

Questions and Answers

Q1) **Is any developer at an advantage or disadvantage in this RFP? This type of response requires a lot of coordination and expense; we don't want to go further if the City has already made the decision.**

A) All responses will be scored according to the priorities identified in the RFP. I imagine that at least one proposal would include the neighboring commercial parcel, but ALL proposals will be given equal consideration.

Q2) **How would the City prefer to have the public parking component structured? Long term lease to private bond, outright purchase, assigned interest?**

A) The City & Edina HRA are open to a variety of financial structures. Several different structures have been successfully implemented.

The historic approach is full public ownership of land and facility with shared responsibilities for maintenance expenses. At 50th and France, the maintenance and operating costs are assessed to the benefitting property owners each year. In the Grandview District, the City owns the parking ramp while Jerry's Enterprises is fully responsible for maintenance and operating expenses. Under this arrangement, their customers and employees have preferred (but not exclusive) access. In other City facilities, we have created condominiums where each party has clear responsibilities and where both parties have shared responsibilities.

The more recent model has flipped the relationship. At Edinborough and Centennial Lakes for example, the ramps are privately owned (and privately maintained) with a permanent easement for public use. These projects were supported with Tax Increment Financing where new property tax dollars were used to pay for the ramps.

The City is open to a variety of approaches depending on the scope of each proposal.

Q3) Please elaborate on stormwater requirements? Does the 3930 site need to accommodate updated stormwater requirements for the adjoining (North) ramp as well?

A) The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District will require parcels with new lot coverage to abide by their standard requirements. It is not the City's intention to retroactively construct storm water improvements for parcels that are grandfathered. For example, a new building on the 3930 parcel will need to meet the new storm water requirements. Alternatively, a new level on top of the existing North Ramp, for example, does not require new storm water features.

Q4) Can any required Park Dedication fees be put toward beatification and developing vegetative screening along the exterior of the ramp? Does part of this want to be carried over to the ramp to the south?

A) Park Dedication Fees are only required when a parcel is subdivided; for example when a parcel is redeveloped to include new condominium units. The City is not anticipating any significant park dedication fees with this project. It is unlikely that any park dedication fees will be waived.

Q5) Would it be Ok to include the former dry cleaning site (3944) and a concept for the 3925 surface parking lot in this proposal? I assume we're dealing with the same general decision making body, but wanted to confirm since it was included in the RFP but not specifically called out.

A) The focus of this RFP is the vacant 3930 parcel. Various parties have inquired about including other City-owned properties. The City and Edina HRA are interested in the creativity of the development community. One point of caution regarding the 3944 (former dry cleaning site): there is likely some residual contamination on this property and the existing driveway may need to be retained for deliveries and utility access.

Q6) Does the City have as-built plans of the ramp available? Has a code review of the ramp been completed, including measuring the travel distances?

A) Construction drawings for the 1997 North Ramp addition and 1976 Center Ramp are now posted on the City's website. No code review has been completed by the City. With any addition to the North Ramp, it should be assumed that a new stairway is included on the 3930 parcel.

Q7) Has the City put any thought into traffic control along West 49 ½ St? Part of the reason retailers have been reluctant to go to this part of the street has been the flow of traffic. Additional parking along 49th via a bump out curb or speed bumps would really help to attract high quality tenants.

A) The City supports effective traffic calming features. Due to the narrow width of 49-1/2 Street, it is unlikely that on-street parking will be feasible. Alternatively, wider sidewalks, strategically placed bump outs, and well-marked crosswalks with pedestrian LED lights are preferred. The City will not consider speed bumps on the public street.

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Q8) Does the City control the two adjacent commercial buildings east of the vacant parcel?

A) No. The parcels at 3318 W. 49-1/2 and 4916 France Ave are privately owned. According to Hennepin County tax records, the 3918 parcel is owned by 49.5 Km2, LLC of Minneapolis and the 4916 parcel is owned by William C Knapp of West Des Moines, Iowa.

Q9) What is the current use of the adjacent commercial building.

A) The single-story commercial building at 3918 W. 49-1/2 Street is currently occupied by two businesses – Berkshire Hathaway Home Services-Lovejoy Realty and Bespoke Hair Artisans. Each tenant indicates they have multiple year leases.

Q10) Why did the previous proposal to reconstruct the Walgreens fail to move forward?

A) In 2015, NLD Edina, LLC brought forward a concept to rebuild the adjacent Walgreens as part of a mixed-use redevelopment of the corner. The 13,700 Sq Ft retail store was proposed to be complimented with 64 apartments with below-grade parking. The FAR, height and density exceeded the City Code and the dual driveway on France Avenue was not acceptable to Hennepin County. After hearing concerns and suggestions from Planning Commission and City Council in July 2015, the developer considered some adjustments, including possible expansion on the 3930 site, but ultimately decided not to pursue the project.

Q11) Is the adjacent North Parking Ramp available for redevelopment?

A) The focus of this RFP is the vacant 3930 parcel. Adjacent City-owned properties, however, are certainly welcome to be part of any redevelopment proposal that accomplishes the goals outlined in the RFP.

The existing North Parking Ramp has 260 parking stalls, all of which would need to be replaced, if it were reconfigured. Any combination of parcels are welcome to be included in the redevelopment proposal so long as they enhance and strengthen the appeal of 50th & France to be a neighborhood destination for premier shopping, dining and entertainment.

Q12) Would the City consider issuing tax-exempt bonds to pay for the design and construction of the public parking facilities?

A) Yes, the City has used its bonding authority to issue tax exempt bonds for several different projects over the years. The impact of new debt on the City's overall economic health would need to be evaluated before any commitments could be made.

Q13) Would the City consider entering into a condominium arrangement to separate the ownership of the public parking facilities from any commercial or residential tenants?

A) Yes.

Q14) Would the City consider leasing the public parking spaces if they were owned by a private entity?.

A) Yes. Several different ownership and use arrangements can be considered. Over the years, the City has created public parking facilities that are publicly owned and others that are privately owned. Also see response to Question #2.

Q15) Would the City be supportive in obtaining grants to remediate environmental contamination, if found, on any of the City-owned sites?

A) Yes. The City routinely submits or sponsors grant applications to agencies such as Hennepin County, Metropolitan Council and MN Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). Some of these programs allow grants to be awarded to developers; in such an instance, the recipient is required to execute a standard sub-recipient agreement.

Q16) Would the City consider creating a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District to fund the creation of new public parking?

A) Possibly. TIF was originally used to construct some of the existing facilities and it seems reasonable to consider this funding mechanism to expand the public parking facilities. While parking facilities are an eligible use of incremental taxes, the parcels included must pass the tests and standards identified in Minnesota Statute. At this time, the City has NOT pursued this strategy and the feasibility of a new TIF District is unknown. The cost of such evaluations and legal review would be the responsibility of the developer.

Q17) What are the geotechnical conditions and at what level is the water table in this area?

A) No geotechnical study has been conducted recently. Past projects have included deep basements without encountering ground water.

Q18) What is the role of the 50th & France Business Association in this project?

A) The 50th & France Business Association is an independent organization and not directly related to this RFP. Recognizing that the Association is comprised of long term property owners and tenants at 50th and France, it is anticipated that at least one representative of this group will be included on the advisory interview panel that considers all proposals received.

Q19) What provisions or concessions need to be included so as to not impact the Edina Art Fair?

A) Each summer, approximately 200,000 people visit 50th & France to attend the Edina Art Fair. Guests park in the public ramps and walk throughout the public sidewalks and streets. All construction projects are encouraged to be tidy without active work during the three-day event.

Q20) Is complete design detail and financing detail required with the proposal?

A) No. due to the potential complexities that exist in the proposals, only preliminary design concepts and preliminary financing concepts are required. Expectations are identified in the RFP document. More detailed information will be necessary after the City has selected finalists. Full details will be worked out in a Term Sheet as the City negotiates the final terms of the transaction.

Q21) The adjacent blocks at 50th and France have a pedestrian alley and plaza system that is unique. Should proposals include similar features for the redevelopment site(s)?

A) Yes. It is preferred that any proposal include convenient and attractive pedestrian routes and public plazas. These features are intended to preserve and enhance the unique pedestrian-oriented feel that customers and residents expect.

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