THE SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR RESPONSES TO THIS RFEI HAS BEEN EXTENDED FROM AUGUST 18, 2017 TO FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 15, 2017 AT 4PM.

CITY OF WHITE PLAINS
TRANSIT DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY
REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
ANSWERS TO SUBMITTED QUESTIONS

Q: What is the FAR (Floor Area Ratio) for this proposed area for development?
A: Please refer to Section VI Existing Zoning and Utilities of the RFEI.

Q: Is it mandatory to have minority business participation in the development?

Q: Are there any drawings or structural reports for the parking structure(s)?
A: Additional information, including technical documents and/or reports will be made available concurrent to the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP).

Q: Are there any drawings or program documentation for the fire station?
A: Additional information, including technical documents and/or reports will be made available concurrent to the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP).
Q: Are there any environmental studies for the four sites available?
A: Additional information, including technical documents and/or reports will be made available concurrent to the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP) including a Phase I analysis.

Q: Are there any site surveys available for use, which were used in preparation of the RFEI response?
A: Additional information, including technical documents and/or reports will be made available concurrent to the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP).

Q: Will there be a tour organized by the City before the August 18 RFEI deadline?
A: No.

Q: If zoning modifications are suggested by the developer, does the City have a clear idea on the potential extended development timeline?
A: A timeline will be developed following review of the responses received to the RFEI and subsequent RFP.

Q: Are there any hi-res/digital AutoCAD drawings available for reference?
A: Additional information, including technical documents and/or reports will be made available concurrent to the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP).

Q: Please confirm if it is a requirement to respond to the RFEI in order to later respond to any subsequent RFPs or RFQs.
A: No, however it is the City’s intent to identify and select a development team through information gathered during the RFEI/RFP process.

Q: Will only those respondents who participate in the RFEI process, be considered for the RFP process?
A: No, however it is the City’s intent to identify and select a development team through information gathered during the RFEI/RFP process.
Q: What is the city’s highest priority for the site's redevelopment? Site activation or a return on investment for the city?
A: To develop a financially feasible plan that creates value and a variety of vibrant synergistic uses while balancing neighborhood impacts.

Q: What is Mon-Fri occupancy rate for parking garage? What is the weekend occupancy rate for the garage?
A: Please refer to the Transit District Strategic Plan and the accompanying Baseline studies, which can be found in the Existing Conditions Report and Final Report at www.wptransitdistrict.com for weekday occupancy rates.

Q: What role--advisory or otherwise--will the MTA play in the development process?
A: Representative(s) from the MTA served on the Stakeholder Task Force for the Transit District Strategic Plan and participated in the entire 15-month public planning process. For further information, please contact the MTA.

Q: Can the firehouse be located off-site?
A: Development concept plans in the submission must include the incorporation of a 40,000 square foot municipal firehouse either in its existing location, or within the 4.5-acre development site to maintain existing emergency service response times and direct access to Ferris Avenue, Bank Street and Hamilton Avenue. However, an alternative concept plan may be provided identifying a new firehouse location in the immediate vicinity of the development site that maintains or reduces emergency service response time.

Q: What are affordability expectations for a development project on the site?
A: The City of White Plains Planning Department manages the City’s Affordable Housing Program. Information regarding this program can be found on the City’s website at: http://www.cityofwhiteplains.com/index.aspx?nid=192

Q: Are drop-off lanes, driveways, as well as various rights-of-way at the train station under MTA jurisdiction or the City’s?
A: The City of White Plains maintains jurisdiction over the rights-of-ways, driveways, and drop-off lanes around the train station with the exception of the MetroNorth Right of Way (MTA), and Bronx Street which is under the jurisdiction of Westchester County.
Q: Are overhead walkways and other structural elements connecting the station to the parking garage under MTA's jurisdiction or the City's?

A: Jurisdiction over overhead walkways and other structural elements varies between the City and the MTA.

Q: What are distance offsets from the rail right-of-way that are required by MTA for new construction?

A: Please contact the MTA for specific requirements.

Q: Is the City in any conversations with bike-share or car-share systems that may be relevant to this project?

A: The City provides a Zip Car program in City-owned parking garages. In addition, the City is in the process of gathering information and investigating opportunities regarding bike share program.

Q: Can the City provide topographic maps of the four sites?

A: Additional information, including technical documents and/or reports will be made available concurrent to the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP). GIS and AutoCAD data is publicly available at gis.ny.gov and giswww.westchestergov.com.

Q: Are you seeking an at-risk developer who is prepared to develop one or all of the parcels with direct private investment? Or are you seeking a development planning team who will continue to strategize the best solution for the stakeholders and ultimately issue an RFP for a developer(s) for specific phases and/or parcels?

A: The City seeks to solicit interest from qualified parties in the redevelopment of three City-owned properties and one White Plains Urban Renewal Agency-owned parcel (together the “Development Site”). The purpose of the RFEI is to solicit interest and redevelopment strategies for the Development Site that will advance the goals and objectives of the recently released White Plains Transit District Strategic Plan. The City is not seeking a development planning team to ultimately issue an RFP for a developer(s).

Q: What measures will the City employ to protect the intellectual property of responders from being copied or otherwise misused without permission?

A: The City will make all efforts to protect intellectual property of responders. Such information must be labeled as proprietary (by page or specific graphic) in the submission. Note that the entire submission may not be deemed proprietary information.
Q: Two months is not sufficient time to create a complete and well-documented conceptual plan... will a partial submittal be considered if the project’s intent is clearly expressed?

A: All Submission Requirements detailed in the RFEI must be followed.

Q: Does the City anticipate any future Master Plan updates that will impact this project?

A: Not at this time, however any updates would further incorporate the goals and objectives of the White Plains Transit District Strategic Plan.

Q: Are there any City-Owned locations that would be suitable for relocation of the Fire Station?

A: Development concept plans in the submission must include the incorporation of a 40,000 square foot municipal firehouse either in its existing location, or within the 4.5-acre development site to maintain existing emergency service response times and direct access to Ferris Avenue, Bank Street and Hamilton Avenue. However, an alternative concept plan may be provided identifying a new firehouse location in the immediate vicinity of the development site that maintains or reduces emergency service response time.

Q: Are there any Privately-Owned locations that would be suitable for relocation of the Fire Station?

A: Development concept plans in the submission must include the incorporation of a 40,000 square foot municipal firehouse either in its existing location, or within the 4.5-acre development site to maintain existing emergency service response times and direct access to Ferris Avenue, Bank Street and Hamilton Avenue. However, an alternative concept plan may be provided identifying a new firehouse location in the immediate vicinity of the development site that maintains or reduces emergency service response time.

Q: Can any existing Fire Facilities be retrofitted/expanded to compensate for the loss of the existing Fire Station?

A: No. Development concept plans in the submission must include the incorporation of a 40,000 square foot municipal firehouse either in its existing location, or within the 4.5-acre development site to maintain existing emergency service response times and direct access to Ferris Avenue, Bank Street and Hamilton Avenue. However, an alternative concept plan may be provided identifying a new firehouse location in the immediate vicinity of the development site that maintains or reduces emergency service response time.
Q: Does the City consider the current location of Fire House No. 2 to be an optimal location for this use?

A: Development concept plans in the submission must include the incorporation of a 40,000 square foot municipal firehouse either in its existing location, or within the 4.5-acre development site to maintain existing emergency service response times and direct access to Ferris Avenue, Bank Street and Hamilton Avenue. However, an alternative concept plan may be provided identifying a new firehouse location in the immediate vicinity of the development site that maintains or reduces emergency service response time.

Q: Can the City provide us with a list of the current owners and operators of every parking facility (surface and structured) within 1 mile of the TransCenter?

A: For parking ownership information, please refer to the Transit District Strategic Plan and the accompanying Baseline studies, which can be found in the Existing Conditions Report and Final Report at www.wptransitdistrict.com.

Q: Will the City consider a shared parking strategy for the emerging Transit Oriented District?

A: Yes.

Q: What other lots are owned or controlled by the City?

A: Please refer to the Baseline Studies which can be found in the Existing Conditions Report and Final Report at www.wptransitdistrict.com for ownership information within the Transit District.

Q: What is the projected construction timing and funding source for the improvement of the TransCenter?

A: To be determined based on response to this RFEI and RFP.

Q: Is the MTA planning and committed to build an intermodal transportation center on the existing site?

A: Representative(s) from the MTA served on the Stakeholder Task Force for the Transit District Strategic Plan and participated in the entire 15-month planning process. For further information, please contact the MTA.
Q: Has the MTA established a timetable and a budget for improvements to the TransCenter?

A: Representative(s) from the MTA served on the Stakeholder Task Force for the Transit District Strategic Plan and participated in the entire 15-month planning process. For further information, please contact the MTA.

Q: What level of participation will the MTA have in this project?
What level of participation will the Bee-Line have in this project?
What level of participation will the Greyhound Lines have in this project?
What level of participation will the Leprechaun Lines have in this project?
What level of participation will the Short Line Bus have in this project?
What level of participation will the Trail Ways of New York have in this project?
What level of participation will the I-BUS have in this project?
What level of participation will the private shuttles have in this project?
What level of participation will the private taxi companies have in this project?

A: The City of White Plains encourages the continued participation by all interested stakeholders.

Q: What are the likely impacts of the new Bus Rapid Transit on this area?

A: The Transit District includes the future site of multiple stops and planned eastern terminus of the Lower Hudson Transit Link Bus Rapid Transit from Rockland County, NY to White Plains. A station stop is currently proposed for the south side of Main Street between the MetroNorth train bridge and Bank Street and on the West side of Ferris Avenue adjacent to the existing parking structure (Site # 3, 16 Ferris Avenue).

Q: Will there be financing available in the form of Federal, State or City issued bonds with sufficient capacity to pay for:
(i) the massive infrastructure and parking requirements of the redevelopment plan for all 4 parcels;
(ii) the infrastructure on and off site to provide the TOD desired results
(iii) relocating the fire station?

A: It is the City’s intention to explore and pursue all available public and private funding sources and opportunities.

Q: If a new platform needs to be constructed above the current abutting street grades sufficient to accommodate the needs of commuters from all sources of transportation, are there sources of funding available to cover this expense?

A: It is the City’s intention to explore and pursue all available public and private funding sources and opportunities.
Q: Will the City consider granting height allowances for both residential and office buildings above 280 feet?

A: Modified zoning district concepts that clearly advance the stated goals and objectives of the Transit District Strategic Plan may be considered.

Q: Are there any known environmental concerns on any of the parcels? Have any Phase 1 tests been conducted?

A: Not at this time, however a Phase I Report will be available concurrent with the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP).

Q: Will the City consider modifying existing road directions and travel lane widths?

A: Yes.

Q: What are the likely impacts of the new MXD use developments to this area? Current and proposed.


Q: Have there been studies conducted to assess the need, or plan for accommodating, future bicycle travel lanes?

A: The Transit District Strategic Plan includes near-term strategies regarding bicycle facilities. See www.wptransitdistrict.com for details.

Q: Identify the private and public owners of New Street? Will the City consider transferring its New Street ownership to a private entity?

A: New Street as currently constituted traverses private property west of North Lexington Avenue and is public east of North Lexington Avenue. The City will not commit to the de-mapping of a municipal street at this time.
Q: Will the City consider improvements to the “street wells” at the north-western ends of N. Lexington and/or MLK?

A: Yes. The Transit District Strategic Plan and the accompanying Baseline studies, which can be found in the Existing Conditions Report and Final Report, address various transportation-related improvements. See www.wptransitdistrict.com for further details.

Q: Will the City consider improvements to the local and regional way finding systems as part of this plan?

A: To be determined, based on the outcome of the redevelopment project. However, the Transit District Strategic Plan outlines several strategies pertaining to wayfinding improvements.

Q: Will the City be responsible for coordinating/paying for the anticipated sewer improvements?

A: To be determined based on the outcome of the redevelopment project.

Q: Are there any current or proposed Capital Improvement projects that will impact the proposed project area?

A: There are no Capital Projects currently scheduled that will impact the proposed project area.

Q: The RFEI states that submissions should consider a number of different community-driven principles in respect to the development. This includes, among other things, a “balance of high-density transit-oriented development with surrounding neighborhoods. Has this “balance” been defined? What are the specific concerns of the surrounding neighborhoods that should be balanced?


Q: The RFEI calls for the incorporation of additional parking at appropriate transit oriented development ratios where needed. Has the City defined this ratio and is there flexibility with respect to the ratio for any additional parking required in respect to new development? Is all displaced commuter parking subject to a replacement of a 1:1 ratio?

A: The City seeks to maintain and maximize existing commuter parking capacity utilizing district wide solutions and may consider flexibility in TOD parking requirements for future development.
Q: Is there a new height limitation if the “community benefit” increases the FAR?

A: Modified zoning district concepts that clearly advance the stated goals and objectives of the Transit District Strategic Plan may be considered.

Q: What geotechnical information is available for the development area? Is the water table known for the development area?

A: Additional information, including any technical documents and/or reports will be made available concurrent to the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP).

Q: The RFEI notes that it is anticipated that the 24” diameter reinforced concrete pipe will require an upgrade to a new 36” ductile iron pipe when the development site is approved. Where within the development site will this upgrade be required and has an anticipated cost estimate been performed?

A: To be determined based on the outcome of the redevelopment project.

Q: What role, if any, will Con Edison and their services need to play in the development of this site? Has there been any discussion with Con Edison about existing gas and electrical capacity?

A: To be determined based on the redevelopment project.

Q: Are there existing drawings for the garage and the firehouse on sites three and four, and if so, can these drawings be provided? What are the respective ages of these facilities?

A: Additional information, including any technical documents and/or reports will be made available concurrent to the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP). The parking structure was completed in mid-1980s.

Q: If the existing firehouse were to remain in its current location, are there improvements that the City would require a developer to make to the facility?

A: Development concept plans in the submission must include the incorporation of a 40,000 square foot municipal firehouse either in its existing location, or within the 4.5-acre development site to maintain existing emergency service response times and direct access to Ferris Avenue, Bank Street and Hamilton Avenue. However, an alternative concept plan may be provided identifying a new firehouse location in the immediate vicinity of the development site that maintains or reduces emergency service response time.
Q: Are there any property surveys or CAD drawings of the development area that can be made available?

A: Additional information, including any technical documents and/or reports will be made available concurrent to the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP). GIS and AutoCAD data is publicly available at gis.ny.gov and giswww.westchestergov.com.

Q: Will all four sites be awarded to a single developer or will each be awarded separately?

A: It is the City’s intent and desire to identify a development team to comprehensively redevelop all properties in a manner that achieves the City’s goals and objectives formulated through the community-driven Transit District Strategic Planning process.

Q: Are there any plans to renovate the Metro-North White Plains Station?

A: Representative(s) from the MTA served on the Stakeholder Task Force for the Transit District Strategic Plan and participated in the entire 15-month planning process. For further information, please contact the MTA.

Q: How many parking spaces exist on each lot with parking?

A: Please refer to the Transit District Strategic Plan and the accompanying Baseline studies, which can be found in the Existing Conditions Report and Final Report, address various transportation-related improvements. See www.wptransitdistrict.com for further details.

Q: What percentage of parking must be retained once the parking spaces are relocated?

A: The City seeks to maintain and maximize existing commuter parking capacity on the development site while considering district-wide solutions to meet total parking demand.

Q: Must the relocated parking be on one of the four sites up for redevelopment or will other possibilities be considered?

A: The City seeks to maintain and maximize existing commuter parking capacity on the development site while considering district-wide solutions to meet total parking demand.

Q: Are there regulations restricting the distance of relocated commuter permit spaces from the entrance of the Metro-North White Plains Station?

A: The City seeks to maintain and maximize existing commuter parking capacity on the development site while considering district-wide solutions to meet total parking demand.
Q: Where is the 24” concrete pipe currently located?

A: The 24” reinforced concrete sanitary line runs down Water Street and then below the Mott Street tunnel which is approximately between the Fire station and the Parking Garage. It then connects directly to the County Trunk line.

Q: What is the schedule post-RFEI for selecting the final Developer? In light of the demanding Submission Requirements as provided in the FREI does it make sense to skip the RFP process, and select the Developer at this stage, especially if there is a relatively limited number of Respondents?

A: It is anticipated that the City will review all responses received, and will make further determinations regarding a schedule at that time. It is the City’s intent to identify a development team through this RFEI/RFP process.

Q: In describing a "financially feasible plan [to] finance development of the project site" as required in Respondent’s Submission, are there any constraints or other factors that all Developers should uniformly factor with respect to, for example, (i) the amount of available or contemplated City "public investment," (ii) what infrastructure or other amenities might be funded through City or other public investment, (iii) will the City consider something like a PIF or TIF as a financial mechanism, (iv) does the City expect to have an approved IDA in place in the near future, (v) is the City contemplating selling, or retaining ownership of the subject parcels, and (vi) in suggesting a "Public Private Partnership" in the RFEI, what financing mechanism(s), if any, was the City contemplating?

A: It is the City’s intention to explore and pursue all available public and private funding sources and opportunities. Respondents must describe a general approach and relevant experience to financing development of the project site.

Q: In discussing near and long-term strategies in the RFEI, is the City contemplating that these strategies and the associated objectives and timing would apply to the selected private Developer?

A: Please refer to the Guiding Strategies in the Transit District Strategic Plan at www.wptransitdistrict.com. Such timeframes were derived from a conceptual public planning process and may be modified upon selection of a private developer.

Q: Is the City expecting the Detailed Concept Plans to address areas outside the 4.5 acres - i.e., the White Plains Transit District shown in the RFEI?

A: No.
Q: Will the City commit to using its eminent domain powers as a last resort, if necessary, to implement the Project?

A: The “Development Site” is narrowly defined in the RFEI to include three City of White Plains owned parcels and one White Plains Urban Renewal Agency parcel.

Q: What role or level of commitment (physically and financially), if any, has the MTA either committed to, or is being contemplated or discussed, regarding the Project? How does a Respondent address this factor in its financial development analysis? Has the MTA provided the City with any capital improvement plans related to this station, or would affect the station?

A: Representative(s) from the MTA served on the Stakeholder Task Force for the Transit District Strategic Plan and participated in the entire 15-month planning process. For further information, please contact the MTA.

Q: The City discusses in the RFEI and Strategic Plan its willingness to consider "modifications to existing zoning regulations." Does the City contemplate enacting such modifications (i) prior to selecting a final Developer, (ii) after selection, but prior to either site plan review or conveyance of the City properties, or (iii) as a consolidated private application?

A: To be determined pending the outcome of the RFEI/RFP and redevelopment process.

Q: Is the City contemplating a maximum cap on developable square feet in a modified zoning?

A: To be determined pending the outcome of the RFEI/RFP and redevelopment process. Modified zoning district concepts that clearly advance the stated goals and objectives of the Transit District Strategic Plan may be considered.

Q: Does the City contemplate any ratio or percentage of a specific use(s) (i.e., residential to office) in the overall Concept Plan or modified zoning?

A: To be determined pending the outcome of the RFEI/RFP and redevelopment process.

Q: Will the City allow the ultimate selected redeveloper to use the technical data collected in the Strategic Plan process as part of any environmental review process under SEQRA?

A: Yes.
Q: Who would be responsible for implementing the long-term traffic improvements?

A: To be determined pending the outcome of the RFEI/RFP and redevelopment process.

Q: Will the Developer be responsible for managing and/or operating the retail and open space upon completion of the Project?

A: The selected developer will be responsible for managing any proposed retail component of the project. Management of open space is to be determined pending the outcome of the RFEI/RFP and redevelopment process.

Q: The potential Development Phasing shown at Section 5.3.2 of the Strategic Plan indicates one approach to phasing. Is the City open to considering other phasing options? At a minimum, what Fire Station operations must be maintained throughout the construction period?

A: Yes, the City is open to considering other phasing options. The existing Fire Station must remain fully operational throughout the duration of the project.

Q: Has the City contemplated any temporary parking strategies for the time during which all or a portion of station-area parking may be unavailable?

A: Please refer to the Transit District Strategic Plan and the accompanying Baseline studies, which be found in the Existing Conditions Report and Final Report and identify district parking capacity. No specific temporary parking strategies have been contemplated at this time. See www.wptransitdistrict.com for further details.

Q: City still owns the underlying land. Will land be sold to developer or does the City want a ground lease structure?

A: To be determined pending the outcome of the RFEI/RFP and redevelopment process.

Q: Is NY State Economic Development involved and offering State sanctioned benefits?

A: Not at this time.

Q: Is the County IDA the responsible entity that can offer benefits such as fixed tax assessments, mortgage and sales recording tax relief, etc.

A: Yes.
Q: We assume the streets bisecting the site are all public rights of way.
A: Yes, Hamilton Avenue and Main Street are public rights-of-way.

Q: Does MTA have a vested interest in this project and are they a stakeholder with input over final plan? i.e. Harrison.
A: Representative(s) from the MTA served on the Stakeholder Task Force for the Transit District Strategic Plan and participated in the entire 15-month planning process. For further information, please contact the MTA.

Q: Base information regarding easements, covenants, utility locations, etc. along with geotechnical information and base surveys will be helpful to receive to use for the final submission.
A: Additional information, including any technical documents and/or reports will be made available concurrent to the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP).

Q: Is SEQRA process started or is that responsibility for the developer?
A: No, the SEQRA process has not started for the redevelopment project or any potential rezoning. The responsibility is to be determined based on the outcome of the RFEI/RFP process.

Q: We estimate a development scope of over 1 mm square feet of mixed use in buildings perhaps 25 stories plus parking structures, streetscape and public amenities. Does this density fit the target for the Transit District? Also, discuss building height definitions and limitations if there are any.
A: Yes, the density generally fits the target for the Transit District. Find existing building height definitions and limitations at www.cityofwhiteplains.com/zoning. Modified zoning district concepts that clearly advance the stated goals and objectives of the Transit District Strategic Plan may be considered.

Q: It is contemplated the primary uses will be residential, hotel, limited office space and support retail along with entertainment uses and restaurants. Is this a mix that will be looked on favorably or is the City looking to limit certain uses?
A: Yes, these are the types of uses that we would expect to see in a mixed use development. The City seeks to develop a financially feasible plan that creates value and a variety of vibrant synergistic uses while balancing neighborhood impacts.
Q: We anticipate a long session with stakeholders to gain consensus before the formal filing. Are the approving entities the County IDA, City or White Plains and MTA?

A: To be determined based on a final redevelopment plan.

Q: We have estimated the approvals to last 2 years (beyond SEQRA, if needed). Is there a reason we should adjust that assumption?

A: To be determined based on a final redevelopment plan.

Q: We assume that a PILOT tax structure can be negotiated as part of the project financing. XXXXX plans to own the properties long term so permanent financing from the GST’s or HUD will most likely become reality. Does this financing pose any problems for the City?

A: It is the City’s intention to explore and pursue all available public and private funding sources and opportunities. Respondents must describe a general approach to financing development of the project site.

Q: Reference is made in the documents that an increase in density is encouraged based on “community benefit”. Please define.

A: Modified zoning district concepts with increased density that clearly advance the stated goals and objectives of the Transit District Strategic Plan, including the provision of open space, active ground floor uses, and improved connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods, may be considered.

Q: The commuter parking data must be a part of the project? What capacity and proximity will the City agree to and are you willing to agree to a managed/shared parking regime? What minimum parking ratios is the City willing to accept for each use. Perhaps this information is in the master plan but we often find planning proposals in conflict with municipal codes.

A: The submission must include a conceptual parking plan that accounts for both existing commuter parking and adequate parking for additional uses proposed at accepted TOD levels. The City seeks to maintain and maximize existing commuter parking capacity utilizing district-wide solutions.

Q: Will the City require prevailing wage construction crews given that it is City property?

A: To be determined based on the final redevelopment project.

Q: Will there be benefits that the City can induce for this project?

A: To be determined based on the final redevelopment project.
Q: Are there plans to match the private investment with City or municipal bonding to limit off site infrastructure or RR improvements etc.?

A: To be determined based on final redevelopment project.

Q: The construction plans would be a phased plan. Does the City have any deadlines or limits for completion?

A: Not at this time.