

Town of Waterbury, Vermont

Request for Qualifications for Development of a Multi-Family Housing Project at the Former Stanley Wasson Site in Downtown Waterbury

The Town of Waterbury (“Town”) seeks a developer to design, construct, and/or operate and/or own a housing development at the former Stanley Wasson Site. The site is currently owned by the State of Vermont and is a municipal parking lot. The Town has an option to purchase the property for \$400,000. The Town is seeking to purchase the site, and to transfer it to a developer in an amount equal to or greater than the purchase price.

This RFQ is to identify a qualified developer that has the interest and capability of developing this project in a manner that is consistent with the Town’s goals. The Town will review the RFQ responses and will ultimately select a developer. Once selected, the Town will work with the developer on a more formal and detailed development plan for the property.

Site History & Recent Conditions

The site previously housed two buildings that were demolished in 2021. The property is currently owned by the State of Vermont, and the Town has executed an option agreement. Important site information is as follows:

- Dimensional standards for housing are:
 - 20’ setbacks for exterior lot lines, no interior lot setbacks
 - 50’ height restriction
 - No lot coverage restrictions
 - For additional information please see Page 14 of the Town’s Phase 1 Area Zoning Bylaws. For specific use standards for multi-family housing please see page 24.

- Dimensional standards For mixed-use developments are:
 - 48’ height limit
 - 80% maximum lot coverage
 - Setbacks vary from 0’ for the front, 4’ to the sides, and 8’ to the rear.
 - Individual building size maximum of 8,000 sf.

- Within the Town’s Design Review District.

- Within the Waterbury Village Historic District

- Within the Designated Downtown.

- Municipal water and sewer are available through the Edward Farrar Utility District (EFUD). Current allocation fees, base charges and usage rates can be found at <https://www.waterburyvt.com/departments/billing>. Please note that EFUD is a separate and distinct municipality from the Town of Waterbury. EFUD has substantial capacity to provide water and sewer service to the site.
- The majority of the parcel is located within the Flood Hazard Overlay District; the site has *not* flooded since 2011.

Phase 1 Environmental Assessment has been begun. Estimated completion date is September 1, 2025. When completed the information will be posted to www.waterburyvt.com/news-initiatives/stanley-wasson-property-development

Project Goals

The Town has a desire and a need for bringing additional housing to its adjacent walkable Downtown District, as endorsed by the Town's Housing Task Force and the Selectboard. A major objective of the Town's recent zoning bylaws update was to encourage more multi-family housing and density in this area. The selectboard strongly supports redevelopment of the Stanley Wasson site, increasing the Town's housing stock, and growing the grand list. The selectboard seeks to maximize the development potential of the site, while creating an array of housing options for residents.

The Town seeks a developer to design, construct and/or operate a market rate, multi-family residential project on the parcel as a first priority; the Town further welcomes a second project phase that would include a workforce housing component. For purposes of this proposal, the Town defines workforce housing as affordable to individuals earning 80 to 120% of the area median income.

The Town is open to considering different ownership models. There is further support for offering housing opportunities for individuals and families who live in the floodzone and wish to relocate, and for seniors wishing to downsize but remain in our community. Creative opportunities and options from a developer that can serve to meet these goals will be welcomed.

Additional considerations are as follows:

- The Town is willing to assist in pursuing funding opportunities, tax credits or other financial assistance for the development project, including serving as the lead agent on financing and grant applications and assuming responsibility for administration of awards.

- Future construction within the 50' height limit would be minimally visible from Main Street; the development will be quite visible to immediate neighbors. A building orientation that minimizes this impact, to the extent possible, will be preferred.
- If space allows, there is town interest in creating a public park or open spaces on the edge of the parcel.
- The Town acknowledges future investments in sidewalks and crosswalks will be an important component to the project. Project designs that connect sidewalks within the parcel to existing and/or future public sidewalks are encouraged.
- A commercial component to the project is not desired, but would be considered if it enhances downtown vibrancy and is required to make the project financially viable.

Deliverables

Firms interested in the project should provide the following:

1. An overall initial proposal for building(s) location, size, and related amenities. To the extent possible a conceptual plan should include the estimated number of units and sufficient detail as to convey design intent, including plans to minimize the impact of the development on neighboring property owners. A schematic site plan or renderings is recommended. For a workforce housing component, the plan should include the proposed duration of affordability.
2. Description of specific Town goals, as outlined above, that will be achieved through completion of the project.
3. Identification of public improvements that may be required to support the project.
4. Detailed descriptions of any zoning variances that may be required, if any.
5. Description of the firm's experience in Vermont on similar sized projects. Specific focus should be given to the firm's ability to construct within a floodplain, and a historic district. Developers experience owning/operating multi-family residential buildings should also be discussed.
6. Description of the firms architectural, design and engineering capabilities, If applicable, include partners and subcontractors.
7. Description of key personnel to be involved in the project.

8. Description and/or demonstration of successful financing model(s) that may be considered.
9. Proposed purchase price for the property.
10. Demonstrated ability to obtain financing for past projects of similar size and scope.

Selection Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated on the strength of the following categories:

- Developers overall vision for the project, including how it aligns with the Town's vision and achieves project goals.
- Qualifications of the developer pertaining to similar projects in Vermont, including projects with affordable and/or senior housing components.
- Overall strength and completeness of the proposal.
- Priority will be given to proposals that offer housing opportunities to current employees of local businesses or critical services, along with those opportunities that provide relocation options for individuals affected by floodplain vulnerability.
- Any other creative ideas that lend strength to the project and increase community vitality.

Deadlines and Other Information

August 5, 2025: RFQ Issued

August 29, 2025. Developer questions due. Questions and answers will be provided at www.waterburyvt.com/news-initiatives/stanley-wasson-property-development

Proposals are due by 4:30 pm on Friday, September 26th.

Phase 2: Proposals

For the selected firm the additional Scope of Work shall include:

1. Meetings with the Town leadership team to review the project and discuss modifications, as appropriate.

2. Finalization of Development Agreement, including a detailed site plan including the following:
 - a. Square footage of building(s), number and type of housing units.
 - b. Site features including parking and location of public amenities.
 - c. Schematic building renderings, including elevations and details related to floodplain construction and historic district requirements.
3. Project schedule.
4. Financing plan.

Supporting Documents

- Property Map
- Survey and subdivision as prepared by the State of Vermont
- Phase 1 Environmental Assessment
- Town of Waterbury Phase 1 Zoning Bylaws (also available at <https://www.waterburyvt.com/departments/zoning/permit#c293>). See “Phase 1 Bylaws”
- Edward Farrar Utility District quarterly rate sheet, and allocation application.