

Town of Farmington

# REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS AND PROPOSALS

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT SERVICES

NOVEMBER 27<sup>TH</sup>, 2019



**LEGAL NOTICE**  
**TOWN OF FARMINGTON**  
**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR THE**  
**REDEVELOPMENT OF THE FORMER PARSONS CHEVROLET PROPERTY**

**Request for Qualification and Proposal packages and supporting documentation can be obtained online by visiting [www.farmington-ct.org](http://www.farmington-ct.org) > Government > Farmington Village Center Committee or by following this link: <http://bit.ly/FarmingtonVillageCenterRFQ2019>.**

The Town of Farmington is soliciting requests for qualifications and proposals for the redevelopment of the former Parsons Chevrolet Property in Farmington, CT. The Town is soliciting statements of qualifications and proposals from teams of professional and experienced development entities for the purposes of re-developing a 2.54-acre site in the Historic Farmington Village. The Town intends to purchase the Property from the State of Connecticut. The Property was formerly used as the Parsons Chevrolet Auto Dealership. The Town seeks to control the development on this key commercial Property, which is considered an important gateway to the Farmington Village Center.

Responses to this request must be received no later than January 31, 2020 at 3:00 PM. Proposals must be delivered no later than the due date to: Kathleen Blonski, Town Manager, Town of Farmington, One Monteith Drive, Farmington, CT 06032. Facsimile (FAX) and emailed proposals will not be accepted.

Qualified individuals or firms are required to submit their proposal in accordance with the solicitation package requirements. Submission packages must include one (1) original and six (6) copies of the Firm's response on or before January 31, 2020 at 3:00 PM. All documents and maps included within the proposal shall also be delivered on Flash Drive in both PDF and other original format (such as Word).

The Town of Farmington is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Minority/Women /Disadvantaged Business Enterprises are encouraged to submit a proposal.

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS AND PROPOSALS**  
**PARSONS PROPERTY**  
**Town of Farmington, CT**

**Opportunity**

The Town of Farmington ("Town") is soliciting statements of qualifications and proposals from teams of professional and experienced development entities (Firms) for the purposes of re-developing a 2.54-acre site (Property) in the Historic Farmington Village. The Town intends to purchase the Property from the State of Connecticut. The Property was formerly used as the Parsons Chevrolet Auto Dealership. The Town seeks to control the development on this key commercial Property, which is considered an important gateway to the Farmington Village Center.

**Background**

The Property was purchased by CT DOT in 2009 as a construction staging site for highway improvements to Route 4 in the vicinity of the Property. The highway improvements are completed. The Town has taken proactive measures to solicit public input and develop concepts for a preferred development scenario they feel best maintains and enhances the historic character, appearance, and mix of uses in the Village District. The Property is part of a Village District that was established via special act which permits specific development guidelines and is authorized by Section 8-2j of the CT General Statutes. The Design Guidelines governing construction within the Farmington Village Center/Village District are outlined in the Town's Zoning Regulations at Article II Section 29A, which can be found at: <http://bit.ly/FVCC-RFQP-ZoningRegulations>.

In 2015 the Town conducted a successful series of public participation planning workshops with over 500 participants. The study, conducted by Dodson & Flinker, Inc. and Mullin Associates, Inc, focused on the area bisected by CT RT 4 (29,000 ADT) and is the most prominent gateway to the beautiful Farmington Center Historic District. It is adjacent to the campus of the internationally renowned Miss Porter's School, the stately Hill-Stead Museum and the Farmington Country Club. The study includes the Property and is bounded on the west by the Farmington River. In addition, the subject property has immediate connectivity to I-84, West Hartford, and the UCONN Medical Campus. The area has also been improved via the recent CT DOT road project (CT DOT Project # 51-260). The results of the planning workshops are presented in a final report entitled "Farmington Center Study" dated June 15, 2015, which can be found on at: <http://bit.ly/FVCC-RFQP-FarmingtonCenterStudy>.

This report is key in that it makes recommendations that the Town of Farmington acquire the property from the State of CT in order to ensure that development on the lot conforms to the desires of the town as memorialized by report.

The Town also solicited and accepted a "Final Master Plan Report" prepared by BL Companies (September 19, 2017). Using input from the robust public participation from the previous Farmington Center Study, as well as public participation elements

of its own, the Report provides a Master Concept Plan specific to the Property that based its recommendations on individual studies concerning potential economic, traffic, and environmental impacts as well as preparing a market analysis and creating design guidelines (due diligence) based upon additional site walks and visual preference surveys. The BL Final Master Plan Report can be found at: <http://bit.ly/FVCC-RFQP-FinalMasterPlan>.

The Town most recently accepted and adopted the BSC Group "Farmington Village Center Streetscape and Master Plan (July 9, 2019)," which can be found at: <http://bit.ly/FVCC-RFQP-StreetscapeMasterPlan>. This Streetscape Masterplan is the roadmap for implementing the community's vision for a universally accessible, green, safe, and welcoming Farmington Village Center, which will help foster a coherent vision for future development along the Route 4 and Route 10 corridors. While not specific to the Property, it is nonetheless a required reference point for defining development elements such as enhanced streetscape plantings, sidewalk and crosswalk treatment options, decorative pedestrian lighting and signage options, street furniture, specialty features, fences and walls, and gateway treatments. The recommendations therein also balance needs of pedestrians with vehicles along these corridors using traffic calming measures. This study will assist interested respondents in their efforts to design a concept plan that will be characteristic of the Historic Village District and reflective of the intense public input and scrutiny the plans are based upon.

Several appraisals have been conducted that may help to inform the Firm's response. The can be viewed at: <http://bit.ly/FVCC-RFQP-Appraisals>.

In addition, a local Architect has prepared a concept site plan and architectural elevations that represent his unique professional perspective for the potential of a village-like development with density in line with the RFQ/P. Because the Town of Farmington never formally adopted or endorsed Mr. Coughlin's work, we've added it for your consideration only. We believe the body of work to be an extensive study of an alternate means of development that has merit and is worthy of consideration. The materials are labeled "Coughlin Plans" and can be viewed at: <http://bit.ly/FVCC-RFQP-Coughlin>.

## **Summary of Intent**

While the documents referenced above can and should be used to develop and present the required concept plan to the selection committee, it is vital that the respondents understand the true nature of what the Town of Farmington seeks. The Town's identity is grounded in its historic roots, its farming heritage, and the innovative and creative place we've become as a community. We realize that we lack a town center, a place that embodies the spirit of Farmington. The Town Center we seek is one that respects our heritage through the creation of a moderate density mixed use development that places an emphasis on architectural detail and historic design. The Town Center should provide a sense of place and include gathering places for the residents and visitors alike. The scale should be proportionate to the nearby Farmington Historic District, which should also serve as an inspiration for design.

Massing along Farmington Avenue should be minimized. Vistas into the developed Property should be visible as you drive or walk along Farmington Avenue. Innovative landscaping, lighting, and street furniture should be used to provide a sense of welcoming. Additional parking shall be required to handle visitors using the site as a base from which to launch Historic District tours, as well as visits to the adjacent planned Welcome Center.

## **Goals**

It is the intent of the Town that redevelopment of existing parcels and buildings within the study area, and in particular the Property, will be consistent, or in line with, with the views expressed during the Workshops and in the Final Reports, and more importantly, with community input, the image of our brand, and design preferences referenced throughout this RFQ/P.

Specifically, the Town seeks an appropriately scaled mixed use residential and commercial development that provides vitality to the Village Center and reflects Farmington's brand as a community that is committed to maintaining a balance between preservation and innovation. the Town prefers a moderate density development, one that may consist of the following elements:

- no more than 70 market rate or luxury apartments
- complimentary mixed uses such as restaurants, pubs, niche or specialty retail shops such as hardware stores, bookstores, and gift shops, small office space
- adequate parking with the ability to provide for some public parking not otherwise required for the proposed residential and commercial uses
- captures the historic character of Farmington Village
- presents an uncluttered streetscape that respects the appearance of the Historic District
- provides the "live, work, play" quality of life that Farmington hopes to expand upon

## **Environmental Considerations**

The property was a former Automobile Dealership. The State of Connecticut (State), through its Department of Transportation (DOT) has indicated the site is fully remediated. The Town has asked the DOT for confirmation of the environmental status of the Property, and for access to the Property to conduct the Town's own investigations. The State is in the process of releasing the data necessary for the Town to draw an appropriate conclusion as to environmental conditions. After receiving the information, the Town of Farmington may request access to conduct further testing.

The Town of Farmington will continue its due diligence and will seek Liability Relief from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) prior to taking title to the Property. The Town desires to have an interested developer under contract during these processes, and any other site related environmental processes, including grant application and additional remedial action if necessary.

Again, DOT has stated that the site is fully remediated. The Town agrees to share any relevant information it obtains in the future to respondents as it becomes available, either during, or after final selection.

## **Terms**

The partnership we seek rests on the Firm's understanding of the terms, which include partnering with the Town of Farmington while:

- the Town negotiates with DOT to purchase the property,
- the State DOT has stated that the property is fully remediated,
- the Town makes application for liability relief under one of DEEP's Programs,
- the Town continues due diligence on the property,
- understanding that the Town's level of participation may be in flux until all costs are known and an appropriate assessment of the benefits to the Town can be made, and
- the Historical Society seeks to release a "no build" easement on the Property in exchange for access and some public parking for the Historical Society.

In order to present an adequate response, Firms will need to:

1. Familiarize themselves with the aforementioned studies, materials, and constraints.
2. Review and sample the probability of constructability of the preferred development scenario based upon the entirety of the documentation.
3. Consider how the Firm's experience and vision can be used to help the Town realize their stated goals.
4. Provide a concept site plan of the preferred development scenario including potential building layout, landscaping, lighting, and parking, which includes provisions for on-site parking as well public parking for off-site usage.
5. In addition, the above conceptualization shall include architectural renderings and details such as materials and colors, examples of architectural details and site features such as furniture and lighting.
6. Firm shall express interest by issuing a statement of qualifications that demonstrate an ability to implement the desired development as to form and character as outlined in the various reports.

## **Presentations**

Respondents chosen for the interview process shall be required to make 2 presentations at public meetings. Additional meetings may be required and shall be negotiated with the preferred developer prior to executing a contract.

## **Selection**

Selection will be based on an evaluation of factors including 1. adherence to the stated goals; 2. background of firms involved; 3. planning, market analysis, engineering and urban design experience; 4. final presentation; 5. overall quality of proposal; and 6. the design consultant will have a proven expertise in the application of Universal Design principles and be willing to collaborate with an accessibility expert designated by the Town if we so choose.

### **Insurance Requirements**

Prior to the commencement of performance, the successful Firm(s) shall furnish to the Town of Farmington a certificate of insurance for general liability with limits of not less than \$1,000,000, professional liability, (errors and omissions) with limits of not less than \$2,000,000, and workers compensation insurance at statutory limits.

### **Submission Requirements**

1. Responses should be mailed or delivered to:

Kathleen A. Blonski, Town Manager  
Town of Farmington  
1 Monteith Drive  
Farmington, CT 06032

2. **Submission packages must include submit six (6) copies of the Firm's response on or before January 31, 2020 at 3:00 PM.** All documents and maps included within the proposal shall also be delivered on Flash Drive in both PDF and other original format (such as Word).
3. In lieu of requiring a fee proposal, the Town will seek to negotiate a financial partnership with the developer selected as having the preferred development concept and meeting all other qualifying criteria. Such partnership may take on many forms and will be negotiated after selection of the preferred developer is made. If any such negotiations fail to produce an agreement, the Town may seek to negotiate with another respondent.
4. A statement and proposal regarding the Firm's general approach and initial ideas for the project, including a written and illustrated description of the proposed development concept, which demonstrates the Firm's understanding of the Town's desired site design elements, the completed studies of the site and proximal environs, the Firms understanding of the economic impacts and feasibility, and the local commercial and residential market conditions. Descriptions may include the scale of development, an estimate of the number and type of units, and information describing the proposed character and quality of the development, including materials. Respondents should also discuss how the requirements of the Farmington Center/Village District zoning requirements will impact the appearance of the development, particularly regarding how the development will be balanced to enhance the historic Farmington Village Center.

5. Conceptual site design. A draft site plan based on the narrative description to assist the Committee in visualizing the proposed site and architectural details that mirrors the specified goals of the RFQ/P.
6. Narrative for Disposition of the Site.
  - Provide a narrative of the preferred method(s) for structuring the financial and ownership arrangement between the development entity and the Town. Any such preferences shall subject to a negotiated agreement.
  - Please include a description of any relevant experience negotiating previous public/private agreements.
  - As the ultimate disposition of the site will be subject to negotiations, the developer should demonstrate a willingness to work with the Town to reach the most equitable arrangement.
  - It is understood that potentially unknown environmental costs may affect the structure of the agreement and any necessary contingencies should be outlined in the proposal.
7. The Farmington Village Center Village Committee will review the proposals with staff and make their recommendations for selection to the Town Council, who will make the final decision.

### **Firm Qualifications**

1. Contact Information. Name, address, and contact information of firm or individual responding to the proposal.
2. Firm Overview. Provide a brief description of organization, year established, number of employees, and types of business conducted.
3. Information regarding the overall experience of the team and their experience with market analysis, universal design and site planning. Resumes of the proposed members of the team who will be committed to the project.
4. Specific examples (at least 2) of private sector projects they have undertaken that demonstrate their qualifications for this project.
5. References. Provide, for projects listed above, a contact person and information.
6. Financial Viability. Provide a statement and worksheet that indicate the firm's financial capability to accomplish the project.
7. Affirmative Action Experience, Summary & Affirmative Action Policy Statement & Plan.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

Responses will be evaluated based on compliance with the following:

1. **Completeness of Submittal:** Ideas and concepts are presented in a manner that exhibit a full understanding of the supporting documentation and the desires of the Town. Respondents are encouraged to provide as much documentation as is needed for the Town to make a rational decision as to which response is best suited to its needs.
2. **Relevant Experience:** demonstrated ability to undertake development projects in complex environments from conception to construction.
3. **Demonstrated Success:** of past public/private partnerships and similar development proposals.
4. **Access to Financing:** degree to which the development entity demonstrates its access to financing to underwrite construction.
5. **Appropriateness of Proposed Use:** responsiveness to community vision and needs, including a demonstrated understanding of the Town of Farmington and the importance of a high-quality project at the site that emphasizes compatibility with Farmington's historic character and desire for complimentary design elements.
6. **Community benefit:** demonstrates a clear long-term benefit to the community.

## **Questions**

Any questions during the process must be asked via email at [deveom@farmington-ct.org](mailto:deveom@farmington-ct.org). Responses will be made available to all respondents that have submitted correspondence indicating their interest in order to insure a consistent understanding.

All questions and answers shall be circulated to respondents that register to receive such communication from the time that such registration is received.

**Please Note:** At this time, the Town of Farmington does not own the property in question but continues to negotiate a purchase price. The Town does have first option under State law. Purchase of the property will not be completed until all local approvals are received in accordance with procedures established by Town Charter.

The Town of Farmington makes no warranties and reserves the right to accept or refuse any or all of the responses to this RFQ/P in favor of an alternate use of the property.

# Site Map



## Assessor's Property Card

The Assessor's office is responsible for the maintenance of records on the ownership of properties. Assessments are computed at 70% of the estimated market value of real property at the time of the last revaluation which was 2017.



Information on the Property Records for the Municipality of Farmington was last updated on 10/1/2019.

### Property Summary Information

Parcel Data And Values	Sales				
<b>Parcel Information</b>					
Location:	750 FARMINGTON AV	Property Use:	Vacant Land	Primary Use:	Commercial Vacant Land
Unique ID:	06350750	Map Block Lot:	0092 36	Acres:	2.54
490 Acres:	0.00	Zone:	B2	Volume / Page:	0952/0668
Developers Map / Lot:		Census:	4602-02		
<b>Value Information</b>					
		<b>Appraised Value</b>	<b>Assessed Value</b>		
Land		1,071,000	749,700		
Buildings		0	0		
Detached Outbuildings		0	0		
Total		1,071,000	749,700		
<b>Owner's Information</b>					
<b>Owner's Data</b>					
STATE OF CT DEPT OF TRANS 2800 BERLIN TPK NEWINGTON CT 06131					