

Uptown Normal Trail East Project

Southeast Corner of College Avenue and Constitution Boulevard



Request for Proposals issued by:
Town of Normal
Administration Department
11 Uptown Circle
Normal, IL 61761

Contact:

Sally Heffernan
Economic Development Director
sheffernan@normal.org
309-433-9908

maps, concept designs, zoning, utilities and more
available on

Secure project website:
<https://secure.normal.org/TrailEast/>

Introduction

The Town of Normal is seeking development proposals for a vacant, Town-owned property in Uptown Normal. This 1.28-acre tract is made up of multiple parcels comprised of surface parking and a two-story wooden structure (104 E. Beaufort). If advantageous, proposers may submit an alternate proposal incorporating the two buildings (106 and 108 E. Beaufort) adjacent to the first structure. The Town owns 108 E. Beaufort; 106 is owned by a private entity.

This property benefits from significant public and private investment in Uptown including the Children's Discovery Museum, Uptown Station, the Marriott Hotel and Conference Center, Hyatt Place hotel, and multiple apartment buildings and parking decks. A five-story, mixed use building with retail, office and apartments is under construction nearby.

The property is two blocks from the campus of Illinois State University with 3,400 employees and an enrollment of 21,000. The cross-town Constitution Trail runs alongside the property, and the second-busiest passenger rail station in Illinois is in an adjacent block. The Town's development goals for the site include:

1. Maximizing the site's aesthetic potential and its contribution to the vibrancy of Uptown Normal with a well-designed development that will bring a variety of users to the area.
2. Providing Class A office space for a professional services tenant seeking to occupy 18,000 sf in a multi-story building and accommodating other office tenants who have expressed interest in an Uptown location.
3. Incorporating retail space on the development's ground floor. Proposals should, at a minimum, include retail uses on frontage facing Constitution Boulevard and Uptown Circle.

Additional information about this exciting development opportunity and the Request for Proposals process follows:

Proposal Deadline: Thursday, December 14, 2017 at 4:00 PM CST.

Proposals must be delivered to the Administration Department on the second floor of Uptown Station in person, via parcel post or email no later than 4 PM local time on Thursday, December 14, 2017.

Background

Development of this parcel was called out in the original Uptown Normal Renewal Plan aimed to revitalize the small Central Business District directly adjacent to the Illinois State University campus. Major components of the plan include a hotel and conference center, children's museum, multimodal transportation center, enhanced sidewalks, rehabilitated historic buildings, and a traffic circle surrounded by five architecturally significant buildings. With the exception of the subject of this RFP and one other building on the circle, all of the major plan components have been built. In addition, environmental sustainability was at the heart of the plan, and today in Uptown are four LEED-certified buildings and an Uptown Circle honored with the US EPA Smart Growth Award and US FHWA Transportation Planning Excellence Award.

The Town updated and expanded the plan in 2015 into an area south of the Uptown railroad tracks. Called Uptown 2.0, this area is slated for development including a new 100,00 square foot public library, public park, and a mixture of high-density residential and office space. An underpass will connect the north and south sides of the railroad.

Acceptable Uses

Office: A nationwide Architectural/Engineering firm, headquartered in Bloomington/Normal, is planning to consolidate its local office locations to this development and anticipates occupying approximately 18,000 SF. The firm has stipulated serving as Architect and Engineer of Record of the core and shell, and office tenant improvements, as a requirement for their lease.

A technology company has expressed strong interest in 5,000 to 6,000 SF of office space on the condition that they are the only tech company to occupy space in the development.

Contacts for these firms will be provided to potential developers wishing to submit a proposal. The Town will provide developers information for other office tenants who have expressed interest in this development.

Retail: Preference will be given to proposals which emphasize retail on the ground floor.

Residential: Although not a preferred use, the Town recognizes that a residential component may be necessary to make this development financially feasible.

Land Sales Terms

The property will be delivered to the developer in "as is" condition. At least one substantial concrete slab remains in place and its outline is clearly visible on the site. As mentioned below, the Town will assume the cost of relocating electrical utilities. The Town will negotiate the price of land with the chosen developer.

Utilities

Town-owned utilities including water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer and CIRBN fiberoptic are indicated on a utility map on the project website. Nicor gas serves this site, and electrical service is supplied by Ameren. The Town will assume the cost of relocating, and potentially burying, electrical lines.

Parking

Parking will be allowed on the site. Preference will be given to site designs which limit surface parking to clients and customers of on-site businesses. The Town will negotiate a parking agreement for employee and resident parking in the College Avenue parking deck on the northwest corner of College Avenue and Constitution Boulevard.

Environmental

Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessments in conformance with ASTM standards were performed in October 2017. The assessments revealed “no evidence of recognized environmental conditions in connection with the property.” The complete assessment document is available on the project website.

Zoning

All parcels which make up this site are zoned B2, Central Business District. A link to allowable uses in Uptown B2 Zoning is included under the design heading below (Division 17).

Design

Three conceptual site designs are presented on the project website. These concepts are not intended to be exclusive or to restrict final project design. Although the construction of a building to house the Farnsworth Group is the Town’s priority, proposals for one or two buildings will be considered. A single building proposal must include frontage on Uptown Circle or be situated to allow for a future building to be constructed with frontage on the Circle.

All development in Uptown Normal is subject to the design guidelines set forth in [Division 17](#) of the Town’s Zoning Code. An overlay code called the [Uptown Roundabout Design Guidelines](#) is also applied to structures built adjacent to Uptown Circle. Projects are reviewed by the Uptown Design Review Commission which meets on the second Tuesday of every month. If the regularly scheduled [filing deadlines](#) are not met, it is possible for the UDRC chair to call a special meeting. The UDRC also reviews proposed code variances which must then be approved by the Town Council. The original [Uptown Plan](#) (2000) and the [Uptown Normal Master Plan Update](#) (called “Uptown 2.0”) provide additional background information for Uptown projects.

Incentive Districts

The Trail East Project Site is in the Downtown (Uptown) Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District and a State-Certified Enterprise Zone. The Uptown TIF expires in 2026. The McLean County Enterprise Zone includes sales tax exemption on building materials and a .5% credit against Illinois income tax owed. The credit may be carried forward for five years.

Proposals must include, at minimum:

- A.
 - 1) Developer's name, mailing address, email and phone number
 - 2) Developer's current legal status: corporation, partnership, sole proprietor, etc.
 - 3) Federal ID number or Social Security number
 - 4) If different than developer, preferred contact's name, phone and email

- B. A description of the proposed development including:
 - 1) Size of building and square footage of specific components
 - 2) Amount and type of parking needed
 - 3) Anticipated materials and design concept
 - 4) Proposed public improvements
 - 5) If residential is included, the proposal should include tentative information about number of bedrooms, rents or sales prices and amenities.
 - 6) If commercial is proposed, information should be included about the type of tenants expected.

- C. A preliminary capital pro forma showing the sources and uses of funds (debt, equity and other) to acquire parcel and construct the development. Information about the status of securing funds should be included, and a conditional financing commitment is encouraged. If the project includes multiple uses, the operating proforma should be broken down for the component uses.

- D. A description of the public benefits that will result from the development.

- E. A proposed timeframe for development including conditions that must be met before the proposal can be acted upon. The schedule should include the time needed to obtain financing, complete design and secure permits and approvals, prepare the site, start and complete construction, and occupancy.

The Town reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or parts of proposals, to negotiate modifications of proposals submitted, and to negotiate specific work elements with a proposer into a project of smaller or greater magnitude than described in the RFP or the proposer's reply.

Schedule

Submission deadline for proposals	December 14, 2017
Review and evaluation of proposals	December 14 – January 2018
Recommendation of selected developer to Normal City Council	February 2018