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Michael W. Freimuth
Commissioner



City of New Rochelle New York

April 2012

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

“The Gateway Transit-Oriented Development @ Garden Street”

The City of New Rochelle, NY is not just another of Westchester County’s hamlets, villages or towns, but weighs in as the seventh largest city in New York state, with a diverse population of 77,000 that spans every heritage and tradition. New Rochelle’s ten square miles are located just minutes north of New York City and is bordered on the southeast by the Long Island Sound. This first-tier suburb boasts a lively downtown, excellent restaurants, award-winning schools, beautiful parks, and a variety of cultural and entertainment activities and venues.

At the intersection of U.S. I-95 (Exit 16), Garden Street and North Avenue, is the New Rochelle Intermodal Transit Center (ITC), which offers commuters on the MTA’s Metro-North Railroad, going to or from Manhattan’s Grand Central Station an easy trip of as little as thirty minutes and offers Amtrak customers the only Westchester stop for the Boston-to-D.C., Northeast Corridor run. Bee-Line Bus, Hertz Rental Car and taxi services augment the transportation offerings. The ITC’s 902-space parking garage provides for bicycles and scooters along with cars. The area is now the centerpiece of New Rochelle’s revitalization efforts, which have already produced almost 2,000 new units of housing within walking distance of transit.

This vibrant hub is adjacent to the two parcels (see Site Map) known as the “Gateway TOD @ Garden Street”. The City’s partnership with multiple private property owners has created a unique opportunity for the redevelopment of an approximately three-acre site as a mixed-use development with emphasis on commercial, rather than exclusively or predominately residential development. The City will recognize and support increased zoning allowances and bonuses and rewards efforts to promote its policies as outlined in its sustainability plan, “GreenNR”.

Background

In 2008, the City of New Rochelle prepared a comprehensive planning and development analysis of the sites to the north and south of the Metro-North Railroad's New Haven Line tracks across North Avenue from the New Rochelle Transit Center. This study - which encompassed the City-owned parking lots that are included in this RFP - identified neighborhood impacts, urban design opportunities and physical site constraints and assessed the area's development potential. The study revealed that residential demand patterns are shifting towards smaller household sizes, marriage and childrearing delays, increasing numbers of retirees, and changing attitudes toward mixed-use residential living. There is a move towards rental properties, active lifestyles, and walkable, urban, self-contained neighborhoods.

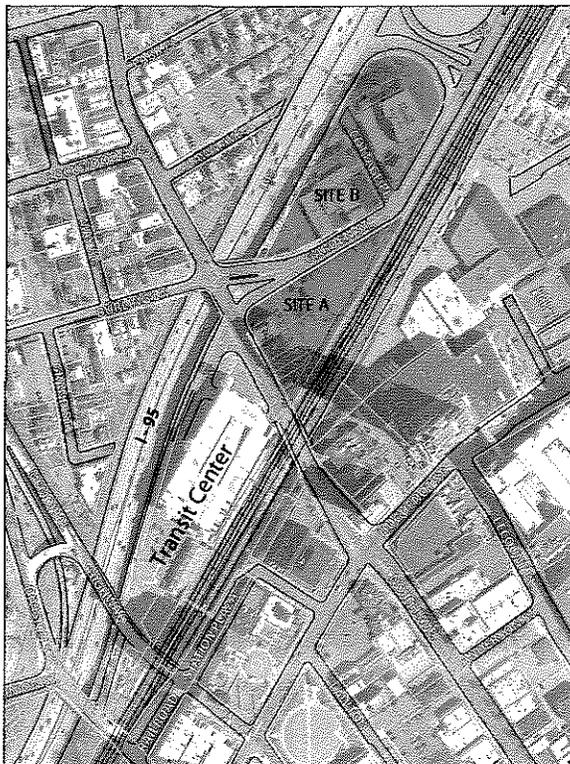
As of the 3rd Quarter 2011, the Westchester County commercial office sector began seeing improvements in leasing activity, though overall absorption activity continued to struggle while asking rental rates remained virtually unchanged from previous quarters. Westchester County's commercial real estate market is projected to grow following New York City's economic shift from contraction to expansion. Westchester County is also interested in promoting growth in biotech, high tech and information technology sectors. This strategy has been incorporated into the regional plan under the Governor's statewide "NY Works" Agenda, which includes aggressive business development efforts with a focus on aiding business owners, retaining and creating employment opportunities and investing in higher education that will revitalize the State's economy. A significant amount of Westchester County office space is auto-oriented and obsolete. The City seeks to establish Class "A" office presence in the "Gateway TOD @ Garden Street," meeting the region's business trends and principles in a perfect location, adjacent to the City's intermodal transit center.

The City of New Rochelle and its regional partners have been awarded a federal planning grant under the "Sustainable NY-CT" regional planning program to analyze a transit-oriented development zone within ½ mile around the New Rochelle Intermodal Transit Center. This effort will integrate transportation and land use planning with housing, economic development, energy and environmental policies and best practices. The City also is in the beginning stages of preparing an updated *Comprehensive Plan* which will serve as the policy document guiding all city-wide development and will largely focus on this highly-targeted TOD area as a central node of future development.

Location

“Gateway TOD @ Garden Street” is located within walking distance of downtown New Rochelle and is only a few minutes from the Long Island Sound. Downtown New Rochelle has experienced significant revitalization over the last few years. Investments include: more than \$300 million invested in New Roc City, a family entertainment center/apartment/hotel complex; two, luxury, mixed-use towers owned by Avalon Bay and Hartz Mountain; and Trump Plaza, a high-rise condominium project with a large commercial component. The City has partnered with the downtown business community to create an award-winning Business Improvement District that addresses quality of life issues and attracts additional development to downtown New Rochelle. Monroe College, a growing, for-profit, educational institution in the downtown relies on the proximity of the Intermodal Transportation Center to attract/retain students, staff, and faculty. Similarly, Iona College and the College of New Rochelle are approximately two miles to the north and south, respectively; they also rely on the local transit system to attract interest in their institutions.

“Gateway TOD @ Garden Street” (Sites A & B) is bounded by Interstate 95 (north), MTA’s Metro-North Railroad tracks (south), Cottage Place/I-95, Exit 16 (east) and North Avenue (west). The site has immediate access to the I-95 corridor sitting midway between New York City and Connecticut’s “Gold Coast” in Fairfield County, including Greenwich and Stamford’s urban centers.



Site A, comprised of a City-owned parking area and several privately-owned parcels, is approximately 1.5 acres and is zoned as Downtown Mixed-Use Urban Renewal (DMUR) with an allowable 5.5 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and a building maximum height of 24 stories or 280 ft. Site A is also located in the Downtown Density Bonus (DDB) overlay zone, which permits additional FAR and building allowances. Density bonuses are available at the discretion of the City Council.

Site B is nearly all privately-held, except for one parcel which is operated by the City as a parking area. Site B is approximately 1.7 acres. Presently, these parcels are zoned Neighborhood Business (NB) or Light Industrial (LI), with maximum heights of 30 ft. and 40 ft. respectively, and maximum FARs of 0.5 and 1.0, respectively. **To facilitate an appropriate project, the City would extend to these parcels the dense DMUR zone referenced above.**

If the parcels in **Site B** were assembled under a new DMUR zone, additional height and FAR may be sought utilizing the Downtown Density Bonus Floating Overlay Zone. In the DDB, permitted uses and dimensional requirements are the same as in the underlying zone. However, greater density can be achieved through the inclusion of certain public benefits, applying FAR bonuses to the development. Height bonuses in the DMUR cannot exceed 500 ft. and are granted at the City Council's discretion.

The RFP Process

A submittal should be in the following format:

- A. Description of the Development Team
- B. Experience of the Development Team
 - Previous projects - Project name, location, photos, construction value, year completed and firm's role in project
 - Project references
 - Key team members' resumes
- C. Proposed Project Concept and Schedule
 - Public/private partnership approach
 - Design concepts, users, developer's approach and phasing
 - Financing, funding, marketing and roles of public and private sectors

The City will accept proposals until 3:00 pm on Friday, June 29, 2012. No proposals will be accepted beyond this time. One electronic and five (5) hard copies should be submitted to:

Suzanne Reider, Senior Project Manager
c/o Purchasing Department
City of New Rochelle
515 North Avenue
New Rochelle, NY 10801

There will be an Evaluation Committee which will review all proposals and evaluate the proposals based on the information presented. Short-listed firms will be asked to meet with the Evaluation Committee.

At the conclusion of the RFP process, the City anticipates the selection of a Preferred Developer in September of 2012, at which point, the City will enter into negotiations for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and/or a Land Disposition Agreement (LDA).

Any questions pertaining to this RFP should be addressed *in writing* to Suzanne Reider via email at sreider@newrochelleny.com. Responses to written questions will be posted on the City's website, www.newrochelleny.com under the "Bid Opportunities" heading.