



TOWN OF EXETER, RI

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**TOWN OF EXETER
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE –
SITE READINESS ANALYSIS,
MARKET ANALYSIS,
AND CREATION OF ZONING OVERLAY DISTRICT**

Sealed bid proposals for the above will be accepted in the Office of the Town Clerk, 675 Ten Rod Road, Exeter, RI, 02822, until 4:00 p.m., on Tuesday, December 29, 2020.

Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud by the Town Clerk at 9:00 a.m., on Wednesday, December 30, 2020, in Council Chambers, Exeter Town Clerk's Office, 675 Ten Rod Road, Exeter, Rhode Island. The bid proposal will be awarded at a future Town Council meeting.

The Town of Exeter reserves the right to refuse or reject, in part or in whole, any or all proposals or any parts thereof, to waive any informalities and/or technicalities in same, or to accept any proposal deemed to be in the best interest of the Town, whether or not it is the lowest proposal.

All bids must be in a sealed envelope and labeled "RFP: Site Readiness." Specifications are attached to this Request for Proposals or may be obtained at the Clerk's Office during normal business hours, by email at clerk@exeterri.gov, or by calling (401) 294-3891.

Lynn M. Hawkins, CMC
Exeter Town Clerk

POSTED: December 10, 2020
Town of Exeter Clerk's Office, Public Library, Post Office, and Website

TOWN OF EXETER, RHODE ISLAND

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE – SITE READINESS ANALYSIS, MARKET ANALYSIS, AND CREATION OF ZONING OVERLAY DISTRICT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Town of Exeter, RI is requesting proposals for professional services to provide technical assistance to conduct a site readiness analysis, a high level market analysis, and create a zoning overlay district relative to catalyze the site-specific economic development potential in the area encompassing the intersection of Routes 102 and 3, at the I-95 Exit 5 interchange in the Town of Exeter. This area of town has an assemblage of parcels immediately adjacent to I-95 that total around 150 acres of land. The town is interested in pursuing a site readiness analysis to determine the development capacity of the land, the general economic climate of the area, and ultimately implementing a zoning overlay district that streamlines the permitting process for the identified area.

The town is in the process of updating its comprehensive plan and recognizes this as a critical time to study the development potential of this area in order to properly incorporate guiding principles and zoning districts into the comprehensive plan. A significant portion of the area is already zoned “Business”, but the town understands the need to go further than just a commercial or business zoning district in order to entice development. The town would like to identify this area in the comprehensive plan, as an economic development center, so that when an overlay district is designed it can be done to match the associated goals, policies and action items in the comprehensive plan, creating consistency throughout the process.

1.1 TOWN OF EXETER - OVERVIEW

Exeter is a town in Washington County, Rhode Island, United States. Exeter extends east from the Connecticut border to the town of North Kingstown. It is bordered to the north by West Greenwich and East Greenwich, and to the south by Hopkinton, Richmond, and South Kingstown. Exeter's postal code is 02822, although small parts of the town have the mailing address West Kingston (02892) or Saunderstown (02874).

According to the United States Census Bureau, the town has a total area of 58.4 square miles (151 km), of which, 57.7 square miles (149 km) of it is land and 0.7 square miles (1.8 km) of it (1.15%) is water.

The total number of housing units in the town as of April 1, 2000, was 2,196. This represented an increase of 277 units from the 1,919 housing units in 1990. Of the 2,196 housing units 111 were vacant. 38 of the vacant units were for seasonal or recreational use.

The town's current 2020 Residential/Commercial Tax Rate is \$15.57 per \$1,000 down from \$15.69 per \$1,000 in 2019. The motor vehicle tax rate is \$32.59 per \$1,000 and remains unchanged from 2019. Of the taxes collected by the town to fund municipal government and

school district services, 81% are from residential property, 10% are from commercial property, including tangibles, and 9% are from motor vehicles.

Fire and Rescue services are provided by the Exeter Fire District which is a separate taxing authority. The district's current 2020 Residential/Commercial Tax Rate is \$1.87 per \$1,000, up from \$1.68 per \$1,000 in 2019.

The Town of Exeter does not have a municipal police department and services are provided by the RI State Police.

As of the census^[1] of 2000, there were 6,045 people, 2,085 households, and 1,592 families residing in the town. This represented a 10.69% increase (584 persons) from the 1990 population of 5,461. The population density was 104.7 people per square mile (40.4/km²). There were 2,196 housing units at an average density of 38.0 per square mile (14.7/km²). The racial makeup of the town was 96.36% White, 0.66% African American, 0.60% Native American, 0.74% Asian, 0.02% Pacific Islander, 0.33% from other races, and 1.29% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 1.27% of the population.

There were 2,085 households, out of which 38.0% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 64.4% were married couples living together, 8.7% had a female householder with no husband present, and 23.6% were non-families. 16.8% of all households were made up of individuals, and 4.6% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.77 and the average family size was 3.15.

In the town, the population was spread out, with 26.3% under the age of 18, 6.4% from 18 to 24, 31.6% from 25 to 44, 26.0% from 45 to 64, and 9.7% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age is 38 years.

The median income for a household in the town was \$64,452, and the median income for a family was \$74,157. Males had a median income of \$47,083 versus \$36,928 for females. The per capita income for the town was \$25,530. About 4.5% of families and 5.5% of the population were below the poverty line, including 7.5% of those under age 18 and 10.2% of those age 65 or over.

The town government is directed by a 5-member Town Council that is headed by a council president and is supported by a part time Town Council Assistant. There is no Town Manager or Administrator. There is an elected Town Treasurer, an elected Town Clerk, who also acts as Purchasing Agent, and an elected Zoning Inspector. The town employs a part time Town Planner and part time Building, Electrical, and Plumbing Inspectors. The town's Zoning Inspector is an elected position. The town does not have a town engineer on staff and only uses one on a consulting basis when development applications warrant review, with the cost of such review borne by the applicant. Other town services are provided by a mix of full and part time employees. Planning, Zoning, and other boards and commissions are appointed by the Town Council. For the purpose of school administration, Exeter is a member town of the Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District along with the neighboring town of West Greenwich.

2.0 BACKGROUND

In January of 2020, Exeter was awarded funding from the RI Commerce Corporation Site Readiness Program in order to thoroughly investigate the development potential of the area surrounding the intersections of routes 102, 3 and I-95. This area has long been seen for its potential to be developed, and over the years, has caused significant concern for the unknown impact its development may have on town government resources, educational services, public safety, quality of life, and other related issues, especially in consideration of the high tax burden placed on Exeter's homeowners. In June of 2019, the Town Council appointed several residents to the newly created Economic Development Task Force (EDTF) with a mission to find ways to increase revenue for the town. Since the town does not possess sufficient financial or staff resources to conduct site readiness analysis independently, the collaborative efforts of the EDTF, Planning Board, and Planning Office, with support from the Town Council, resulted in the awarding of funds from the Site Readiness Program to fund the services requested in this RFP.

3.0 SCOPE OF SERVICES

The Town requests technical assistance services from a qualified firm to provide site-specific development strategies and plans that spur the economic development potential in the area encompassing the intersection of Routes 102 and 3, at the I-95 Exit 5 interchange in the Town of Exeter. The chosen vendor will work directly with the town's EDTF, Planning Board, Zoning Board, Town Planner and Planning Office, Building and Zoning Inspectors, and other town departments, necessary to accomplish the require tasks. Potential vendors must respond to this RFP by providing proposals, including costs, that specifically address each of the following three (3) phases to be employed by the town for this project. Failure to respond in whole, or in part, will be considered unresponsive and, as determined by the town, be reason for disqualification for further consideration.

Three (3) Phase Site Readiness Project

Phase 1: Conduct a site readiness analysis to determine site constraints and opportunities for development.

This could be done initially by utilizing GIS data to determine soil types, approximate locations of wetlands, slopes, ledge, wellhead protection areas, and other limiting factors. This will provide a general idea of what the development capacity of the land could be. In addition, a preliminary investigation of available locations for water and wastewater treatment would be necessary to understand the infrastructure capabilities of the area.

Phase 2: Conduct a high level market analysis of the area to determine what the economic market can support.

Using industry standard practices, provide a market analysis report that determines what the economic market of the area is in order to ensure that any zoning overlay drafted would provide realistic, but flexible options, to maximize the economic opportunities on the property. It is important to understand what the local market will bear for economic development so that real world zoning can be applied to the designated area. This market analysis does not need to go into

great detail, only determine the general types of economic development that could realistically be supported in this area.

Phase 3: Draft, revise and prepare for adoption a zoning overlay district that identifies the subject area for development and provides allowances for economic development, design standards for construction and a streamlined local permitting process.

The initial assessments conducted in Phases 1 and 2 would be utilized to assist in drafting an overlay district to spur and encourage appropriate development for the area. In order to attract economic development, the town understands that the important regulatory tools should be in place so that developers are not required to risk their own time and resources to propose zoning amendments in order to make a project viable at this site. The town wishes to put those regulatory tools in place in an attempt to attract potential development by way of a clear and streamlined permitting process at the local level. This will increase the value of the property and the likelihood that a developer will have an interest.

Taking into consideration the site constraints, opportunities, and market analysis, the chosen vendor will work with the Town to draft a zoning overlay district that would be adopted for the area. This overlay would consist of allowed uses in the district, required site considerations, the process for review and approval, as well as general design standards that ensure that the development is in compliance with the Town's comprehensive plan, overall general land use patterns, and all applicable federal, state, and local rules and regulations.

Presentation of Materials. The consultant shall present information at briefing meetings with the EDTF at critical points in the preparation process. In addition, upon completion of the project the consultant shall be prepared to present the study, including above elements and recommendations at public workshops and/or public hearings upon request.

The Town of Exeter previously conducted a Vision for Exeter study that looked at potential development locations for a town center type of development. Although this proposed project is not the same approach, existing information and results from that study could be used as a reference point for this more specific investigation of an identified area. The town also currently has a POD zoning district that allows for planned development of a certain nature in a particular area. This existing zoning district could serve as the foundation for further review and development of an overlay district that would be used for this specific location. See http://www.planning.ri.gov/documents/LU/2015/2009_Exeter_Final.pdf for complete report.

4.0 PROJECT SCHEDULE

Upon receipt of proposals, and suitable review, the Town expects to make a selection within one month. Once selected, the consultant and Town will complete a contract and agree upon start and completion dates. A draft work product shall be completed within 4 months and accepted by the Town within 6 months of the agreed upon start date.

5.0 SUBMISSION DEADLINE

All Proposals shall be submitted to:

EXETER TOWN HALL
675 Ten Rod Road
Exeter, RI 02822
Attn: Town Clerk
Titled: RFP: SITE READINESS

The submission deadline is **Tuesday, December 29, 2020, no later than 4:00 p.m.** in the Town Clerk's Office, Exeter Town Hall, 675 Ten Rod Road, Exeter, RI 02822. The Town Clerk will publicly open, read, and record all submissions on **Wednesday, December 30, 2020, at 9:00 a.m.** The Town of Exeter assumes no responsibility for delayed or undelivered mail or express packages. Proposals which are not delivered to Town Hall by the above specified time and date will not be considered. Emailed or faxed proposals will not be accepted.

6.0 PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Ten copies, plus an original proposal, shall be submitted and shall contain at least the following items:

6.01 *Project Team*

Describe the prospective Consultant's project team composition by indicating how it intends to perform the work. The role of each participating entity shall be fully described. The prospective Consultant shall detail specifically the work that it proposes to do with its own staff and the work to be performed by others. An approximate percentage of job-hour effort shall be indicated for each such participating entity.

6.02 *Qualifications of Key Staff*

Provide resumes and qualifications for key staff including education, relevant past project experience and descriptions of their assignment on this project.

6.03 *Similar Projects*

List the most recent projects the consultant has worked on having the nature, complexity, and time constraint management issues similar to those anticipated for this project within the last 5 years.

6.04 *Demonstrated Capacity to Perform Work Within Schedule and Budget*

Clearly demonstrate how the consultant intends to deliver the products identified in the project task list, on schedule, and within budget. Describe the intended method for budget planning and control.

6.05 *Work Plan and Scope*

Provide a detailed work plan and scope for each proposed phase of the project. Identify the major tasks to be completed by the consultant team, the time frames for completion, and the approach to the work and key issues for this project.

6.06 Schedule and Progress Reports

Provide a detailed time schedule by which the consultant shall complete and deliver the identified work products. Provide points at which the consultant shall provide progress reports to the identified reporting authority for the Town.

6.07 Fee Proposal

Submit a Fee Proposal in the form of a lump sum contract for the tasks outlined 2.0 SCOPE OF SERVICES, to include:

- (a) a schedule of hourly billing rates for all individuals who will be involved in this project
- (b) a list of typical tasks including estimated hours to complete
- (c) an estimate for the number of hours each person will work on the project
- (d) identify any and all additional charges (i.e., Section 3.0, Phase 3 presentations)
- (e) a proposed billing and payment schedule for services rendered in connection with this project

6.08 Insurance and Risk Management

The selected consultant shall be required to have the appropriate professional and personnel liability insurance to perform the work. Please provide proof of such. Note that the successful bidder shall be required to obtain and provide documentation of insurance that specifically indemnifies the Town of Exeter for \$1million per incident, the cost of such may be included in the proposed budget. Proposer shall be dually authorized to conduct business in the State of Rhode Island.

7.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA

All responses to the proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria and corresponding rating system. The proposals will be evaluated on the basis of written materials provided. Sufficient information must be included in the proposal to assure the correct rating. Incomplete or incorrect information may result in a lower evaluation or proposal rejection.

Evaluation Criteria

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| 1. Firm experience on similar projects: | 10% |
| 2. Demonstrated understanding of scope: | 10% |
| 3. Anticipated time to complete work | 10% |
| 4. Qualifications of assigned staff | 10% |
| 5. Local involvement and knowledge | 10% |
| 6. Cost | 50% |

8.0 SELECTION

Final selection will be made by the Town Council of the Town of Exeter following a review of the proposals by the EDTF. To assist in making a selection, interviews may be conducted at the discretion of the Town. After selection of a consultant, a professional services agreement/contract will be negotiated and executed. It is a desire of the Town to have a signed agreement/contract in place within thirty (30) days of the selection. The Town reserves the right to revise the stated agreement/contract terms and conditions prior to contract signature.

9.0 OTHER INFORMATION

1. All questions regarding this Request for Proposals shall be directed to Lynn Hawkins, Town Clerk at (401) 294-3891 or email: clerk@town.exeter.ri.us. All questions and responses thereto will be provided to other known prospective consultants.
2. The preparation of an RFP response shall be at the expense of the prospective consultant. The Town will not reimburse any expenses incurred by any prospective consultant in the preparation of the RFP response.
3. The Town of Exeter reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted.
4. All submitted responses and produced documents shall remain the sole property of the Town of Exeter.
5. No prospective consultant may withdraw its proposal until thirty (30) days after the actual date of opening thereof.
6. The Town of Exeter does not discriminate because of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, veteran status or any other legally protected status or disabilities that do not interfere with job performance, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, P.L. 101-336.
7. The Town of Exeter reserves the right to revise any part of this RFP by issuing and addendum to the RFP.
8. Proposals may be withdrawn at any time prior to the submission time specified in this RFP, provided notification is received in writing. Proposals cannot be changed or withdrawn after the time designated for receipt.
9. The Town reserves the right to award a contract to the firm that the Town feels best meets the requirements of the RFP process. The Town reserves the right to reject any and all proposals prior to execution of the Agreement, with no penalty to the Town.
10. The Town of Exeter reserves the right to cancel, postpone, extend, or revise the RFP or the RFP process at any time. If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, an addendum will be provided on the Town's website at www.town.exeter.ri.us.
11. All Proposals submitted in response to this RFP become the property of the Town of Exeter, and under the Rhode Island Access to Public Records Act (APRA), the records of local agencies are generally available to the public upon request. Proposals submitted may become a public document after it is officially awarded, and any related contract(s) will be a public document. The APRA allows the Town to withhold documents, or parts of documents that reveal trade secrets or information that is confidential or proprietary, or information that would invade personal privacy. If you believe that portions of your proposal includes such information, you must specify by, at a minimum, stamping in bold red letters the term "CONFIDENTIAL" on that part of the proposal which you believe to be protected from disclosure, and include specific detailed reasons, including any relevant legal authority, stating why it is not to be made public. The Town of Exeter reserves the right to make the final determination of whether to withhold or produce a

document or portion of a document in response to an APRA request. If the Town withholds information at your request, you may be required to litigate any claim of trade secret that you assert.

10.0 Contract Award and Execution

The Town reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposal submitted. Therefore, the proposal should be initially submitted on the most favorable terms the vendors can offer. It is understood that the proposal will become a part of the official file on this matter without obligation to the Town.

The Town reserves the right to request clarification of information submitted and to request additional information from any proposer.

The general conditions and specifications of the RFP and as proposed by the Town and the successful vendor's response, as amended by agreements between the Town and the vendor, will become part of the contract documents. Additionally, the Town will verify vendor representations that appear in the proposal. Failure of the vendor's products to meet the mandatory specifications may result in elimination of the vendor from competition or in contract cancellation or termination.

The selected vendor will be expected to enter into a contract with the Town. The Town reserves the right to reject any proposed agreement or contract that does not conform to the specifications contained in this RFP, and which is not approved by the Town Attorney.

11.0 Equal Opportunity Compliance

The Town is an equal opportunity employer and requires all Proposers to comply with policies and regulations concerning equal opportunity.

The Proposer, in the performance of this Agreement, agrees not to discriminate in its employment because of the employee's or applicant's race, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual preference, age, or physical handicap.

12.0 Other Compliance Requirements

In addition to nondiscrimination and affirmative action compliance requirements previously listed, the Proposer awarded a contract shall comply with federal, state, and local laws, statutes, and ordinances relative to the execution of the work. This requirement includes, but is not limited to, protection of public and employee safety and health, environmental protection, waste reduction and recycling, the protection of natural resources, permits, fees, taxes, and similar subjects.

13.0 Confidentiality of Information

All information and data furnished to the Proposer by the Town, and all other documents to which the Proposer's employees have access during the term of the contract, shall be treated as confidential to the Town. Any oral or written disclosure to unauthorized individuals is prohibited.