

**Request for Proposals  
For the Redevelopment of the Odd Fellows Hall  
63-65 Warren Avenue**



**Issued by  
The East Providence Planning Department**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The City of East Providence is requesting proposals from development firms for the purchase and re-development of the former Odd Fellows Hall. The Odd Fellows Hall located at 63-65 Warren Avenue (map 106, block 22, parcel 13) has been a prominent landmark of the City since its construction in 1889 and has been given the distinction of being listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The subject property is a 6,098 sq. ft. corner parcel with frontage on Warren Avenue and Burgess Avenue, and is currently owned by the City. The structure possesses enormous local significance as one of the last remaining structures of Watchemoket Square, which was once the center of commercial activity for the City prior to the construction of I-195 in the early 1960s and is one of the few surviving local civic buildings from the 19th century. The Planning Department has been in consultation with the City's Waterfront Commission, Historic District Commission and State Preservation Office and it's mutually agreed that the Odd Fellows Hall has enormous redevelopment potential to serve the community as a restaurant, live/work art studio, cultural museum, mixed-use office/retail/residential or a private apartment building.

Previous owners over the last 15 years have failed to address the basic maintenance needs of the structure and for the last several years, almost no maintenance except for a few emergency repairs made by the City have been performed. Small holes are present in the roof, windows detaching from framing and water damage to the interior are a few of the noticeable signs of neglect. Surprisingly, the majority of the original architectural features are present in the interior and exterior, and the building appears to retain its structural integrity and possesses many remarkable and unique historic architectural details. As an example, the second floor meeting room, which is one of the historically significant features of the structure possesses unique molding, decorative brackets, large arches and iron tension rods.

In June 2014, the City hired Durkee, Brown, Vivieros and Werenfels Architects (DBVW) to complete a condition assessment report that found that the building is in a general state of disrepair with significant rehabilitation required. The condition assessment report recommended a redevelopment plan that is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The City recognizes that significant capital investment will be required for occupancy of the building and the City is willing to work in partnership with the successful bidder to redevelop the property. City participation may come in the form of tax stabilization, low-interest commercial loans, CDBG grants or other assistance. Such assistance will be considered based upon the nature of the redevelopment proposal and its benefits to the City.

The City has received approval from the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) and State Properties Commission to enter into a lease agreement for a portion of property on the southeast side of the intersection of Burgess Avenue and Warren Avenue adjacent to the I-195 on-ramp to be used for off-street parking. (See attached lease.)

## **II. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Responses to this RFP shall include the following information:

### **1. AGENCY INFORMATION**

- Name of firm;
- Business address, including city, state, zip code and phone number;

- Contact person, phone and e-mail of who can respond to detailed questions regarding their firm's proposal;
- Indicate whether or not incorporated and if so, when;
- If not incorporated, name of owner(s);
- Indicate if you ever defaulted on a contract and if so, when and why.

## 2. DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

**Development Options:** Identify the proposed re-use of the structure and describe why the specific development options were chosen over others such as townhouses, condos, apartments, offices, senior living, mixed-use, live/work, artist studios, etc. Provide supporting information and data justifying why the proposed re-use option will be successfully occupied.

**Property Description:** Describe in detail the proposed re-use of the structure including but not limited to interior and exterior alterations, building layout, number of units, parking needs and consistency with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The proposal must state if the second floor meeting room will be preserved or altered, and the extent of any proposed alterations.

**Development Benefit:** Describe the benefits the development of this site will create such as green building design, sustainable energy, preservation of a unique architecture, job creation, moderate priced housing, a needed social service or a cultural amenity to be provided to the City residents.

**Neighborhood Impact:** Describe the impact that the proposed re-use of the site will have on the immediate residential neighborhood, Warren Avenue commercial corridor and adjacent Bold Point Waterfront sub-district, if any.

**Time-Line:** Provide a timeline of all major components of the redevelopment of the property, including a potential phasing plan for occupancy.

**Fee or lease payment:** An acquisition fee or the terms of a lease agreement.

## 3. PROJECT TEAM

- Describe the background and relevant experience of the firm along with any sub-consultants to be employed on this project. Describe the background and experience of the designated project manager and other personnel who will participate in the project design and implementation, including a description of the function of each designated participant;
- Describe the relationship or role the firm will have with the City and other stakeholders of the project.

## 4. FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY & LEGAL STRUCTURE

- Preliminary development budget detailing Sources & Uses, Income Budget, Operating Budget, and Cash Flow Analysis. It must be demonstrated that the proposed re-use is financially feasible;

- Describe the type of relationship anticipated with the City in terms of site development, financing, project implementation, ownership and final disposition/management. If financial assistance is required, state the amount and type such as 5-year tax stabilization, City's commercial loan program or CDBG funds.

Respondents may be asked to provide additional information, as needed, to assist the City in the decision making process.

### **III. SELECTION PROCESS**

Responses will be evaluated on the basis of the relative merits of the proposal. Proposals will be assessed generally on their overall benefit to the City, preservation of the interior and exterior architectural features, financial feasibility, benefits to the community and quality of design. A brief presentation of the proposal and interview with City staff may be requested prior to City staff submitting a recommendations to the City Manager and City Council. Firms will be requested to present their proposal before the City Council at a regularly scheduled City Council meeting, which meets the first and third Tuesday of every month.

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the responses to this RFP:

- Qualifications of the firm;
- Response from references;
- Job creation and economic and/or social benefit to the City;
- The extent of preserving the interior and exterior architectural features and a redevelopment plan that is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties;
- Impact the redevelopment will have on the immediate residential neighborhood, Warren Avenue commercial corridor and the adjacent Bold Point Waterfront sub-district;
- The type of relationship being proposed between the City and the firm;
- Demonstrate financial feasibility of the proposal and degree of financial commitments from public and private funding sources that may include a letter of credit;
- Timeline of major steps for conveyance and the rehabilitation of the structure.

### **IV. REFERENCES**

A minimum of three (3) references must be submitted.

### **V. GENERAL CONDITIONS**

- The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive any informality, and to select and negotiate services in the best interest of the City;
- The Firm will abide by all Federal, State and City regulations in the performance of their redevelopment of this site;
- The City reserves the right to accept all or part of any proposal, and to negotiate a contract for services and cost with the selected Firm.

## **VI. CITY CONTACT**

Any questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing to:

Patrick Hanner, Senior Planner

E-mail: [phanner@cityofeastprov.com](mailto:phanner@cityofeastprov.com)