

The seal of the City of Peekskill is a circular emblem. It features a central illustration of a teapot and a coffee pot on a small table, with a cup and saucer nearby. The text "CITY of PEEKSKILL" is arched across the top, and "1940" is at the bottom. The seal is rendered in a light gray, semi-transparent style.

**CITY OF PEEKSKILL
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

**Downtown Retail Recruitment Strategy
And Implementation Program**

RFP Issue Date: December 15, 2010
RFP Submittal Date: January 12, 2011

I. INTRODUCTION

The City seeks a firm/individual with extensive experience as well as a thorough understanding of recruiting retail in and the marketing of downtowns.

A) PEEKSKILL OVERVIEW

Location

Approximately 47 miles north of New York City by car, Peekskill is a 4.3 square mile river city located in northwestern part of Westchester County. Peekskill is bounded by the Hudson River to the west and by the Town of Cortlandt on the north, east and south.

Access

Historically, the City's strategic location on the Hudson River and later at the crossroads of major state highways gave it an economic advantage over other locations in northern Westchester and the Lower Hudson Valley.

Today these highway advantages include: The Bear Mountain Bridge, five miles to the northwest, provides automobile access to points west across the Hudson River. The Taconic State Parkway, located 6 miles to the east, is accessible via Route 35/202. Finally, the NYS DOT recently completed a 2-year, \$73 million renovation of Route 9 in Peekskill, including the removal and replacement of several bridges, the widening of lanes, and the provision of new exit and on-ramps, in addition to new landscaping, signage, and other amenities.

In addition, Peekskill has a Metro-North Railroad train station which provides rail commuter service to New York City and points north up until Poughkeepsie. The Westchester County Bee-Line Bus System provides intra city service, as well as service to White Plains.

Economic History

Much of the City's economic base was founded on manufacturing which was built on these advantages and began diminishing in the late 1960s through the early 1980s. As this economic base was in decline, the rise of regional malls in Yorktown, Cortlandt Manor, and Nyack were further decimating the city's once vibrant downtown.

During the last two decades, the city's downtown has undergone an incomplete economic recovery. The city's downtown faced so many challenges as cited above that any recovery seemed unlikely. However, beginning in the early 1990s and for the past decade, the City began to reinvent itself through establishing and cultivating a creative community through the formation of an artist district. From the establishment of this district in 1991, the City slowly began a come back that included:

- The creation of the first Business Improvement District (BID) in Northern Westchester County in 1996.
- The establishment of a satellite of Westchester Community College now the Center for Digital Arts

- The emergence of The Paramount Center for the Arts whose mission is to bring cultural and educational programming to the northern Westchester and Putnam County area at affordable prices.
- The public/private development by in 2002 of the Peekskill Art Lofts an artist cooperative that features 28 live/work lofts. This development was an effort to expand the magnitude of the city's artist district.
- The designation in 2005 of the city's downtown on the National Register of Historic Districts.
- Beginning in 2006, the City and Business Improvement District (BID) have received three NYS Main Street grants totaling \$900,000. These grants have helped renovate some 18 buildings creating new first floor and upper floor commercial spaces and twelve new or renovated residential units.
- In 2011, the first national chain retail store, Walgreen's will open an 11,000 sq. ft. store at the east entry way of downtown.

B) The Economic & Demographic Transformation of Peekskill & The Region and its Juxtaposition to the Downtown

The downtown's primary market area is the City of Peekskill and secondary market area includes Northern Westchester County and Putnam County. Downtown Peekskill (defined in the statement of work) contains of one of Westchester County's most economically distressed Census Tract. According to 2000 Census, more than 80% of the population in this tract was considered low and moderate income residents by U.S. Housing & Urban Development. Furthermore, 62% of the city's total population (then 22,192) were also considered low and moderate income residents and the city's median household income was approximately 26% less than the median household income for Westchester County.

However, Peekskill is surrounded by wealth. Both Putnam and Westchester are two of the wealthiest counties, not only in New York State, but in the United States. According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, in 2006, Westchester County had the second highest per capital personal income (\$70,519) of any county in New York State. Putnam County ranked fifth with \$47,655. In 2007, Westchester's Median Household Income was \$77,220 and Putnam's Median Household Income was \$84,624.

As of the 2009 census, there were 24,746 people living in Peekskill. This represents a 10.3 percent increase since 2000. This figure makes Peekskill one of the fastest growing municipalities in Westchester County during the past decade. This continues the trend of Peekskill's experience during the 1990s when it was deemed one of the fastest growing cities in New York State after the release of the 2000 Census.

This demographic surge was fueled by a number of market rate housing projects developed on the city's perimeter and by an influx of Hispanic immigrants. As of the 2000 Census, the predominant racial makeup of the city was 57% White, 25% African American, and 22% Hispanic. It is anticipated that the Hispanic component of the city's population will rise when the 2010 Census is released in April 2011.

II. Statement of Work (SOW)

The focus of this Strategy will be on the City's Central Business District (CBD) which includes the Business Improvement District (BID) and an area just to the north of the BID (see Map in Attachment A). It contains about 10-12 city blocks.

All of the initiatives mentioned previously have worked to help incrementally revitalize the City's downtown. However, vacant store fronts in the study area have consistently hovered between 28 and 35 during the past 24 months. Moreover, there has been little to no upper floor commercial space leased during the past twelve months. Finally, the area under study contains four highly visible land parcels (one city owned, three privately owned) which offer opportunities for private development, but have remained fallow for the past decade.

The majority of businesses in the CBD are food service establishments, professional offices, salons and beauty-related retail uses, convenience stores, a mix of non-profits, governmental and institutional uses. The downtown residential mix is comprised of subsidized senior living apartments, artist lofts, market rate apartments, and subsidized apartments.

Through the city's efforts to improve public amenities and a small number of entrepreneurs, the downtown is slowly being recognized as a cultural entertainment and dining district.

The selected consultant will perform the following activities in order to produce a Downtown Retail Recruitment Strategy and Implementation Program.

A. Assemblage and Review of Existing Data and Initial Meeting with City and Project Advisory Committee

In order to make the best use of the City's available resources, the consultant will review background information and data the City's downtown business district including the current zoning ordinance and recent changes. All of this information will be provided directly to the consultant by the City.

An initial meeting will be held with the Project Lead (Director of Planning and Development) and Project's Advisory Group. This will allow the consultant to obtain additional background information as well as discuss and confirm work requirements on issues.

Specific tasks include:

- In collaboration with city staff, compile a building inventory to include current use(s) and occupancy status, availability for sale or lease, owner (and listing broker, if applicable), building condition, commercial sf, residential units by type and # of bedrooms, and other applicable characteristics.
- In collaboration with city staff compile a business inventory to include business type, date of establishment, business hours, total sf of leased space, contact info for owner and manager, monthly rents, number of employees, and other applicable characteristics.

B. Develop a Strategy for Retail Recruitment and Implementation Program for Downtown Peekskill.

Specific tasks to include:

- Review current data and develop new and/or updated data needed to establish a market profile; and conduct a demand analysis to determine potential for additional retail;
- Based upon the review data, identify appropriate mix and types of retailers for Downtown, by segment;
- Develop strategy for attracting the appropriate retail to Downtown;
- Document findings and recommendations and present Recruiting Strategy report to the City of Peekskill and its advisory committee.

C. Develop a marketing and leasing plan to implement the retail strategy.

Specific tasks to include:

- Delineate information needed for, and type of, targeted retail marketing materials for each retail type;
- Create a targeted list of national, regional and local retailers that fit the retail profile of the Downtown Recruitment Strategy;
- Identify location and site preferences for national and chain retail store: required gross leasable area, minimum frontage, parking requirements, traffic and access, demographic preferences, and desirable co-tenants
- Assess current Downtown property and retail space “readiness” to attract retailers;
- Make recommendations to the City and property owners on changes necessary in retail spaces to maximize retail opportunities and rents;
- Evaluate city’s existing zoning regulations in the CBD as they pertain to the recruitment of targeted retailers and the prospects for increasing residential density;

D. Assist and counsel City staff with retail contacts and negotiations with property owners/retail prospects.

Specific tasks to include:

- Identify brokerage and leasing contacts strategic and facilitative of retail recruitment efforts;
- Counsel and train City staff on retail recruitment and negotiations, as appropriate.

III. Selection Process

The City intends to award a contract resulting from this RFP to the responsible consultant whose proposal represents the best value. The City holds the right to reject any and all proposals if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the project.

The award of a contract will be made to the consultant whose proposal represents the best value to the City, as reflected by the selection criteria established below. The City will weigh the relative benefits of each proposal and the award will be based on an integrated assessment of the combined merit rating and price. Under this “best value” analysis, the City reserves the right to award to other than the lowest priced proposal or to other than the highest merit rated proposal.

The selection of the successful firm will be made by the Common Council and will include, but not limited to the following criteria:

1. Applicable Experience – Quantity and type of experience with similar work.
2. Approach to Project – methods of identifying, understanding and addressing project.
3. Cost Saving Innovations – Presentation of cost saving ideas for the project.
4. Technical Expertise - Expertise in dealing with the technical issues related to the project.
5. Adequate Resources - Sufficient staff, equipment and systems in place to complete proposed work within proposed time frame.
6. Project Innovations - Ideas or suggestions to improve the quality/schedule of project.
7. Project Proximity - Physical location of firm(s) in order to maximize attention to this project.
8. Performance on Past Projects - Success on previous projects of a similar nature.
9. Familiarity of Project - Knowledge of project background, needs, goals, limitations and special considerations.
10. Proposal Quality - Readability, completeness, brevity and organization of written proposal and quality of oral presentation

Any cost incurred by the respondents in preparing or submitting a Request for Proposal or interviewing for this project shall be the respondents' sole responsibility.

IV. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PROPOSAL

The consultant will submit two printed copies of this report with all appropriate supporting documents and a computer disk (PDF Format) containing the same.

Information in each submittal shall be considered public information by the City of Peekskill. Any information considered to be trade secrets, privileged or confidential should not be revealed in the proposals. Contents of the proposals could be made public after the contract has been awarded and executed. The following sections are required in the submittal:

Budget: Billing or pricing structure for these services needs to be included. Estimated lump sum budget based on the statement of work and the proposed approach detailing the time and budget allotted to each consultant and sub-consultant by task. The budget section should include the cost of public outreach and contacting the potential stakeholders, such as mailings,

websites, questionnaires, etc. Also, the consultant(s) should identify what other costs are typically charged in addition to the professional service hours.

Project Team: Identify the project team members and their positions within, or relationship to, the firm. Detail any anticipated sub-consultants. Provide member resumes as part of each description. Provide a description of the expertise of each team member(s), roles and experience of key personnel.

Schedule: Provide an anticipated schedule, beginning with the estimated date of contract execution, to perform the work listed under Statement of Work above. This schedule should show a start date, prospective meetings dates, final documentation delivery dates, and any other information the submitting firm feels is appropriate.

Similar Experience/References: The submitting firms should list similar project experience detailing project(s) description, location, budget, etc. Submitting firms should also provide a comprehensive list of references. Examples of comparable projects completed in the past 3 years, with references for each.

Level of Support: A description of the type and level of support typically required through each phase of the project, including, but not limited to, staff support, GIS maps/data, and provision of meeting space, meeting materials and meeting logistics, additional supporting background.

Other Information: Provide any information which may be beneficial to the project, or unique qualities/ideas that will improve the project or provide additional value.

All submitted Proposals should be submitted by 11:00 am on Wednesday, January 12, 2011 to

Office of the City Clerk
City of Peekskill
840 Main Street
Peekskill, NY 10566

Proposal should be marked: Downtown Retail Market Study

Please address any questions about the RFP to Christopher Marra at 914-293-0916 or cmarra@cityofpeekskill.com.

Attachment A

