



# REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

## DEVELOPMENT OF TOWN-OWNED PROPERTY

### *AMERBELLE MILL PROPERTIES*

104 EAST MAIN STREET • 5 BROOKLYN STREET • 19 GROVE STREET  
98 EAST MAIN STREET • 40 BROOKLYN STREET • 1 COURT STREET

TOWN OF VERNON, CONNECTICUT  
JUNE 2019



## **Part I. Community Description**

The Town of Vernon, Connecticut is a celebrated place to live and work. From its beautiful parks and lakes, to its vast trail systems and historic homes and buildings, Vernon has it all. With a resident population of nearly 30,000 and occupying only 18.03 square miles, Vernon combines a balanced appreciation of its rich history with a strong economic base for growth, both residential and commercial.

Located 15 minutes east of Connecticut's capital, Hartford, and 25 miles from the City of Springfield, Massachusetts, the Town of Vernon is strategically placed in "New England's Knowledge Corridor" with close proximity to some of the country's top colleges and universities, including the University of Connecticut and Trinity College.

With its easy access to Interstate 84 and state routes 74, 31, and 83, Vernon is a diversified community. Because of its locale, Vernon provides homeowners the opportunity to enjoy suburbia while experiencing a short commute to the Hartford or Springfield business districts.

Vernon is a full-service local government, offering a wide range of benefits for its residents and businesses, including vibrant economic development, quality educational systems, extensive parks, and recreational opportunities with over 40 miles of renowned trails, police, fire, and emergency medical services. The Town of Vernon's local government is proud of the services we offer to our residents and seeks to practice a management philosophy of continuous improvement.

## **Part II. Opportunity Description**

The Town of Vernon invites experienced qualified developers to submit qualifications for the development of the former sites of the Amerbelle and Daniels Mills as well as the adjacent lot at 19 Grove Street located along East Main Street (5 Brooklyn Street and 104 East Main Street) about one mile from Interstate-84. Combined, these three parcels total 8.43 acres and are bisected by the Hockanum River, offering an opportunity for riverfront development in the town's Rockville Historic District. There exists the strong possibility of an additional 5.2 acres of adjacent mill properties at 98 East Main Street, 40 Brooklyn Street, and 1 Court Street that could further enhance the development of the former Amerbelle and Daniels' Mill sites, bringing the total available acreage to 13.63.

These parcels are highly desirable for regional businesses, with easy access to I-84 and a scenic location. The Town has determined that these sites would be best suited for residential, retail, office, light industrial, and/or passive recreation use and strongly prefer a mixed-use style of development. Any redevelopment proposal must conform to the overall objectives of the Plan of Conservation and Development as well as the Town's zoning regulations. As such, the Town of Vernon will be looking for projects that promote the sites as economic anchors for its downtown and which are compatible with the historic, cultural, and geographic qualities of the town and the surrounding neighborhood. Proposals that serve regional, tourist, and local needs and consider implications to the surrounding area, including residential properties, are encouraged.

These are contaminated brownfield sites. The Town is actively involved in continued remediation of the sites and has secured almost \$5 million in State funding. Selective demolition and some remediation have already been completed, with additional funding available for the Town to complete further remediation.

### **Part III. Developer Incentives**

The Town is open to a number of developer incentives to ensure a desirable outcome for this project. The Town may choose to enact a traditional fixed property tax assessment agreement as well as permit fee waivers and/or Tax Increment Financing. A 60-day streamlined land use regulatory process is promised for the right project. The Town is open to the option of an outright sale or long-term ground lease of the properties. The Town of Vernon's elected and appointed officials and staff are willing to provide operational support to make this a valuable investment and have experience with other mill redevelopment projects, understanding the collaborative effort and advocacy these projects require.

### **Part IV. RFQ Procedure**

The Town of Vernon will be tasked with reviewing qualifications packages to select experienced developers. The Town asks developers to submit their proposals to its consultant, the Connecticut Economic Resource Center, no later **July 26, 2019 at 10:00 am**. After reviewing developer submissions, the Town of Vernon intends to select up to three "preferred developers."

The preferred developers will tentatively make their presentations to the Town of Vernon during the week of **August 5, 2019**. The Town of Vernon will be responsible for selecting the developer and negotiating the eventual disposition of the development sites under mutually beneficial terms.

Depending on the number and quality of responses, the Town of Vernon reserves the right to request additional information from some or all respondents, or to issue additional information requests to advance the review process.

### **Part V: Parcel Information**

#### *Town-owned:*

104 East Main Street parcel ID: [40-0117-00006](#)

5 Brooklyn Street parcel ID: [41-0119-00001](#)

19 Grove Street parcel ID: [41-0122-00037](#)

#### *Privately-owned:*

98 East Main Street parcel ID: [40-0117-00005](#)

40 Brooklyn Street parcel ID: [40-0117-00004](#)

1 Court Street parcel ID: [40-0117-00003](#)

## Part VI. Questions and Site Visits

Questions regarding the sites or requests for site visits can be directed to Shaun Gately, Interim Director of Planning and Development, at (860) 870-3637 or [sgately@vernon-ct.gov](mailto:sgately@vernon-ct.gov). Site visits will be scheduled during the **week of July 8, 2019**.

## Part VII. Submission Requirements

Responses should be mailed or delivered to:

**Courtney Hendricson**

**Connecticut Economic Resource Center**

**805 Brook Street, Building 4**

**Rocky Hill, CT 06067**

The submission packages must include **six (6)** hard copies and **one (1)** flash drive with a PDF copy of the proposal and be received no later than **July 26, 2019 at 10:00 am**. The Town of Vernon will review proposals and contact respondents with any questions.

The Town of Vernon is interested in working with a developer who is experienced in the construction of commercial and/or mixed-use, community-style single-parcel development. This experience may be demonstrated by listing examples of successful developments in the recent past involving properties of similar size in Connecticut or regionally, such as New England and New York.

### A. Firm Qualifications

1. **Contact Information.** Name, address, and contact information of firm or individual responding to the RFP.
2. **Firm Overview.** Provide a brief description of the organization, year established, number of employees, and types of business conducted.
3. **Experience.** Provide a list (and corresponding materials) of projects with similar development criteria, environmental sensitivity, and location characteristics.
4. **References.** Provide, for projects listed above, a contact person and information.
5. **Financial Viability.** Provide a statement and worksheet that indicate the firm's financial capability to accomplish the project.

### B. Preliminary Project Proposal.

A conceptual proposal plan is requested to be submitted with the Firm Qualifications and should include the following:

1. **Narrative Description of the Project.** A description of the proposed development concept, which illustrates the firm's understanding of the Town of Vernon and the local commercial environment. Descriptions may include the scale of development, an estimate of the number and type of units, and information describing the proposed character and quality of the development. Applicants should also discuss how green building and design elements may be incorporated into the proposed project.

2. **Conceptual Site Plan.** A simple draft site plan based on the narrative description to assist the Board of Selectmen in visualizing the outlined details, including information on conceptual building elevations and phasing.
3. **Proposal of Disposition of the Site.** A short description of the preferred method(s), if any, for structuring the financial and ownership arrangement of the site between the development entity and the Town. Please include a description of any relevant experience negotiating previous public-private agreements. As the ultimate disposition of the site will be subject to negotiations, the developer should demonstrate a willingness to work with the Town to reach the most equitable arrangement.

A detailed project proposal will be requested from developers who have successfully completed the Qualifications stage of this process.

#### **Part VIII. Proposal Evaluation Criteria**

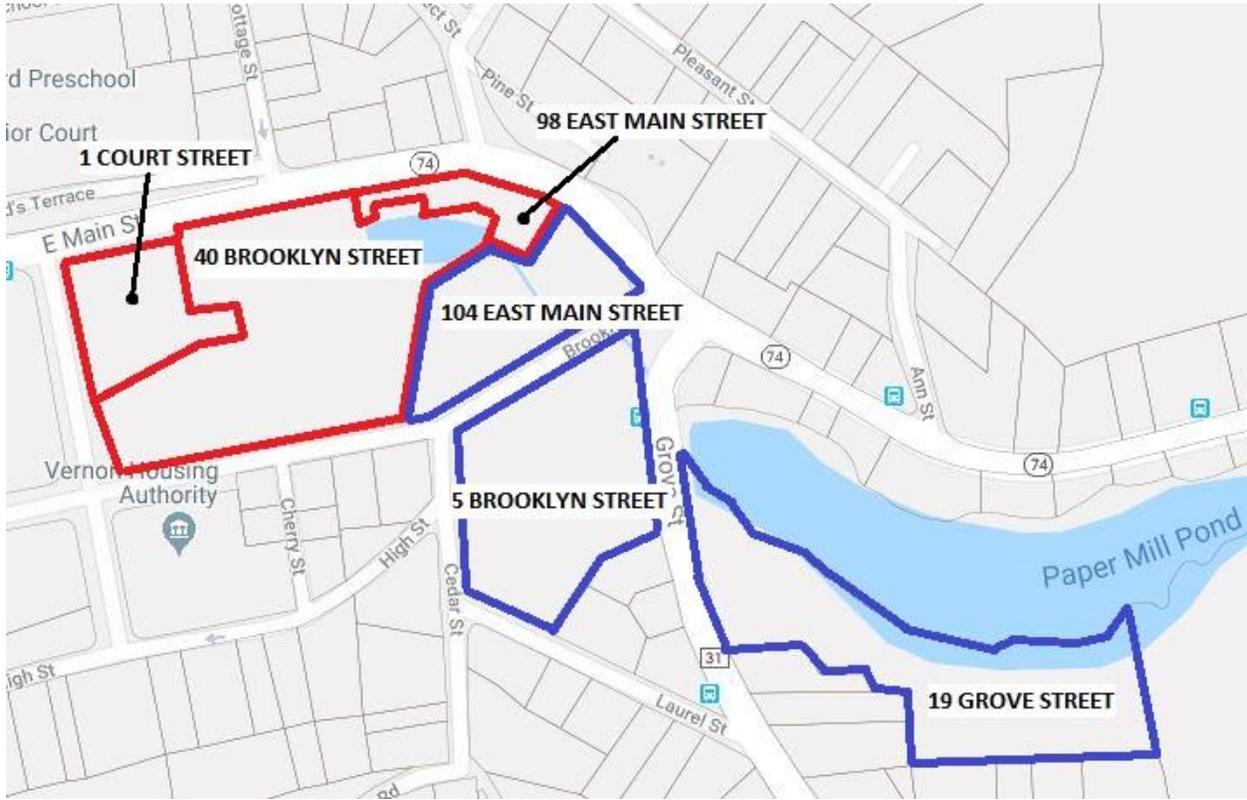
The following items will be taken into consideration in evaluating the proposals:

1. **Completeness of Submittal.**
2. **Relevant Experience.** Demonstrated ability to undertake development projects in complex environments from concept to construction.
3. **Demonstrated Success.** Success in past public-private partnerships and similar development proposals.
4. **Access to Equity and Finance.** Degree to which the development entity demonstrates its access to equity and financing to underwrite construction.
5. **Appropriateness of Proposed Use.** Responsiveness to community vision and needs, including a demonstrated understanding of the Town of Vernon and the importance of a high-quality project at the site.
6. **Community Benefit.** Demonstration of a clear long-term benefit to the community.

#### **Part IX. Disclaimer**

Please note, the Town of Vernon reserves the right to determine the appropriateness and merit of all submissions and to amend, withdraw, and/or cancel this request at any time. Submittal of proposals does not obligate the Town to enter into negotiations of agreements with any responding party, and the Town may, without qualification, reject any or all proposals at any time prior to entering into an agreement with the selected developer. The Town shall consider all information provided by responding parties to be public record. If a developer claims a privilege against public disclosure for trade secret or other proprietary information, such information must be clearly identified in the proposal. Furthermore, the Town of Vernon shall not be liable for any pre-contractual expenses incurred by any developer in relation to the preparation, submittal, or negotiations of a proposal.

Appendix A. Parcel Maps



\*Red outline denotes privately-owned property; blue outline denotes publicly-owned property.

