

**CITY OF EAST PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

**RFP #: EP091012**

**Professional Planning Consultant Services for the  
“Auto Row” Portion of Taunton Avenue  
(From Approximately Hall St. Easterly to the Seekonk, MA Boundary)**

**ISSUED BY**

**City of East Providence, RI**

**July 28, 2010**

**CITY OF EAST PROVIDENCE  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**Professional Planning Consultant Services for the  
“Auto Row” Portion of Taunton Avenue  
(From Approximately Hall St. Easterly to the State Line and the Town  
of Seekonk, MA)**

**I. Introduction**

The City of East Providence requests proposals from Professional Planning Consultants for preparation of a comprehensive planning study of the “auto row” portion of Taunton Avenue from approximately Hall Street easterly to the State Line and the Town of Seekonk, Massachusetts, and prepare renderings and draft zoning text and map amendments based upon the Scope of Work described below.

**II. Background**

The City wishes to conduct a comprehensive planning study of the “auto row” portion of Taunton Avenue (Route 44) from approximately Hall Street east to the State Line and the Town of Seekonk, Massachusetts (Project Limits). Taunton Avenue, a State arterial roadway, intersects with Pawtucket Avenue (Route 114) within the Project Limits. Pawtucket Avenue is also a State and arterial roadway and a major north-south route in East Providence with 24,000+ vehicles trips per day. A Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) “Park and Ride” commuter parking lot is located on the north side of Taunton Avenue approximately two-tenths of a mile (.2) east of Pawtucket Avenue. The study will address transportation and land issues and will assess possible future land uses, public transportation and possible locations for a RIPTA hub, safe and convenient pedestrian routes and access points, and streetscape amenities.

Certain properties in the Project Limits are closed automobile dealerships and appear to hold significant potential for redevelopment. This redevelopment could include medium and high-density residential use, accessory commercial and convenience services, and centers for employment. The study shall also address the feasibility of the creation of a hub within the Project Limits for the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA). Public transit is a crucial element in providing people with access to employment, school, shopping, medical visits, and to social service providers. Safe and convenient pedestrian improvements that would conveniently link all the various land uses and public transportation need to be identified.

The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) operates three bus routes that converge on the crossroads of Taunton Avenue and Pawtucket Avenue - Route 33, Route

34, and Route 78. They are east-west routes and north-south routes. RIPTA's highest single boarding point in East Providence is at the juncture of Taunton and Pawtucket Avenues. For a number of years the City and RIPTA representatives have been attempting to establish a formal "hub" in this area that would provide amenities for RIPTA riders, e.g. covered shelters with benches, lighting, trash receptacles, pedestrian amenities for safety and convenience, and an appropriate traffic circulation route for a dedicated bus turn-around. Efforts to accomplish this on a parcel in the vicinity of the East Providence High School have not been successful to date. A RIPTA "Park and Ride" commuter parking area is located on the north side of Taunton Avenue opposite the vacant Tasca Ford property. The commuter lot is approximately two-tenths of a mile (.2) east of the Pawtucket Avenue intersection.

The study would take a multi-modal approach by assessing public transportation, and bicycle and pedestrian modes. Nearby uses provide services, including fast food restaurants, two supermarkets, an urgent care (walk-in) clinic, a bank, and other retail uses (clothes, movies, and pharmaceuticals).

### **III. Scope of Services**

The City of East Providence seeks professional planning consultant services to provide: 1) an assessment report detailing the inventory and analysis of existing conditions found in the field, 2) a report and renderings of proposed land uses and pedestrian and streetscape amenities, as well as an assessment of the feasibility of the establishment of a RIPTA hub and any proposed location, and 3) draft of recommended amendments to Chapter 19, Zoning relating to proposed land uses, infrastructure and transit.

The scope of work for these services shall be as follows and all reports and renderings shall be in print and electronic format and shall become the property of the City of East Providence:

#### **A. Assessment of Existing Conditions and Permitting Requirements**

1. Conduct field visit(s) to gain a thorough understanding of the parcels within the Project Limits and their context, the existing land uses and vacant buildings, and the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) Park and Ride facility, and their interrelationship to all of the surrounding area.
2. Meet with and gather input from key stakeholders, including, but not limited to, City officials, the Downtown Business Association of East Providence, East Providence Chamber of Commerce, RIPTA, RIDOT, property owners and their representatives, the Seekonk, Massachusetts Town Planner, and the Southeastern Regional Planning & Economic Development District (SPREDD) to gather input for preliminary design and the linkages necessary to return the properties to vibrant uses with easily accessible public transit.

3. Review available documentation, including prior planning and transportation studies, e.g. City's Comprehensive Plan, Transit 2020, and Land Use 2025 for the purpose of assembling the information necessary for preparation of preliminary plans and renderings of proposed land uses and pedestrian and streetscape amenities, as well as an assessment of the feasibility of the establishment of a RIPTA hub and any proposed location for review by City officials and other key stakeholders.
4. Determine state and federal permitting issues and reflect these in work products.
5. Draft any necessary text or map amendments to Chapter 19, Zoning and submit in print and electronic format; and
6. Presentation of final draft work products to City administration and the public at a meeting of the East Providence Planning Board and City Council.
  - a) a report in print and electronic format on the inventory and analysis of existing conditions found in the field and a review of any pertinent planning and/or transportation studies;
  - b) development of proposed land uses and pedestrian and streetscape amenities and renderings of these, as well as an assessment of the feasibility of the establishment of a RIPTA hub and its possible locations;
  - c) conduct a kick-off meeting presenting the inventory and analysis to City officials and the public, as well as the proposed land uses and the RIPTA hub feasibility analysis;
  - d) complete inventory and analysis of existing conditions found in the field and rendered on display boards and in electronic media to become the property of the City

## **B. Preliminary Design and Public Input**

1. Based upon field visits and a careful review of any pertinent documents, together with input from key stakeholders, prepare an assessment report on the feasibility of developing mixed uses including medium and high density residential uses and a RIPTA Hub, and prepare a preliminary plan and renderings of proposed uses and amenities.
  - Existing parcels and buildings
  - Utilities (existing and proposed)
  - Transit Amenities
  - Pedestrian and Streetscape Amenities
2. Review site design and improvements plan with key stakeholders.
3. Modify improvements plan as necessary based on input received from stakeholders and hold an additional meeting to review the modifications, if deemed necessary.

### **C. Final Improvements Design**

Once authorized by the City, prepare final design renderings, regulations and work products as required.

### **D. Preparation of Draft Amendments to Land Use Regulations**

The City seeks to be in the position to address any vacancies proactively and to have considered the feasibility of alternative uses to auto dealerships. Redevelopment would provide the opportunity to develop in a “greener” manner, including future construction in this area to be done in accordance with green building standards and utilizing low impact development (LID) techniques, such as green roofs. Particularly in this case, with the expansive paved areas associated with auto dealerships, reduction of the large impervious areas would help to alleviate stormwater pollutants, flooding and would be an aesthetic improvement over the existing condition.

The Comprehensive Plan contains a “Critical Area” Plan which touches the most western portion of Taunton Avenue near Hall Street. This plan calls for encouraging internal pedestrian activity on the large lots in this area, reducing curb cuts, establishing a streetscape theme and landscaping. The Plan calls for “Regional/Auto Oriented Retail”. The proposed study would revisit this recommendation and assess continuation of this policy or preparing for a sustainable mix of other land uses, such as high and medium density residential, supporting commercial uses for the residential land use, and office offices.

The consultant will make any revisions as necessitated by initial public comments and directed by City staff and after a period of no more than two (2) months the consultant will present the revised drafts (including renderings for possible uses and recommended improvements to the streetscape) at a public meeting held by the Planning Board. The Planning Board will hold public meetings prior to making any necessary advisory recommendations to the City Council on proposed zoning map or text amendments.

A final public meeting will be held before the City Council at which the consultant will present the findings of the study and any proposed zoning map and/or text amendments. The City Council would hold a public hearing for presentation of the study and consideration for adoption. Inclusion of the study in the City’s Comprehensive Plan will take place in accordance with State regulations.

## **IV. Equal Employment Opportunity (RIGL 28-5.1)**

**(a) § 28-5.1-1 Declaration of policy.** – (a) Equal opportunity and affirmative action toward its achievement is the policy of all units of Rhode Island government, including all public and quasi-public agencies, commissions, boards and authorities, and in the classified, unclassified, and non-classified services of state employment. This policy applies in all areas where the state dollar is spent, in employment, public service, grants

and financial assistance, and in state licensing and regulation. For further information, contact the Rhode Island Equal Employment Opportunity Office, at 222-3090

### **(b) E-Verify**

Illegal Immigration Control (E-Verify) - All prime contractors and any subcontractors must comply with RI Executive Order 08-01 Illegal Immigration Control Order.

## **V. Timetable for Completion**

A timetable shall be completed for each of the above-referenced project components, with all work to be completed within four (4) months from the notice to proceed.

## **VI. Submission Requirements**

### *A. Insurance*

The planning consultant shall hold general liability coverage of \$ 1,000,000 and workmen's compensation insurance, as required by the State of Rhode Island, for itself and any of its employees. Proof of such insurance shall be provided by the firm chosen, prior to the signing of a contract with the City.

### *B. Proposals*

Written proposals from all interested parties shall be submitted to the office of the City Manager, Room 102, City Hall, 145 Taunton Avenue, East Providence, RI 02914, no later than 10:00 AM on Wednesday, August 18, 2010 (submit five sets). Responses to this RFP shall include the following information:

1. Name of firm.
2. Business address, including city, state, zip code, telephone/fax numbers, and email addresses.
3. Indicate whether or not incorporated. If so, when?
4. If not incorporated, name of owner(s).
5. Have you ever defaulted on a contract? If so, where and why?
6. Description of the background and relevant experience of the firm to be responsible for the scope of work outlined above, along with any sub-consultants to be employed. Prospective firms shall have prior experience in transportation planning and/or Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and shall provide examples of recent work.
7. Description of the background and experience of the designated project manager and other personnel who will actually participate in the project, including a description of the function of each designated participant and their projected time commitments with specific hours and rates. Include the name, title and educational and work experience of each member who will work on this project shall be included in the response. The chosen firm and any of its subcontractors must possess the level of expertise and

- organizational capacity to advance the project, to work with the public, steering committee and staff, and to have a record of delivering work products within schedule.
8. The contact information for references for projects the firm has completed in the past eighteen (18) months shall be included in the response.
  9. A time schedule for completing each task of the project and a schedule of proposed presentations. The City desires to see the project completed within four (4) months.
  10. A budget which sets forth a total price for the scope of services. Proposals shall include an estimate of the cost of each distinct task, and the basis for the estimate. All printing, travel and other miscellaneous costs should be itemized and included in the proposed budget.
  11. The firms selected shall provide at least six (6) copies of the final approved plans, renderings and zoning amendments and all products in electronic format.
  12. Plans shall be stamped by a Professional Engineer (PE) for any civil and structural design, and registered Landscape Architect for any landscaping components.
  13. Fee.

## **VII. Selection Process & Criteria**

Proposals will be reviewed by City staff from the Department of Public Works and Planning, as well as Chairperson of the Cities Historic Properties Commission. This is a Request for Proposal, not an Invitation to Bid. Responses will be evaluated on the basis of the relative merits of the proposal.

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

1. Qualifications of the firm. Please list projects, staff and dates.
2. Qualifications of individuals to be assigned to the project, along with professional recommendations.
3. Proven history of sound financial management.
4. Ability to work effectively with municipal government.
5. Response of references.
6. Fee.
7. Ability to perform scope of work tasks within the City's required delivery timeframe.

## **VIII. PROJECT FUNDING**

The services detailed in this RFP will be funded through a Planning Challenge Grant received from the State of Rhode Island, Division of Planning as administrators of program funds derived from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) transit funds.

## **IX. GENERAL CONDITIONS**

1. **Note:** This is a Request for Proposals (RFP), not an invitation for BID: *responses will be evaluated on the basis of the relative merits of the proposal, in addition to price.* All respondents are advised to review all sections of this Request and to follow instructions carefully as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the proposal.
2. The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive any informality, and to select and negotiate management services in the best interest of the City.
3. The Firm will abide by all Federal, State and City regulations in the performance of the scope of work specified in this Request for Proposal.
4. 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.
5. The Firm shall provide all necessary personnel, materials, equipment, and facilities to perform and complete all work under this proposal, and shall provide the number and type of final work products listed above.
6. The City intends to make a decision on a contract for the requested services within thirty (30) days of the proposal deadline. The Firm shall be prepared to begin work immediately upon the execution of a contract with the City.

## **X. CITY CONTACTS**

Any questions of a technical nature regarding this RFP may be directed to:

Diane M. Feather, AICP, Chief Planner  
East Providence City Hall  
145 Taunton Avenue  
East Providence, RI 02914  
Office (401) 435-7532; Fax (401) 435-7611  
e-mail: [dfeather@cityofeastprov.com](mailto:dfeather@cityofeastprov.com)

Questions related to the procedure and process for submission may be directed to:

Paul Airozo, CPPO, Purchasing Agent  
East Providence City Hall  
145 Taunton Avenue  
East Providence, RI 02914  
Office: (401) 435-7570; Fax (401) 435-7726  
e-mail: [paiozo@cityofeastprov.com](mailto:paiozo@cityofeastprov.com)