**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FOR ENGINEERING, CONCEPTUAL DESIGN AND PLANNING SERVICES PURSUANT TO THE RELOCATION OF EXISTING AMTRAK TRAIN STATION IN AMSTERDAM, NEW YORK AND DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW TRAIN STATION WITHIN A MULTIMODAL FACILITY**

**Introduction**

Through the support of the New York State Department of State, under the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP), the City of Amsterdam, working in conjunction with the Montgomery County Business Development Center (MCBDC) intends to engage appropriately qualified consulting teams to assist in the formulation of plans to relocate the Amtrak passenger station from its existing location at the periphery of the city to a more convenient and central downtown location where the building will serve a multi-modal purpose. Presently, the station is an under-sized and unimpressive structure on West Main Street and lies well within the floodplain. In fact, the building was severely damaged by Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, with over five feet of water inundating the station.

Construction of a new rail terminal in the downtown area will not only address issues of the current building’s inadequacy and the threat posed by future flooding, it presents the community of Amsterdam with an extraordinary opportunity to integrate the location and function of a new multi-modal facility as a key catalyst for downtown revitalization. A fundamental objective of this engagement is to establish the predicate framework — in terms of basic feasibility, location, design, anticipated costs, integration within the local circulation system and relationship to nearby downtown buildings/functions -- for the submission of a successful application under the US DOT TIGER grant program and other pertinent funding sources to construct a new and expanded rail station in downtown Amsterdam.

Accordingly, this Request For Proposal (RFP) requires that two interdependent assignments be undertaken pursuant to this engagement: **[1]** Engineering and design services relative to building/platform/site/integration with rail lines/etc.; and, **[2]** Context-sensitive planning services intended to facilitate the creation of a Transportation Oriented Design (TOD) District, with the new train station / multi-modal facility serving as an activational and architectural focal point in downtown. The engagement may be undertaken via a team – involving two or more firms -- or by a single professional services firm -- provided a single firm can supply all the necessary expertise. No particular approach is preferred; rather, the City will prioritize respondents (whether single firms or teams) who demonstrate a capacity to ably undertake all elements of the engagement. Recognizing the breadth of the assignment and the fact that responses must be carefully considered, respondents will be allotted approximately 45 days to formulate their proposals.

Pursuant to New York State Executive Law Article 15-A, the Department of State recognizes its obligation under the law to promote opportunities for maximum feasible participation of certified minority-and women-owned business enterprises and the employment of minority group members and women in the performance of DOS contracts. Accordingly, the City of Amsterdam encourages the submission of proposals by MWBE firms to meet the DOS-established overall goal of 20% for MWBE participation, 10% for Minority-Owned Business Enterprises (“MBE”) participation and 10% for Women-Owned Business Enterprises (“WBE”) participation (based on the current availability of qualified MBEs and WBEs).

**Context**

The City of Amsterdam is providing the following background information to juxtapose the past several decades of economic and community decline against emergent positive trends. We expect that proposers will envision this engagement as an opportunity to play a major role in Amsterdam's continuing community renewal.

With direct access to both the Erie Canal and a major rail transportation corridor, the City of Amsterdam, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, emerged as a relative industrial colossus along the banks of the Mohawk River. Earning the sobriquet “Rug City”, carpet mills sprouted and flourished, powered by the precipitous drop of the North Chuctanunda Creek. Immigrants, largely from Southern and Eastern Europe, filled the factory floors. By the 1950’s, however, the fabric of the local economy was rent, with technological innovation reducing the need for labor and a union-adverse textile industry climate in the southern states inducing wholesale relocation of local manufacturers. Correspondingly, the ranks of the community’s citizenry thinned dramatically as a population of nearly 35,000 (in the 1930’s) people shrunk to a now stable cohort of 18,620 inhabitants.

A second and, in retrospect, very unnecessary, experiment in social and economic reform further crippled the city, especially the downtown. In the early 1970s, urban renewal was undertaken with considerable ambition, if not foresight, as the very heart of the community, a previously vibrant downtown built along the axes of Main Street and Market Street, was torn down and replaced by the utilitarian Amsterdam Mall (now known as Riverfront Center) that squat upon much of the area that once comprised downtown and, even more reprehensibly, forced a incomprehensible reorganization of vehicle and pedestrian circulation patterns. Thus, the salient challenge to defining the City’s downtown actually occurred forty years ago when the area was effectively bi-furcated with the construction and development of the mall. The placement of the immense building at the nexus of the primary east-west and north-south routes through the downtown imposed an uncoordinated vehicular and pedestrian circulation system on the traditional downtown grid. The collateral damage associated with the urban renewal effort also included the demolition of Downtown’s New York Central Railroad Station -- ultimately replaced by an under-sized and unadorned Amtrak station that lies deep within a floodplain far to the west at the city limits.

Nonetheless, during the last 15 years a new urban tableau has been painstakingly crafted and its elemental features are now taking form. Revitalization efforts began to take hold when the City updated its Comprehensive Plan in 2003 -- a document that recognized that revitalization efforts needed to integrate private capital, public investment and sound land use and zoning policy -- and, in a hopeful harbinger, the 2010 Census revealed the City’s first increase in population in seventy years. The fact is that Amsterdam is now on the rise, retaining and attracting sufficient businesses to more than offset closures and departures, yielding a significant net gain in both jobs and property value.

Amsterdam can and will become not only home to an attractive downtown and livable community, but will also morph into regional destination as an urban hub of the Mohawk Valley and serve as an appealing gateway to the Greater Capital District, the Adirondack Park and the western Mohawk Valley. Additional investment in the City will reinforce the substantial public and private investments of the past 15 years and will make apparent to a broader audience the palpable momentum of broad renewal that the residents and business owners have already been building upon.

The relentless and impelling energy surging from closely coordinated private investment, public expenditures and sound planning have already substantively addressed many of the nettlesome, if not seemingly insoluble, challenges that once stymied downtown. These investments include, but are not limited to:

* Completion of the Mohawk Valley Gateway Overlook (MVGO), a nearly $20 million pedestrian bridge, serving as a linear park that connects the Southside with its culinary and hospitality businesses to the Northside and traditional downtown.
* Investment of over $4 million in transportation improvements to the downtown area, creating a more accessible and safer environment for both drivers and pedestrians and addressing the most problematic circulation issues.
* Business creation and growth throughout the East Main Street Riverfront District, which is the City’s traditional Latino neighborhood.
* Rapid business growth within the Sanford Clock Tower, a six story building along the Chuctanunda Creek and home to many expanding small businesses.
* Additional investment within the Riverfront Center.
* Redevelopment of a former hotel, located on the west end of the Historic Main Street District, into an assisted living facility.
* Redevelopment of buildings in downtown area for mixed-use purposes, with a focus on high-and apartments -- the ongoing transformation of the former KeyBank building on West Main Street serves as an archetype for future rehabilitation and transformation of downtown buildings .

**Nature of Desired Response**

The City of Amsterdam is fully aware of the challenges associated with undertaking this project and fully realizes that significant ingenuity will be required to meet these challenges and yield a product that is commensurate with the expectations of the citizens of Amsterdam. Accordingly, the City of Amsterdam strongly encourages creativity in response to this RFP. We have provided the elemental outline of the work program, but competitive respondents are expected to elaborate beyond the programmatic details we have provided. Furthermore, respondents are expected to furnished pricing information by component tasks, provide detailed project schedules and indicate how they will successfully coordinate with the parties vested in this initiative including, but not limited to, the City of Amsterdam, the Montgomery County Business Development Center, the New York State Department of State - Office Planning and Development, a Project Advisory Committee and the general public.

Although respondents are required to frame their responses in the manner subsequently stipulated, the City of Amsterdam and MCBDC are eager to solicit responses that creatively and organically approach the assignment. Here are some principles and general guidance to keep in mind when formulating your response:

* Elements of the Work plan reflect an earlier conception of the necessary individual tasks needed to accomplish the engagement. The fact is that the work that actually needs to be done may deviate in general nature and specific substance from the work scope as supplied. We do not expect respondents to simply regurgitate that specific scope; rather, **your response should reflect your firm’s comprehension of how the job ought to be done, why it ought to be done in that manner, and how specific tasks and deliverables should deviate from the current iteration of the Work plan.**
* The budget is established at $208,500, which is the amount of the grant funding from the LWRP and local cash match. Your firm’s proposed budget should not exceed $208,500. The City and MCBDC recognize that undertaking certain tasks, in the manner previously described, may be neither fiscally practicable, nor integral to achieving the desired project outcome. Accordingly, if compliance with that budget constraint requires your firm to adjust its proposed work plan, please simply do so and describe how the work plan has been modified in order to accomplish the engagement with the available funding.

**Work Plan**

The work plan as presented below should be considered to be somewhat elastic and conceptual in nature, thus allowing for proposers to outline an approach to the engagement that results in the most usable product. The constituent elements of the scope of work to be undertaken are a synthesis of the items in the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) grant contract between the City of Amsterdam and NYS Department of State (only items that relate directly to the work of the selected consultant) and additional planning tasks, as identified by MCBDC staff and, as such, are inherently unwieldy in their organization. There are two primary reasons for encouraging a certain level of malleability in the substantive content of the proposals.

1. The budget available to undertake the engagement is limited and inflexible -- accordingly, the proposal should **reflect for those finite resources can be best allocated to accomplish the project**.
2. The City of Amsterdam and staff from the Montgomery County Business Development Center have not directly undertaken an analogous project. As such, it is likely that there are certain technical tasks/analyses that need to be undertaken, but that are not necessarily outlined in the work plan. The respondent should identify any such omissions and, as appropriate, incorporate those tasks/analyses into the work plan.

Project Coordination Meeting

The City of Amsterdam/MCBDC will hold a project meeting with the consultant and other project partners as appropriate, to review project requirements, site conditions, and roles and responsibilities; identify new information needs and next steps; and transfer any information to the consultant which would assist in completion of the project. The consultant shall prepare and distribute a brief meeting summary clearly indicating the agreements/understandings reached at the meeting. Work on subsequent tasks shall not proceed prior to Department approval of the proposed approach as outlined in the meeting summary.

*Deliverable -- summary of meeting, including basic decisions regarding roles, processes, protocols, etc.*

Initial Reconnaissance of Potential Sites and Site Selection

The consultant will coordinate closely with representatives from CSX & Amtrak and directly interface with NYS Department of Transportation (DOT) defining general parameters to guide site selection, including, but certainly not limited to: minimum areal footprint requirements, track segment constraints, multi-modal circulation and access requirements, necessary modifications/enhancements to existing local circulation system Together with City of Amsterdam/MCBDC, project partners and an Advisory Committee, the consultant will develop site additional selection criteria and apply those criteria to three possible sites for the rail station. The consultant will then make a recommendation to the aforementioned parties regarding the best site for a new rail station.

*Deliverable -- summary of evaluation of all three potential sites in the context of general siting parameters and other stipulated criteria. Detailed memorandum to accompany recommendation of selected site.*

Site Mapping and Inventory

Upon selection the site, the consultant will undertake mapping and inventory tasks, including but not limited to the following elements:

* Site survey showing extent of project boundary
* Ownership/grant/lease status of all lands to be incorporated into the design
* Manmade structures, buildings, or facilities on or adjacent to the site
* Above and below ground infrastructure, including stormwater treatment structures
* Transportation/circulation systems (truck, car, bus, ferry, train, pedestrian, bicycle, etc.) that serve or are located near the site
* Adjacent land and water uses
* Historic and archeological resources
* Soil and, as appropriate, core sampling to determine site stability
* Topography and hydrology
* Natural resources, including location of mature trees
* View corridors
* Zoning and other applicable designations
* Analysis of site constraints, needs and opportunities

*Deliverable -- The consultant will provide the information in both narrative and cartographic format (using broadly available CAD software).*

Focused Analyses -- Transportation Oriented District

As previously emphasized, the City of Amsterdam desires to leverage the relocation of the train station as a means of creating a TOD in the downtown area. Presumably, the TOD would comprise an effective area of 2-3 city blocks and be guided by the following planning rubric:

* Walkable design with pedestrian access as the highest priority
* Train station / multi-modal building as prominent feature of Downtown
* Engaging public space surrounding facility
* Service as regional node containing a mixture of uses in close proximity (office, residential, retail, civic)
* Designed to include the easy use of bicycles and scooters as daily support transport
* Managed parking inside 10-minute walk circle around downtown / train station
* Specialized retail at station serving commuters and locals

The consultant will evaluate the impact and potential of a new location for the rail station / multi-modal facility upon downtown Amsterdam. Issues and dynamics to be considered may include, but not necessarily be limited to the following:

* Other uses for building (multi-use- Office space, café, etc.) that makes it more economically viable
* Tenant mix
* Assessment of factors of how station becomes true hub/activity generator
* Relationship to waterfront/bridge/investments- assessment of spurring/reinforcing other initiatives to create a critical mass
* Use of facility for ease of access across train tracks
* Linkage with other pedestrian trails- more walkable City (Chuctanunda Trail, MVGO, Canalway Trail)
* Localized market potential
* Flow of traffic
* Projections for station vicinity economic development (employment, retail, residential, etc.)
* Summary of available local property and existing uses/occupancy
* Assessment of existing and proposed (already developed – awaiting adopting zoning ordinances

*Deliverable -- Concept TOD Plan inclusive of graphic/schematic presentation, accompanying narrative and supporting documentation.*

Focused Analyses -- Facility Site

After a determination regarding the new location for the rail station has been made, the following pre-engineering and feasibility assessments should be undertaken. The purpose of these analyses is to yield a conceptual blueprint for a relocated rail station/multi-modal facility by identifying/quantifying presently unknown variables, establishing basic design guidelines and refining the functional relationships such that a realizable project may be developed. Several caveats/instructions should be emphasized that this point:

* It is possible that some of the tasks enumerated below may need to be done before a specific site is selected.
* Some analyses may not be directly relevant or may be too costly to undertake as part of this engagement. Identify those as such.
* Some important analyses may be missing from this iteration of the work plan. Please include additional analyses that you recognize are necessary to this process.
* Presently, the identified areas of analysis are organized loosely in bullet points. All responses should better organize these analyses and provide greater elaboration

*Analytical tasks/products:*

* Evaluation of other uses and possible tenant mixes for building (multi-use- office space, café, etc.) that makes it more economically viable
* Formulation of basic design principles
	+ Sizing
	+ Massing
	+ Complementarity with downtown design vernacular
	+ Accessibility
	+ Open/green spaces
* Assessment of parking requirements
* Enhance of opportunities to enhance customer experience and maximize facility user-friendliness
* Identification of platform requirements including size and location
* Evaluation of ownership models
* Identification of requisite signalization requirements
* Development of general cost estimates
* Evaluation of access for buses
* Assessment of proposed and possible vehicular circulation, inclusive of localized road closures
* Evaluation Of Pedestrian Circulation Requirements
* Identification Of Means To Integrate Brown’s Bus And Greyhound Bus Services
* Evaluate Opportunities To Expand Services (Megabus, Etc.)
* Assessment Of Compatibility With Amtrak Design/Functional Requirements
* Identification of cost-sharing opportunities (Amtrak, bus services, etc.)
* Assessment of ability to incorporate sustainability/safety (CPTED) concepts into design
* Evaluation of waiting area requirements
* Identification of Ticketing and rail passenger support requirements

*Deliverable -- The analytical products described above will be incorporated into a report and will serve as the foundation for the formulation of a conceptual design.*

Formulation of Design Alternatives

The consultant shall formulate two (2) alternative design approaches the facility or facilities, considering and including a summary of the following:

* Best management practices to be employed to avoid or reduce water quality impairments from upland runoff or in-water activities, and
* Impacts, if any, to State designated Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitat areas, Scenic Areas of Statewide Significance, other Coastal Management Program special management areas, or other sensitive resources, and how those impacts should be avoided or mitigated.

*Deliverable -- Graphical representations and narrative summary of the itemsas specified.*

Public Meeting

In consultation with the City of Amsterdam/MCBDC & NYS DOS, the consultant shall hold a public information meeting to solicit public input on the conceptual designs to assist in selecting a preferred alternative.

*Deliverable -- a written summary of public input obtained at this meeting*

Construction Requirement Analysis

The consultant shall prepare an analysis of all federal, state and local requirements for the selected conceptual design alternative, including necessary permits and approvals, and a description of how these requirements will be satisfied by the design. This analysis shall be submitted to appropriate project partners and NYS DOS for review. A pre-permitting meeting with NYS DOS and the identified federal, state, local and rail entities may be required to discuss any revisions needed to satisfy regulatory requirements.

Deliverable -- written summary of specified analysis.

Environmental Quality Review

The consultant shall prepare all documents necessary to comply with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) through determination of significance.

*Deliverable -- Preparation of accompanying SEQRA documentation*

Final Conceptual Design

Upon selection of the preferred conceptual design, the consultant will provide general interior schematics, a site plan and renderings appropriate for incorporation into funding applications. The materials to accompany the selected conceptual design shall include all required maps, tables, data, written discussions, and other information identified in the contract and subcontract work plans and during the project kick-off meeting. The draft final of these materials shall be provided to the NYS DOS and the project advisory committee for review at least two weeks prior to the due date for comments. NYS DOS comments must be addressed to the satisfaction of the NYS DOS in subsequent revisions of the products and the final design.

*Deliverable -- Concept Station/Multi-modal Facility Plan inclusive of graphic/schematic presentation, accompanying narrative and supporting documentation.*

**Proposal Format**

The following is what is expected in each of the major sections of your proposal:

*Section A – Introduction:*

This section should contain an Executive Summary which demonstrates your understanding of the project goals and objectives to prepare the plan. Please give this part of the response some careful and considered thought.

*Section B – Company Profile and History:*

* Name, phone number, and e-mail address of the individual Montgomery County should contact with any questions on the proposal;
* The name and title of person submitting the proposal;
* Project team members and qualifications;
* Documentation of firm history, including capabilities in the area of services to be provided, number of years in business, number of years doing business in New York State, size and scope of the operation;
* Type of organization (corporation, partnership or sole proprietorship);
* Name of individual designated as the Project Manager for the project and a resume for this individual identifying past experience on similar projects.

*Section C – Reference Related Materials:*

Respondents should provide the following information with the proposal:

* Current client list;
* Any services that will be subcontracted and the name of the subcontractor;
* At least three (3) references that can provide an informed evaluation of your firm’s capacity to undertake this project and identify engagements with other municipalities or local government agencies within the past five years.

*Section D – Work Plan:*

As previously discussed, the work plan should generally follow the framework previously outlined. However, the work plan should be adjusted and augmented as previously described.

*Section E - Pricing Format:*

Keep this straightforward -- break it down by primary work elements and other significant costs associated with the engagement. Again, you will need to work within a $208,500 budget.

###### Consultant Selection -- Assessment and Scoring

In consultation with the Advisory Committee, the City and MCBDC shall review all proposals received as a result of the RFP. The following criteria will be used in evaluating consultant responses:

* Quality and completeness of the response.
* Understanding of the proposed work plan.
* Applicability of proposed alternatives or enhancements to information requested.
* Cost-effectiveness of the proposal.
* Qualifications and relevant experience with respect to the tasks to be performed.
* Reputation among previous clients.
* Ability to complete all project tasks within the allotted time and budget.

Incomplete proposals that do not address all of the requested components will not be accepted for review and consideration.

All respondents will be notified of the selection as soon as possible after the submission deadline. The City may conduct interviews with one or more proposers. The City reserves the right to reject all proposals.

###### Information, Submission and Deadline

One (1) original and five (5) hard copies of the proposal must be submitted by 4pm Friday, January 20, 2017. Additionally, respondents must submit one copy in PDF format.

 For More Information Contact: Submit Proposals to:

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