

August 22, 2006

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS – DUE SEPTEMBER 13, 2006 DOWNTOWN HISTORIC FLORENCE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

You are invited to submit an Expression of Interest and Qualifications for preparing a Downtown Historic Florence Redevelopment Plan. Your firm has been selected as one of a small group of consultants invited to participate because of your good reputation.

The Downtown Historic Florence Redevelopment Plan will address a central business corridor on North 30th Street. The approximate study area limits are Grebe Street to McKinley (see attached map) and 27th to North Ridge Drive.

The Plan is expected to involve visioning, land use and zoning, mixed use development, enhanced transportation and traffic, improved streetscape and pedestrian environment, and site development concepts. The proposed project will complement a number of current and ongoing planning programs within the area, particularly the proposed Historic Florence Gateway Visitor/Welcome Center Master Plan (a separate consultant study sponsored by Florence Futures). In addition, the Plan must be coordinated with the Omaha City Planning and Public Works Departments, Omaha By Design, and Metropolitan Area Planning Agency.

Purpose and Need

There is a clear desire to improve Downtown Florence as a destination for commercial/retail shopping by local and regional residents as well as tourists. To accomplish this goal, a comprehensive master plan is needed to establish a road map for the type and mix of commercial/retail. In addition, an economic analysis must accompany the master plan. Together, these two elements will serve as the factual document to attract a minimum of \$50 million in private development. The result will be a renewed main street in Historic Florence.

The attached "Destination Florence" paper outlines the goals and the status of current activities to complete the goals.

BACKGROUND

The people of Florence have identified the need for a motel/restaurant/family plex to be located in or within proximity of Downtown Florence (November 1, 2005 Town Hall meeting). When tourists stop at the Mormon Trail Center, they frequently ask “Where can we stay? Where can we eat? Where can we let the children unwind?” When residents of Florence have out of town visitors, these same questions are asked.

The Mormon Trail Center has been generating, depending upon the year, approximately 80,000 annual visitors. The Mormon Temple generates another 35,000 per year. Within the metropolitan area there are 800,000 people. These residents are within 20 minutes of the Florence neighborhood via I-680. For shopping, Florence residents currently travel west to Maple Street, West Center Road or West Dodge Road. Some even travel east to Council Bluffs.

Thus, the question for the Downtown Historic Florence Redevelopment Plan is how to assemble the types of businesses that would serve the out-of-state tourists, the metropolitan area visitors, and the local resident shoppers. The hotel/restaurant/family plex could certainly serve as an anchor for the revitalized Florence Business District along with the new Hy-Vee Drug Store at 30th and State Street.

Formation of Florence Futures - In 1998, a group of local advocates formed Florence Futures. Their mission statement reads:

- * To preserve, enhance and promote the cultural, historical, educational and community assets of the Florence area;
- * To serve as the organizational liaison between public and private entities for the fulfillment of its Mission on behalf of, and for the enhancement of, the Florence community;
- * To receive grants, gifts, donations and sponsorships for the funding and administration of Florence Community Planning, Development, Educational, Marketing and other activities related to the Foundation's non-profit Mission on behalf of, and for the enhancement of, the Florence-area community.

In 2006, Florence Futures officially became a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Their goal is to sponsor two master plan consultant studies: 1) to improve, beautify and redevelop Downtown Historic Florence; and 2) to develop a Visitor/Welcome Center along with expanded heritage tourism experiences in Historic Florence and throughout the region.

The Florence Futures Board is comprised of:

Linda Meigs, Chairman
Lowen Kruse, Vice-Chairman
Brad J. Brummund, Treasurer
Lillian Wunsch, Secretary
Clare Duda
Mele Mason
Bud Hartlaub
Elder Duane Whiting
Betty Davis
Kay Haman
Bruce Hamilton
Jon T. Hansen
Liz Jaunty
Paul Mullen
Charles Bressman
Jim Thompson

Funding for the Project – Funding will be from donations by public and private individuals and foundations to “Florence Futures Development Fund.” A maximum budget of \$110,000 (including reimbursable expenses) has been set for this consultant study.

Contract Administration – Florence Futures will identify a single person as administrator to coordinate the project and address day-to-day issues with the consultant.

Project Completion – Approval of the Downtown Historic Florence Redevelopment Plan by the Florence Futures Board will mark the conclusion of the consultant contract. The desired time schedule is four months from start to completion.

Outcomes from the Study

1. A Downtown Historic Florence Master Plan Report (25 copies, and an electronic version).
2. An Economic Analysis Report (25 copies, and an electronic version).
3. A minimum of two public meetings, one during the early stage of the study, and a second at the conclusion.
4. A public summary handout of the project studies, including an illustrative map of the Plan (250 copies, and an electronic version).

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Expressions of Interest – Please indicate your interest in pursuing this opportunity by September 13, 2006, by mailing the required information to:

Linda Meigs, Chair
Florence Futures, Inc.
P.O. Box 12121
Omaha, NE 68112
E-Mail: lsmeigs@msn.com

Contact Information – Include information on the primary contact person including name, position, address, phone number, and e-mail address. This should be the person that will be the contact for all correspondence and notifications.

Company Description – Provide a brief history of your firm, addressing:

Historical background and growth in consultant studies, for planning, economic analyses and related services.

Locations of the offices your firm operates, and the specific location that would be the base for this contract.

Project Experience – Describe your firm's relevant project experience, including total project cost and time, on similar types of urban planning projects (include a minimum of three, a maximum of seven) covering these elements:

- Downtown Planning/Corridor Planning
- Sub-Area Planning
- Infill/Redevelopment Planning
- Urban Design
- Form Based Codes/Design Guidelines
- Infrastructure Assessment and Design
- Pedestrian/Bicycle
- Tourism and Historical
- Market/Real Estate Analysis
- Traffic, Parking and Transit
- Economic Impact Studies

References – Provide five references with names, titles, client name, addresses, phone numbers, and websites, as appropriate, for the urban planning project experience described above. Include at least two planning projects that have been completed more than five years ago which have been implemented.

Project Approach – Describe your process in leading the visioning process and obtaining support of affected parties.

Staffing – Include the resumes and related experience of the key personnel that would have the hands-on role as a team member on this project. Include the number of years the key personnel have been with the firm and how many years they have been in their current position.

- Who will be the project planner? What is his/her:
 - Demonstrated experience in managing the master plan study?
 - Demonstrated ability to work with the Florence Futures Board and with their other employed consultants?
- Who will be the project economic analyst? What is his/her:
 - Demonstrated experience in completing factual economic analyses of conceptual land use plans?

Subcontracting/Outsourcing – Indicate what components of the work you would outsource to another consultant(s). List the subcontractors that you prefer to use.

Fees and Expenses

- Describe how you charge for your company's services within our budget.
- Define the items that would be included in reimbursable expenses.
- Address how you propose to distribute the billing for your services over the life of the project.

Format of Response – Respondents will submit five paper copies with at least one non-bound, and one copy in an electronic file format.

The response must include at least the requested information. Florence Futures reserves the right to request additional information during the review period.

Clarifications shall be requested in writing to Florence Futures. Using e-mail is recommended to expedite the process.

If an answer is appropriate and not already contained in the RFQ, it will be issued in writing via e-mail to all those who received this RFQ and who have provided an e-mail address.

SELECTION

The responses will be evaluated for relevant experience, past record, ability of professional personnel, location and ability to meet time and budget requirements. Those most closely matching the needs of Florence Futures will receive a Request for Proposal and Interview. Firms completing this phase will be ranked based upon their qualifications, proposal and interview.

The top ranked firm will be invited to negotiate a scope and contract with Florence Futures. If Florence Futures cannot negotiate terms successfully with the first ranked firm, we will open negotiations with the second ranked firm (and so on).

Florence Futures does reserve the right to reject any and all submittals.

Sincerely,

Linda Meigs
Chair
Florence Futures

JS/wl
Attachments