White Plains Transit District
Development Opportunity

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

June 4, 2019

Downtown White Plains Transit District

City of White Plains, NY
I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The City of White Plains is pleased to release this Request for Proposals (“RFP”) for the redevelopment of three municipally-owned properties and one White Plains Urban Renewal Agency owned property totaling approximately 4.5-acres along the easterly side of the White Plains Metro-North railroad station, within the White Plains Transit District. It is the City’s intent to identify a development team through this RFP process to redevelop the properties in a manner that achieves the City’s goals and objectives formulated through the community-driven Transit District Strategic Planning process and outlined in the City’s Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) that was released in June 2017. Respondents to this RFP need not have submitted a response to the RFEI.

This project represents a significant development opportunity for the City. It also presents a unique opportunity to enhance critical pedestrian connections between the Transit District and adjacent neighborhoods including Battle Hill, Fisher Hill and Ferris Avenue as well as reinforce the existing Main Street connection to the downtown core. All development concepts must be consistent with the six primary community-driven planning principles developed as a result of significant public input during the Transit District Strategic Plan process including: Density, Economic Development, Open Space, Parking, Pedestrian/Bicycle, and Placemaking.
Located approximately 25 miles north of New York City, the City of White Plains is the commercial and civic hub of Westchester County. The White Plains Metro-North Railroad Station maintains the highest ridership in Westchester County attracting daily commuters from points north, and an increasing number of commuters from New York City. The City’s daytime population of nearly 150,000 benefits from the City’s role as a transportation hub, entertainment destination, and home to major corporations and government offices. As a result, the City of White Plains is experiencing an unprecedented downtown development boom with 5,000 new multi-family residential units and 500,000 square feet of retail/commercial space either under construction or in the development pipeline. The City’s support of these projects demonstrates its commitment to new sustainable development that will serve as a catalyst for economic growth, private investment, and job creation. For more information visit:

cityofwhiteplains.com
By the Numbers:

- **5,000** Multi-Family Dwelling Units
- **450** Affordable Housing Units
- **500,000** sq. ft. Commercial/Office Space
- **$3 Million** in Recreation Fees Collected to Enhance Public Parkland
- **$93 Million** Investment by MTA to Upgrade White Plains Metro-North Station
- **$3.5 Billion** in Total Private Investment
In December 2016, the City unveiled the White Plains Transit District Strategic Plan for the area 1/3 of a mile around the White Plains Metro-North Station, the highest ridership station in Westchester County, leading reverse commute destination on the Harlem Line from New York City, and second leading reverse commute destination in the entire Metro-North system. The district also includes the Westchester County Bee-Line TransCenter Bus Terminal, as well as multiple stops and the eastern terminus of the Hudsonlink Bus Rapid Transit service from Rockland County, NY to White Plains.

The community-driven plan was formulated using a comprehensive and robust 15-month community engagement process resulting in the collection of over 2,000 public comments compiled during multiple public engagement meetings, city events, “Question of the Week” surveys and web-based comments. The final Strategic Plan, background studies, presentations, and public comments are available for download at the White Plains Transit District website:

cityofwhiteplains.com/TransitDistrictStudy

The Strategic Plan provides a vision for both public and private investment in the Transit District. Within this framework, the City has begun implementing a series of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure projects to enhance connectivity to the downtown core. In addition, MTA Metro-North is currently investing $93 Million to significantly enhance the existing White Plains Station consistent with Plan recommendations.
In June 2017, the City released a Request for Expressions of Interest to solicit interest from qualified parties in the redevelopment of the Development Site. The RFEI describes the City’s goals and objectives for the Development Site, including key community planning principles and development scenarios established by the Transit District Strategic Plan. Respondents to this RFP need not have submitted a response to the RFEI.

The responses garnered from the RFEI have substantially informed this RFP. Select the report cover below to access the document.
COMMUNITY PLANNING PRINCIPLES

The City seeks to develop an implementation strategy for an enhanced multimodal Transportation Center that accommodates all modes of travel, maximizes economic development potential immediately around the station, and activates connections in Downtown White Plains, resulting in increased economic vitality. The development of these sites presents unique challenges and opportunities that will require a thoughtful approach to balance existing uses with new development. Submissions must incorporate the following community-driven planning principles that were developed through the Strategic Planning Process:

**Placemaking:** Create a vibrant mixed-use destination by enhancing the civic role of the station area, introducing a mix of symbiotic land uses and public art to improve the overall experience for residents and visitors alike.

**Open Space:** Create a signature passive green space to act as the transit district anchor for existing and future residents, and provide opportunity for neighborhood events, markets, public art, etc.

**Bike/Pedestrian Infrastructure:** Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to enhance non-motorized access to the Transit District, and enhance connections to adjacent neighborhoods, downtown core, and Bronx River Parkway Reservation.

**Parking:** Maintain and maximize existing commuter parking capacity utilizing district-wide solutions. Incorporate additional parking at appropriate transit oriented development ratios where needed.

**Density:** Balance high-density transit oriented development with impact on surrounding neighborhoods. Encourage ground floor retail, preserve view-sheds, and supply appropriate height and bulk transitions between the Transit District and surrounding neighborhoods (Battle Hill, Fisher Hill, and Ferris Avenue)

**Economic Development:** Develop a phased and financially feasible plan that creates value and a variety of vibrant synergistic uses while balancing neighborhood impacts.
The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) and Metro-North Railroad recently announced a $93 million investment to upgrade the existing White Plains Metro-North Station. The project commenced in 2018 with an anticipated completion date of December 2020. The project includes:

- New side platform with radiant heat flooring for snow/ice control;
- New replacement heated stairs from side platform;
- New elevator at main entrance to side platform;
- New bathrooms, ticket office, and food vendor space;
- New and larger, glass-enclosed waiting area;
- Upgraded main entrance;
- New, expanded lobby, artwork, and newsstand;
- Upgrades to the Main St. and Hamilton Ave. entrances, as well as the Mott St. tunnel;
- New platform canopies with wood ceilings;
- Addition of Wi-Fi, USB charging ports, electronic messaging, LED lighting, security cameras, and speakers throughout the station.

More complete project details and timeline can be found at the official project website:

[web.mta.info/mnr/wp-reno/wp-reno.html](http://web.mta.info/mnr/wp-reno/wp-reno.html)
The City secured a $1.2 million grant through the New York State Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) to enhance existing bike and pedestrian infrastructure in the Transit District Area. Improvements will include Westchester County’s first fully separated two-way bike lane on the south side of Martine Avenue to facilitate much needed east-west bike access from the core of the downtown to the Transit District. The grant will also fund a new secure bike corral at the Metro-North station, three major crosswalk enhancements, upgrades to existing bike lanes, and a High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk Beacon mid-block on Main Street between Lexington Avenue and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. All improvements will be completed by 2020. The city launched a dockless bike share program with Lime in June 2018. The program has been extremely successful and now includes “Lime-E” pedal-assist bikes. The Transit District has proven to be the leading origin and destination for bike share trips city-wide.
The new **Hudsonlink** bus rapid transit system improves the availability, accessibility, and quality of transit in the Lower Hudson Valley and reduces travel times for buses along the New York State I-287 corridor. Downtown White Plains is the eastern terminus of the first phase of **Hudsonlink** with several stops within the White Plains Transit District adjacent to the Metro-North Station.
II. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENT PARCELS

The Development Parcels are located along the west side of Ferris Avenue and Bank Street, to the immediate east of the White Plains Metro-North Station and Right of Way. The northern three parcels (10, 16, and 20 Ferris Avenue), are owned by the City of White Plains, while 3 Hamilton Avenue ("Bronx Street Lot") is owned by the White Plains Urban Renewal Agency. Combined, the parcels comprise over 4.5 acres and consist of two surface parking lots (Bronx Street Lot and Station Lot), a parking garage, and White Plains Fire Station #2.

All four parcels hold great potential for transit-oriented-development and increased connectivity between the White Plains Transit District, adjacent neighborhoods, and the rest of Downtown White Plains. Any redevelopment of this area must be consistent with the Strategic Plan and carefully consider potential impacts and enhancement opportunities for the surrounding residential neighborhoods (Battle Hill, Fisher Hill and Ferris Avenue), including view-sheds, pedestrian and bicycle connections, traffic, and infrastructure.
The three city owned parcels, 10, 16, and 20 Ferris Avenue, development sites 2, 3, and 4 respectively, have been “squared off” illustratively above to clearly distinguish existing uses and associated strategies identified by the Transit District Strategic Plan. The three parcels are currently irregularly shaped on the City’s official tax map and would be merged or adjusted by the City to accommodate a future redevelopment plan.
Site #1: 3 Hamilton Avenue ("Bronx Street Lot")

**Location:** Bordered to the north by Hamilton Avenue, the south by Main Street, the east by Bank Street, and the west by the Metro-North White Plains Station and right-of-way

**Ownership:** City of White Plains Urban Renewal Agency

**Approximate Lot Size:** 40,500 Square Feet

**Current Use:** Daily permit and meter surface parking lot

**Strategic Plan Vision:** Mixed-use development concepts must incorporate retail/commercial, entertainment, or other active ground floor uses. An opportunity exists to create a new station concourse with pedestrian access at grade from Bank Street through a new development and up to the train platform and potential future elevated open space “High-Line” concept running parallel and adjacent to the existing northbound platform. Connection from new development to the center platform must have a minimum vertical clearance of 23-feet from top of rail. Any proposed connection to the platform(s) must be compatible with current station improvement plans (Appendix D) and will require the discretionary approval of Metro-North.
**Location:** Bordered to the north by an existing driveway, the south by Hamilton Avenue, the east by Ferris Avenue, and the west by Metro-North White Plains Station and right-of-way.

**Ownership:** City of White Plains

**Approximate Lot Size:** 37,500 Square Feet

**Current Use:** Daily permit/meter surface parking lot, taxi queue, drop-off area

**Strategic Plan Vision:** Development concepts must maintain or enhance existing at-grade circulation patterns and access to the station for all modes of transportation (drop off, taxi, shuttle, bike). Pedestrian realm enhancements and the addition of at grade retail is imperative. Opportunity to create an enhanced bike/pedestrian connection under the Hamilton Avenue Metro-North Railroad Bridge to the Bronx River Parkway Reservation Pathway on the west side of the train tracks and provide additional elevated public open space at track level (“High-Line” concept) to span Hamilton Avenue and connect to 3 Hamilton Avenue. Vertical development must maintain a minimum of 15 feet of clearance from grade to accommodate emergency vehicle access and 15 feet of horizontal clearance from the edge of the Metro-North railroad tracks.
Location: Bordered to the north by an existing driveway, the south by an existing driveway, the east by Ferris Avenue, and the west by Metro-North White Plains Station and right-of-way

Ownership: City of White Plains

Approximate Lot Size: 40,000 Square Feet

Current Use: Structured parking garage that provides both permit and meter parking.

Strategic Plan Vision: Development concepts may consider a phased approach that results in the ultimate relocation of the existing parking spaces to unlock the parcel for development, or in the alternative, integrating the existing structure into a comprehensive transit oriented development scheme that enhances both vehicular and pedestrian access to the main station entrance. In this instance, proposed enhancement to the structure’s exterior (e.g. artwork or artistic lighting etc.) is required. Ample opportunity exists to enliven the street-wall along Ferris Avenue, create enhanced pedestrian connections to the Westchester County Bee-Line TransCenter Bus Station across Ferris Avenue and to the Bronx River Parkway Reservation on the west side of the train tracks.
Location: Bordered to the north and east by Ferris Avenue, the south by an existing driveway, and the west by Metro-North White Plains Station and right-of-way

Ownership: City of White Plains

Approximate Lot Size: 72,500 Square Feet

Current Use: Municipal firehouse with limited surface parking

Strategic Plan Vision: The City is currently evaluating options to construct a new fire station in the immediate vicinity of the development site. Development concepts need not include the incorporation of a new municipal firehouse facility at its existing location, however it is imperative that the Firehouse remain operational in its existing location until a new facility is constructed by the City.
III. Existing Zoning

The Development Site is currently zoned CB-4 (Core Business), a high-density, mixed use district encompassing much of the City’s central business district. The CB-4 District permits a combination of residential, retail, office, government, business, service, cultural and entertainment uses and permits high-density hi-rise housing (230-280 feet) to be built on development sites greater than 50,000 square feet, and where 50 percent or more of the floor area ratio is residential (www.cityofwhiteplains.com/zoning).

Minor modifications to existing zoning regulations required to accommodate a proposed development concept that is consistent with the City’s Transit District Strategic plan must:

- Enhance the form and function for new transit oriented development with particular attention to ground floor uses and the public realm;
- Include standards for building height and mass that would define a clear transition between the Development Site and surrounding residential neighborhoods;
- Maintain the existing maximum building height of 280 feet;
- Have a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 9.5. Surface parking and parking structure areas are not calculated as part of total FAR.
IV. Existing Infrastructure

Utilities

The existing sanitary sewer line that services the Development Site is a 24” diameter reinforced concrete pipe that leads directly to the Westchester County trunk main. This pipe also services the portion of the City that will ultimately include over 2,000 new multi-family residential units that are currently in the development process. As such, it is anticipated that the existing 24” pipe would require upgrading to a new 36” ductile iron pipe when the Development Site is improved. Existing potable water and storm water infrastructure capacity appears sufficient to accommodate new development under existing zoning regulations. Additional technical specifications and plans pertaining to easements, utilities, land records, the Municipal Garage, and White Plains Train Station are provided in Appendix A.

Traffic and Transportation Circulation

No changes to the existing street network and traffic circulation in the vicinity of the development parcels are planned save for minor lane width and lane reductions to accommodate bicycle facilities on both the Hamilton and Bank Street corridors. Development proposals that include amendments to existing vehicular circulation must provide evidence that such changes would maintain or enhance existing levels of service and demonstrate safe operations for pedestrians and cyclists. Baseline traffic modeling was conducted during the public planning process of the Transit District Strategic Plan, the findings of which and can be found in Appendix B.

It is imperative that vertical development on 10 Ferris Avenue maintain or enhance existing at-grade circulation patterns and access to the station for all modes of transportation (drop off, taxi, shuttle, bike) and would require a minimum of 15 feet of vertical clearance from grade to accommodate emergency vehicle access and 15 feet of horizontal clearance from the edge of the Metro-North railroad tracks.
The City of White Plains retained Barton & Loguidice, D.P.C. (B&L) to conduct a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment of the Development Site. The investigation of the site was conducted using a three-part process: an environmental records review, interviews, and a site visit. This investigation was conducted in general accordance with the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) "Standard Practice for Environmental Site Assessments: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Process" (ASTM Designation E 1527-13).

The following findings were made as a result of the site reconnaissance and review of available information:

- Portions of the site appear to have had many historical uses including: a lumber and coal yard, a farm supply store, an auto mechanics shop, an “amusements manufacturer”, various other commercial businesses, a city works garage, a fire station, a parking lot and garage, and a part of an active railway siding.

- 20 Ferris Avenue was listed on the ERNS database and NY Spills database due to a leaking spray paint machine. The property achieved acceptable cleanup status in 1994. The property was also listed on the LTANK database for a total of four incidents. Each incident achieved acceptable cleanup status. It is listed as having two active Underground Storage Tanks (USTs).

- According to the EDR report, the Young Coal and Lumber Yard was established in 1885 and contained a mill, several small sheds, coal and lumber storage areas, and railroad sidings. By 1911, the property was used to manufacture sashes, blinds and trim, and for the storage of grain, fertilizers and feed. The site was razed in 1974, and has served as a parking lot since. Cleanup efforts included excavation and removal of soils 26 feet below ground surface.

- This assessment has revealed no recognized environmental conditions (RECs) in connection with the property. While 55-gallon drums of paint, propane tanks, and small gas cans are stored on site in the basement area, there was no evidence of staining associated with these items, and proper spill containment measures have been taken, such as the use of a locked flammable storage cabinet and the installation of a holding tank that is connected to the floor drain in the paint shop.

A full copy of the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, dated May 2018, can be found in Appendix C. The information provided is not intended to serve as a complete environmental record of the properties.
V. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Respondents must submit a detailed Development Plan consisting of the following elements:

1. A cover letter introducing your organization and briefly summarizing your intent.
2. Organizational lead contact and key team members’ biographies/resumes
3. A proposed Design Concept and Development Plan to include:
   - Narrative identifying the development plan and how it will advance the objectives set forth in the RFP and the Transit District Strategic Plan.
   - A site plan depicting each land use proposed and specific pedestrian access and circulation improvements (crosswalks, pedestrian bridges, bicycle facilities, roadway improvements) to enhance access to the station from the Bronx River Parkway Reservation, Battle Hill, Fisher Hill, and Ferris Avenue neighborhoods.
   - Delineation of the bulk and size of each component of the development program relative to existing CB-4 zoning regulations and/or any potential zoning modifications required to facilitate the development plan and further advance the goals and objectives stated in the City’s Transit District Strategic Plan and RFP. Building height shall not exceed 280 feet and the aggregate FAR must not exceed 9.5. (Note: Parking areas are not calculated as part of FAR). To the maximum extent practicable, all tower floorplates shall be oriented to preserve the view-shed of the City from the Battle Hill Neighborhood to the west of the train tracks.
   - Provision of retail/commercial, entertainment, or other active ground floor uses along all Bank Street and Ferris Avenue street frontages.
   - Identification of the location, size, and intended use/programming of an at-grade community green, park, or open space on the Development Site consistent with the goals and objectives of the Transit District Strategic Plan. In the alternative, the creation of a linear elevated open space (“High-Line” concept) parallel and adjacent to the station’s northbound platform with potential to span Main and Hamilton Avenues and provide additional pedestrian access points to both the north and southbound station platforms. Any proposed connection to the platform(s) must be compatible with Metro-North’s current station improvement plans as provided in Appendix D.
   - The maintenance and maximization of existing commuter parking capacity utilizing district-wide solutions. Incorporate additional parking at the City’s Central Parking Area (CPA) ratio of 1 space per residential unit. Provide a reasonable shared parking analysis balancing the parking needs of existing commuters, future residents, and all other programmatic elements proposed.
   - A description of sustainable building practices that will be incorporated into the project.
   - Concept to maintain or enhance existing at-grade circulation patterns and access to the station for all modes of transportation (drop off, taxi, shuttle, bike) if vertical development on 10 Ferris Avenue is proposed. A minimum of 15 feet of vertical clearance from grade is required to accommodate emergency vehicle access.
4. An estimate of the economic impact of the Development Project including but not limited to temporary and permanent job creation, increased municipal tax revenue, economic development multipliers, etc.

5. A construction phasing plan, schedule and general budget.

6. A financial capacity and public/private partnership approach to financing development of the project site through debt, equity, Public Private Partnership (PPP) including the possibility of outright sale, ground lease, payment in-lieu of taxes (PILOT), value capture, or other innovative mechanisms to fund both sustainable development and improvements identified in the City’s Transit District Strategic Plan. Include three (3) project examples in which the development team has utilized the financing strategies listed above including a clear overview of previous Public Private Partnership experience with municipal governments or other public entities. Include specific details on the role and financial commitment of both the development team and municipality/public entity for each project example.

7. Visual photo simulation illustrating a scaled massing model or rendering of the proposed Development Plan from four (4) specific public vantage points as viewed from approximate eye level (6 feet from ground). The existing and future views must be from the specific locations (A,B,C,D) depicted on the map and street level images provided in the Visual Photos Simulation section of this RFP.
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The proposal must demonstrate the Respondent’s proven financial ability to complete the project and the availability of identifiable funding sources to finance the project. The following financial incentives may be available through the Westchester County Industrial Development Agency (IDA):

- Issuance of Tax Exempt Bonds and Notes
- Sales Tax Exemption
- Mortgage Recording Tax Exemption
- Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)

For more information about the County’s IDA programs, please visit:

business.westchestergov.com/incentives/ida

OPPORTUNITY ZONE

3 Hamilton Avenue (“Bronx Street Lot”) is located within Census Tract 93 which is designated as a Federal Opportunity Zone pursuant to the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (Tax Reform, P.L. 115-97). Opportunity Zones offer a tax benefit designed to incentivize long-term equity investments in businesses and real property located in designated underserved communities. For more information, please visit:

www.irs.gov/newsroom/opportunity-zones-frequently-asked-questions

and

esd.ny.gov/opportunity-zones
A. Northwest corner of the intersection of Chatterton Avenue and Tarrytown Road

B. Intersection of Main Street and Bronx River Parkway southbound on-ramp
C. Southeast corner of the intersection of Main Street and Bank Street

D. Southeast corner of the intersection of Hamilton Avenue and Bank Street
VI. Evaluation Criteria

The award of a contract for the described services will be made by the City of White Plains Common Council based on recommendations by an RFP Evaluation Committee. Respondents may be required to make a presentation of their Development Plan and qualifications to this committee. The City of White Plains may enter into a Lease or Purchase and Sale Agreement with the selected developer, at its sole discretion.

The evaluation committee will make recommendations on proposals based on the following criteria:

- **40%**
  Innovative Development Plan and Project Design

- **30%**
  Adherence to Community-Driven Transit District Strategic Planning Principles

- **20%**
  Financial Proposal and Capacity

- **10%**
  Schedule for Completion
VII. RFP SCHEDULE

RFP Release Date
• June 4, 2019

Information Session
• June 27, 2019

Deadline to Submit Questions
• July 17, 2019

Answers to Questions Posted
• July 31, 2019

Deadline to Submit Proposals
• November 1, 2019 by 4pm EST
VIII. Submission Requirements

Please provide **twenty (20) hard copies** and **one (1) electronic copy** in the form of a flash drive/CD of the submission titled “City of White Plains Transit District Development Opportunity Proposal.” Your proposal must be received by the City of White Plains by **November 1, 2019 at 4:00 pm EST** at the following address:

City of White Plains Planning Department  
70 Church Street  
White Plains, NY 10601  
Attn: Christopher N. Gomez, AICP  
Commissioner of Planning  
Re: White Plains Transit District Development Opportunity Proposal

- The City of White Plains will host an information session for prospective Respondents on **June 27, 2019 at 2:30 PM EST**. All participants **must** RSVP with a list of attendees by **June 20, 2019** to transitdistrict@whiteplainsny.gov.
- The City of White Plains will accept written questions via email only from prospective Respondents no later than **July 17, 2019**. Please submit questions to: transitdistrict@whiteplainsny.gov with the following email subject line **“RFP Question.”**
- Written questions must include the requestor’s name, e-mail address and the Respondent represented.
- Responses to all timely and appropriate questions will be posted on the City’s website cityofwhiteplains.com/TransitDistrictStudy by **July 31, 2019**.
- The City of White Plains reserves the right to conduct interviews with or pose questions in writing to Respondents in order to clarify the content and to ensure a full and complete understanding of each submission.
- The City will make all efforts to protect intellectual property of Respondents. 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.
- This RFP is not intended and shall not be construed to commit the City to procure or to contract for any services.
- The City reserves the right to negotiate a Development Agreement with any Respondent to this RFP.
- All costs incurred in connection with responding to this RFP will be borne solely by the Respondent.
- The City reserves the right, without prior notice, to supplement, amend or otherwise modify this RFP, or otherwise request additional information, or to withdraw this RFP at any time. Notification of changes in connection with this RFP will be made available via the City’s website cityofwhiteplains.com/TransitDistrictStudy.
- The City may, at its discretion, waive any provision herein as it deems in the best interest of the project and/or the City.