior), or entrances, which openings are determined to be well-distributed along the face of the building or addition so as to minimize the lengths of blank wall areas.

(4) *Building width.* A new building or addition to an existing building shall occupy the full width of the lot, except in the following circumstances:

- a. A pedestrian passageway to parking or other businesses to the rear of the building is provided.
- b. A side yard is used as an outside seating area for a cafe or a public courtyard.
- c. A driveway to parking spaces in the rear is allowed alongside the building because there is no other access to the parking spaces.
- d. A utility easement precludes use of the full width, in which case one of the above uses shall be placed over the easement.

(5) *Outdoor patron seating areas.* Administrative review and issuance of an outdoor use area permit is required for designation of proposed outdoor seating areas, to ensure that the standards in this Chapter are met and that public safety and access for pedestrians, persons with disabilities, and emergency response personnel will not be compromised.

(6) *Signage.* The signage requirements of article VII. Signs shall be met, except as provided below:

- a. *Wall sign.* Wall signs shall be externally illuminated by incandescent, metal halide or halogen light and shall be made of metal, painted wood or similar material (no plastic). Signs shall be placed on the building so as not to obscure architectural features and details. Internally illuminated neon signs are permitted.
- b. *Free standing sign.* A freestanding sign shall be externally illuminated by incandescent, metal halide or halogen light and shall be made of metal, painted wood or similar material (no plastic).

(7) *Parking.* Each development in this district shall be required to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the DPR Committee that the location, arrangement, appearance, and sufficiency of off-street parking and loading shall be adequate to serve the development. No parking, driveway, or other area for vehicles shall be placed between the building and the street.

- a. *Parking ratios.* The number of parking spaces provided for a site shall be considered as a base from which to adjust, as applicable and appropriate, to an adequate number and location of spaces. In no case shall the number of off-street parking spaces exceed the number calculated from the parking ratios required by the zoning ordinance. For a building of two or more stories, floor area within stairwells and elevator shafts shall not be included in total floor area for parking calculations.
- b. *Shared parking.* Where a parking area will serve two or more uses for which peak parking demand occurs at different times, the parking spaces provided may be counted toward the parking requirement for more than one of those uses provided that the requirements of section 19-279 (b) "Shared Use of Parking" are met.

c. *Parallel parking.* Where parallel parking is allowed on a street section abutting the property and on the same side of the street as the property, such parallel parking shall count toward meeting the parking requirement for the property.

d. *Alleys.* As development or redevelopment occurs, alleys shall be created for access to parking on the rear of properties.

e. *Off-site parking.* Where alternative off-site parking (either public parking or private parking obtained by lease or recorded easement) is provided within 300 feet of the property, the on-site parking requirement shall be reduced, provided that the total of on-site and alternative off-site parking together shall meet the requirement for the proposed use.

(Ch. 453, § XXIII, 7-15-08)

FOOTNOTE(S):

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Editor's note— Section VIII of Ch. 506, adopted July 20, 2010, renumbered Div. 17 to read as herein set out. (Back)

ARTICLE V. LAND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Sec. 19-361. Purpose and objectives.

Sec. 19-362. Uses and activities requiring land development project approval.

Sec. 19-363. Applications and review procedures.

Sec. 19-364. Definitions and regulations.

Sec. 19-365. Public/private street standards.

Secs. 19-366—19-369. Reserved.

Sec. 19-370. Reserve parking area for business/technology development.

Secs. 19-371—19-410. Reserved.

CITY OF EAST PROVIDENCE

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

WEBSITE ADVERTISEMENT

PURCHASE/REDEVELOPMENT OF THE RIVERSIDE SQUARE SITE

RFP NO. EP19/20-28

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

BID OPENING DATE THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 2020 at 11:00 AM

The City of East Providence is requesting proposals from development firms for the purchase and redevelopment of city-owned land on the corner of Fenner & Bullocks Point Avenues. Specifications may be downloaded from the City's website under Current Bids.

<http://www.eastprovidence.com/content/9457/10056/default.aspx>

A pre-bid walk-through is mandatory and will take place at the owned land on the corner of Fenner & Bullocks Point Avenues (Web address approximately 344 Bullocks Point Ave.) East Providence, RI 02915 on **THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2020 at 11 a.m.**

Three (3) copies of a technical proposal shall be submitted in one (1) sealed envelope to the Controller's Office, Attn: Procurement Specialist, Room 103, City Hall, 145 Taunton Ave., East Providence, RI 02914 no later than **THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 2020 at 11 a.m.** The bids will be publicly recorded. Bids received with a time of 11:01 AM or later will be rejected. The envelope needs to be marked **BID EP19/20 - 28.**

The City reserves the right to waive any informality in or to reject any or all Bids if deemed to be in its best interest. The Contract shall be awarded to responsive and responsible bidder whose bid in either the lowest price, or lowest evaluated or responsive bid price.

Any questions need to be directed in writing to David Bachrach, Community Development Director dbachrach@eastprovidenceri.gov by **THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2020 at 4 p.m.**

Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

Dawn Kenney, Procurement Specialist

dkenney@eastprovidenceri.gov