



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
2009-082
FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Town of Stratford
Transit Centered Development Feasibility Study

The Town of Stratford is requesting proposals from creative design professionals to help the Town assess the feasibility of promoting Transit Centered Development in the vicinity of the Stratford train station, located in Stratford Center. This project is being completed with a grant provided by the Tri-State Transportation Campaign.

Background

The Town of Stratford proposes to complete a feasibility assessment of Transit Centered Development (TCD) project(s) in Historic Stratford Center, involving key stakeholders in the consensus-shaping, planning and design process. The major emphasis of the project will be devoted to a) investigating and creating community and stakeholder-driven consensus around appropriate types of TCD that could work in Stratford Center and b) building broad community awareness and support for the TCD concept. As resources and time permit, the Town would move to the next phase of identifying necessary zone changes and amendments to the Town Zoning Regulations that will enable development of mixed-use developments consistent with TCD objectives.

Stratford is a suburban, coastal community located in northeastern Fairfield County with a Census-estimated population in 2007 of 49,015. At an overall rate of 2,842 persons per square mile, Stratford ranks 22nd in the state in population density. The Town is serviced by Metro North commuter fixed-rail service with a northbound and southbound station located in the Town's urbanized center.

There are a number of design considerations that are important to the Town of Stratford in the development of this feasibility study, including:

- The existing train station is adjacent to an historic area that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and contained within a local historic district (Academy Hill).
- The Town of Stratford is a mature community and is largely "built-out". Much of the study area is already developed with few parcels of vacant

land. TCD opportunities may well consist of adaptive reuse, infill, and redevelopment alternatives.

- Current zoning allows development at a lower density than typically anticipated with Transit Centered Development.

As a consequence, it is expected that this study will have to be done very carefully and with a great deal of sensitivity to these issues and the neighbors that already live and work in the immediate area.

Scope of Work

The scope of work for this project will be as follows:

Project objectives

- To increase community awareness and support for the TCD concept
- To investigate possible sites appropriate for TCD through an extensive public involvement process
- To develop a feasibility assessment that will enable Stratford to identify appropriate methods and location(s) to promote TCD improvements as an alternative to suburban sprawl
- To provide a successful model for replication in other communities in the region

Tasks

The Town Planning Commission and the Town Planner are overseeing the development of this feasibility study. The chosen consultant will provide technical assistance to the Planner and a Steering Committee of key stakeholders that was formed to guide the study. (12-member Steering Committee represents the Planning Commission, Zoning Commission, Historic District Commission, Economic Development Commission, Old Stratford Neighborhood Association, etc.)

The Consultant will assist the Town in the following:

- Data Collection as appropriate
- Preparation for and Participation in Public Workshops
 - Workshop I – Explanation of TCD and potential benefits for Stratford; Identification of issues
 - Workshop II – Presentation of recommended TCD strategies for Stratford
 - Design Charrette – Consensus-shaping session using visualization exercises to help the public determine the potential impact of such development on existing conditions and to determine the most appropriate design solutions
- Consultant will perform a feasibility assessment of the potential for TCD with the study area. The feasibility assessment would include:
 - 1) a detailed survey of the existing area within an approximately ½

mile radius of the train stations to determine existing land uses and existing densities and a more general survey of uses and densities within a one mile radius of the train stations 2) Identify specific potential sites and opportunities for developing TCD projects; 3) provide illustrations/photo imaging of potential TCD projects in relation to existing development.

- Consultant will participate with the Town Planner and Steering Committee in determining relevant, successful TCD models within Connecticut or region that could provide guidance on how TCD could work in Stratford. Consultant would join Planner and Committee members in traveling to such other communities to view their TCD models and to seek input from local officials in those communities.
- Consultant will present preliminary assessment and recommendations to the Steering Committee/Planning Commission based on the previous tasks.
- Consultant will revise preliminary assessment and recommendations as necessary and make presentation at Workshop II (above).
- Consultant will prepare and implement a one-day design charrette in which the Committee, other Town officials and the public would participate in design visualization exercises related to preferred TCD strategies for Stratford (above).
- Consultant will prepare draft final report to the Steering Committee, based on input received from the public workshops and the design charrette. Report should include:
 - Recommended strategies for achieving TCD in Stratford
 - Recommended land use plan (land uses, densities and road infrastructure) for TCD Target Area (up to one mile radius of train stations)
 - General recommendations on implementation of TCD in Stratford (private/public partnership approaches, potential funding sources, zoning and regulatory considerations).
- Consultant will make final modifications to report and submit twenty-five bound copies to Town. Consultant will also provide report as a Word document and in a .pdf format.
- Consultant should anticipate the need for at least five meetings with the Steering Committee/Planning Commission.
- Consultant should anticipate the need for three public meetings as described above.

Town Support:

The Town through its Town Planner will provide assistance to the consultant in the administration of the project, in at least the following ways:

1. Handle publications, notices and invitations for all workshops and public meetings, including Steering Committee meetings.
1. Assemble and maintain mailing list(s) of interested parties
2. Prepare agendas for Steering Committee meetings.
3. Help to design workshop format, assist in the development of questions for use in small groups.
4. Assemble materials (markers, newsprint, sign-in sheets, refreshments, etc.) for public meetings and workshops and obtain laptop/projector for public meeting presentations, if necessary.
5. Obtain necessary base mapping from Town Engineering Department in printed form or in digital form (.dxf or .shp format), using Town's GIS system. Standard maps are at 1" = 100' scale, with contours at 2 foot intervals.
6. Assistance with obtaining data, reports and input from other Town departments as necessary (e.g. zoning map/regulations, etc.)

Submission Requirements:

Interested firms must submit an original and ten (10) copies of their proposals, 8.5" x 11") to:

Purchasing Agent
Town Hall
2725 Main Street
Stratford, CT 06615

Submissions will be received in the Purchasing Department at the above address until 2:00 p.m. on Friday, October 16, 2009.

At this point, the Town plans to notify consultants selected for interview by October 23 and to conduct interviews on October 26 and October 27, 2009.

Proposals must include:

- i. Cover letter
- ii. Explanation of Approach to Project
- iii. Background of firm(s)
- iv. Related experience, relevant projects
- v. Resumes of key personnel and the roles they will play
- vi. Past 3 years references with contact phone numbers and names of similar projects completed.
- vii. Detailed Scope of Services
- viii. Detailed fee proposal break down
- ix. Timelines for completion of the project

Submission Materials:

All materials submitted become the property of the Town of Stratford and will not be returned to the submitting firm. Any restrictions on the use of the data contained within the proposal materials must be clearly stated in the submission itself.

Incurred Costs:

The Town of Stratford is not liable for any costs incurred by firms prior to issuance of a fully executed contract.

Selection of Firm(s)

The Steering Committee and Town Staff will review and rank all proposals received. Interviews will be arranged for those firms whose proposals most clearly demonstrate the skill to carry out this project in a way that responds to the needs of the Town. Chosen firms will be expected to possess a wide range of skills to ensure successful completion of this project (including familiarity with the following disciplines: Architecture, Urban Design, Historic Preservation, Transit Centered Development, Affordable Housing, Parking and Traffic Management, Planning for pedestrian and bicycle improvements, Land Use Planning, Visualization Techniques, Landscaping and Lighting, Community Involvement and Facilitation/Consensus Shaping, Technology, Knowledge of applicable State laws and familiarity with Government and Politics; and Brownfield Redevelopment).

Firms that are interviewed will be evaluated based on the strength of their proposals and project approach; the experience and skills of the firm(s) and the staff assigned to this project; relative capability to complete this project successfully; and the competitiveness of their fee proposals.

The Town reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals received through this selection process.

The Town of Stratford is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Minority/Women's Business Enterprises are encouraged to apply.