



“...meeting community needs...enhancing quality of life.”

MEMORANDUM

TO: Community & Economic Development Committee (CEDC)

FROM: Karen Harkness, Director of Community & Economic Development

DATE: September 8, 2021

RE: College Avenue North Neighborhood Plan

The City of Appleton issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) in early summer to build upon the vision and goals of the City’s Comprehensive Plan, identify and respond to current conditions and issues, provide an analysis, redevelopment alternatives, implementation plans and strategies to deliberately shape and stimulate design and development north of College Avenue.

This area north of College Avenue includes the Appleton Public Library, Transit Center (the central hub of a regional transit system serving a 117 square-mile area with over 200,000 residents), churches, residential, commercial and privately owned surface parking, as well as a parking structure owned by the City. Two Tax Incremental Financing Districts (TIFs 3 & 11) are already established in this area. Additionally, much of the area located north of College Avenue is located in an Opportunity Zone. Strategic and ongoing investment in Downtown remains a top priority for the City, as does invigorating public and private investment.

The process will be interactive and engage in a highly collaborative approach to create a *College Avenue North Neighborhood Plan* (herein after “the Plan”) which would provide a framework for future development that facilitates greater connectivity between the City, adjacent neighborhoods, existing businesses, and not-for-profits while recognizing the influences between buildings, social settings and the surrounding environment.

The goal of this Plan is to complement and build from the previous work completed in identifying a vision for the Downtown. The Plan will also help guide private development, public investment and improvements for the next 5 to 10 years in accordance with identified vision, goals and prioritize competing goals.

On June 4, 2021, Request for Proposals were received from 8 firms for consulting services to build upon the vision and goals of the City’s Comprehensive Plan, identify and respond to current conditions and issues, provide an analysis, redevelopment alternatives, implementation plans and strategies to deliberately share and stimulate design and development north of College Avenue.

After review of the proposals by an 8- person panel of Community and City staff members, 4 of those firms were chosen and subsequently interviewed on June 23, 2021. Upon conclusion of the interviews and discussion among the panel, the firm of RDG was unanimously selected by the review team to be recommended for award of the contract.

The review team consisted of City Departmental Directors, Planning and Economic Development staff, the Chair of Community and Economic Development Committee and Council President, a Plan Commissioner and the Mayor.

The responses to the Request for Proposals were evaluated for relevant experience, project success, project team, project understanding/study methodology, project schedule, and cost. It was important that the firms clearly demonstrated experience in creating neighborhood plans, market analysis, collaboration, and the ability to foster strong public engagement throughout this process.

Specifically, RDG demonstrated an understanding and approach to the project that illustrated their multi-disciplinary experience, deep knowledge in neighborhood planning, ability to build consensus among different interests, knowledge of markets, housing and trends, creativity, commitment to use many tools to reach stakeholders, and enthusiasm for the community. These skills, experiences and use of tools will allow for the creation of a successful plan.

On July 7, 2021, the Appleton City Council awarded this project to RDG. RDG's response to our RFP is attached for your review. Also attached is the list of Steering Committee Members. The project kick-off is September 13th when the Steering Committee has their first meeting.