



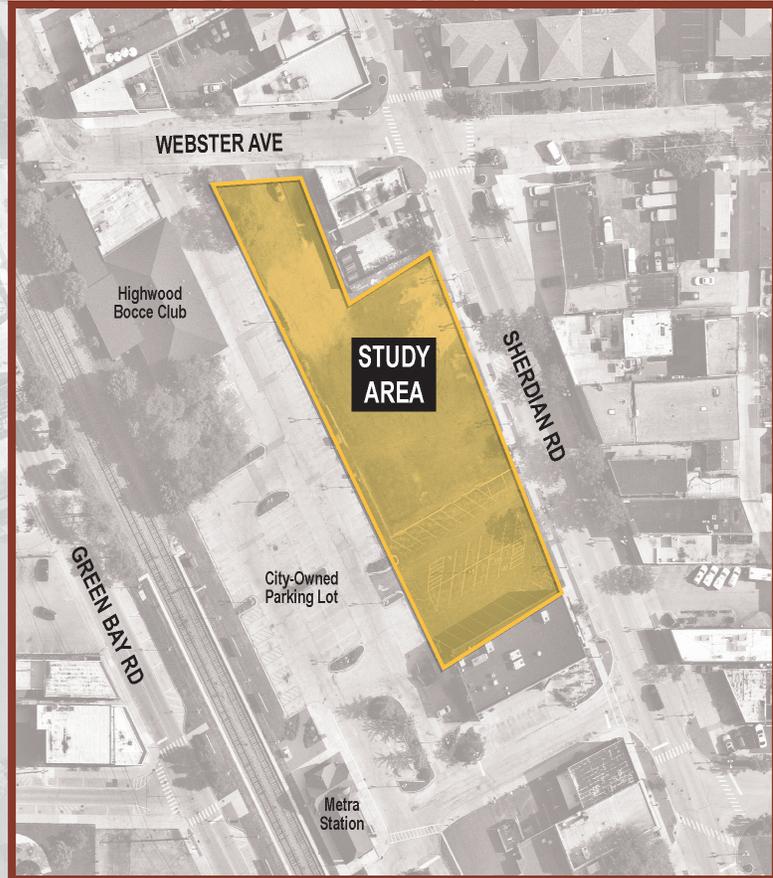
Downtown Transit Oriented Development Request For Proposals (RFP)

Q&A Deadline: All questions shall be submitted via email by 03/15/2024. Answers to all questions received will be posted on the City's website and emailed to those who sent questions by 04/15/2024.

Submittal Deadline: All proposals shall be submitted as a single PDF via email by 06/01/2024

Contact: All contact regarding this RFP shall be via email and sent to:

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INTRODUCTION

Highwood, Illinois is a vibrant and diverse community located in Lake County, Illinois, just 25 miles north of Chicago. With a population of around 5,400 residents, Highwood offers a unique blend of suburban charm and urban convenience. The demographics of the City reflect its diversity, with a mix of ethnicities and backgrounds contributing to its rich cultural tapestry. Highwood is known for its welcoming atmosphere and strong sense of community, where residents from various walks of life come together to celebrate their shared interests and values.

In recent years, Highwood has witnessed exciting development activity in its downtown area and near the Metra station, further enhancing the City's appeal. The Downtown district has undergone revitalization efforts, resulting in a flourishing culinary scene with numerous restaurants, cafes, and eateries. From cozy family-owned establishments to trendy bistros, Highwood offers a wide range of dining options to satisfy any palate. Additionally, the Downtown hosts vibrant events throughout the year, such as the famous Garlic Fest and Bloody Mary Fest, drawing visitors from near and far. Near the Metra station, there has been a surge in residential and mixed-use development, providing convenient housing options for commuters and contributing to the overall growth and vitality of the City. With its combination of diverse demographics and ongoing development, Highwood continues to thrive as an attractive destination for residents and visitors alike.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The City of Highwood is excited to announce an opportunity for private developers to submit proposals for the development of a property near the Metra station in Downtown Highwood. This RFP aims to identify a visionary and experienced developer who can transform this prime location into a vibrant mixed-use development that will enhance the community and contribute to the continued growth of Highwood.

Located just steps away from the Metra station, this site, which includes several City-owned parcels, presents a unique opportunity for transit-oriented development. The City of Highwood recognizes the value of this site as a catalyst for economic vitality and Downtown revitalization. As a vibrant and diverse community with a rich history and a commitment to progress, Highwood is eager to collaborate with innovative developers who share our vision for creating an exceptional destination that integrates mixed-use (commercial ground-floor with upper-floor residential) into Downtown.

The purpose of this RFP is to invite developers to propose a Redevelopment Plan that capitalizes on the site's strategic location and its potential to serve as a vibrant hub in the heart of Downtown Highwood. The selected developer will have the chance to shape the landscape and make a lasting impact on the community, while also benefiting from the support and collaboration of the City of Highwood in bringing the project to fruition.

The City of Highwood invites developers to explore this unique opportunity, and we look forward to receiving innovative and thoughtful proposals that will further enhance the appeal and vitality of our community. Together, we can create a landmark development that reflects the character of Highwood, while providing residents and visitors with an exceptional place to live, work, and enjoy the vibrant atmosphere of our community.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES, FISCAL IMPACT, AND GAP ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

In 2023, the City identified five parcels east of Sheridan Road south of Webster Avenue as a key opportunity with the potential to further invigorate the City's Downtown, if redeveloped. Following the identification of these parcels, the City acquired several of them and demolished the existing buildings to further ready the sites for redevelopment. Though the City had identified these parcels as an opportunity, developers, businesses, and other Downtown stakeholders had not yet realized a shared vision regarding the appropriate development and uses on-site. To achieve this unified vision, the City initiated a process that convened stakeholders to determine appropriate future development scenarios.

At the beginning of the project, the consultant team facilitated meetings between Highwood City staff, business owners, property owners, local developers, and Downtown partners to determine the site's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges to define a unified vision for its future. Following these meetings, the consultant team used the input to define a range of appropriate attributes of development including the desired building footprint and height, use mix, and configuration and quantity of parking.

The range of attributes were utilized to test different development options for the site. Each option proposed a different building height, configuration of parking, and mix of uses. The City of Highwood TIF District includes these parcels and runs through 2037. The City will consider TIF requests on a case-by-case basis.

Development scenarios were then reviewed with the City's staff and elected and appointed officials. Stakeholders affirmed that the City would be open to development proposals that range from four and five stories in height and that the development should include several characteristics, as detailed in the guiding principles section below, to ensure that it contributes to the character of and enhances the pedestrian setting downtown. City staff then developed site concepts to show the desired form, massing, and appearance of the development. The concept images are shown in two different possible schemes below, each scheme with different building massing and façade details.

Concept Images

Scheme 1



Looking South on Sheridan Rd.



Looking North on Sheridan Rd.



View from Metra parking lot

Scheme 2



Looking South on Sheridan Rd.



Looking North on Sheridan Rd.



View from Metra parking lot

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Four guiding principles for the development of the site were identified through the Development Services, Fiscal Impact, and Gap Analysis process.

1. The five parcels should be consolidated and redeveloped with a mixed-use building containing between four and five stories.
 - a. The building's ground floor should front directly on the sidewalk along Sheridan Road.
 - b. Upper stories should step back from the front elevation to provide continuity in the existing street wall and create an intimate sense of scale when viewed at the street level.
2. The ground floor of the development should include nonresidential uses.
 - a. A minimum of 5,000 square feet of the ground floor should be dedicated to retail, restaurant, or entertainment uses.
 - b. The remaining ground floor area may be utilized for residential amenity space.
3. The development should include parking.
 - a. At a minimum, 1.25 parking spaces per residential unit should be provided in either a surface parking lot or parking structure.
 - b. At a minimum, 20 parking spaces made available free of charge to the public, should be provided in a surface parking lot.
 - c. No parking is required to be provided for nonresidential, ground floor uses.
4. The development should act as a gateway into Highwood from the Metra station.
 - a. A pedestrian connection between Sheridan Road and the Metra station should be provided.
 - b. The west-facing building façade oriented toward the Metra Station should play a key role in creating a sense of place. The façade should include a combination of the following features to create an inviting environment:
 - Facade Articulation
 - Balconies on upper-floors
 - Ample window space
 - Public art
 - Vegetation or Landscaping
 - High-quality building materials
 - c. Public gathering space, in the form of a public plaza or pocket park, located between the building and the Metra station is encouraged.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The site includes five parcels in the block west of Sheridan Road and south of Webster Avenue. The two northern parcels were recently purchased by the City and the previously existing buildings have been razed. Meanwhile, the southern two parcels are for sale and currently occupied with a surface parking lot. Additional details regarding the existing features on the subject site are included in the table below.

Address	Site Size (Sq ft)	Existing Use	Current Zoning
424 Sheridan Road	15,156	Vacant	MX: 1 Main Street Mixed-Use District
420 Sheridan Road	5,977	Vacant	MX: 1 Main Street Mixed-Use District
416 Sheridan Road	5,770	Surface parking	MX: 1 Main Street Mixed-Use District
412 Sheridan Road	4,797	Surface parking	MX: 1 Main Street Mixed-Use District
430 Sheridan Road	6,866	Vacant	GX: General Transition

All five parcels are in the City's MX: 1 Main Street Mixed-Use District, which allows development between one and six stores including retail and service uses in the ground floor and residential or office uses in upper floors. The City may approve flexibility in the MX-1 District standards to realize the desired development of the site such as changes in the range of uses allowed on the ground floor, building façade requirements, and driveway access location standards.



RFP RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

Interested parties should submit proposals for the Redevelopment Plan. The proposal should include:

1. Cover letter signed by a developer representative who is authorized to enter a binding contractual agreement for the development on behalf of the firm, organization, or company.
2. Identification of a single individual as the contact person for the proposal process.
3. Statement outlining the relevant previous experience of the development team.

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

It is intended that the selected developer will be responsible for preparing the following materials as part of the development review process:

1. Plat of Survey
2. Existing Conditions Exhibit:
 - a. Existing topography
 - b. Any environmental features such as trees and vegetation
 - c. Location of existing buildings
 - d. Private and public utilities
3. Site Plan showing the following information:
 - a. Site area
 - b. Location of proposed buildings and the site area to be encompassed by proposed buildings
 - c. Location and dimensions of open space and public amenities
 - d. Number, location, and dimensions of off-street parking spaces including:
 - Surface parking
 - Structured parking
 - Accessible parking
 - e. Size and location of proposed uses including:
 - Number of residential units and square footage of units
 - Square footage of retail, dining, and other nonresidential uses
4. Engineering Plans:
 - a. Erosion and sediment control plan
 - b. Stormwater drainage and detention plan
 - c. Utilities plan
5. Architectural Plans:
 - a. Building elevations
 - b. Building floorplans for each floor
 - c. Color 3-D Architectural Renderings (street level views)
 - d. Materials list and samples
6. Landscape plan
7. Lighting plan
8. Traffic impact study
9. Market study
10. Fiscal impact analysis forecasting the impact on City, schools, and other taxing districts
11. Phasing Plan
12. Covenants, if applicable
13. Findings of fact for the standards of review for Planned Unit Development