

City of Elkhart
Community & Redevelopment

Request for Proposals Freight Street - Mixed Use Development

June 5, 2024

Department of Redevelopment
City of Elkhart, Indiana

The City of Elkhart invites proposals for the reimagining of Freight Street, a 1.6 acre site on the west side of Main St., between Freight St. and St Joseph St., which is within walking distance of historic neighborhoods, downtown, and adjacent to other planned developments. A mixed-use vision is desired – providing new residential units and commercial spaces contributing to and benefitting from other private investments in the area. This development will be further supported by the city’s commitment to a new pedestrian focused streetscape with wide sidewalks, trees, and lighting, as well as new public water and sewer utilities.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The City of Elkhart Redevelopment Commission is soliciting proposals for the redevelopment of Freight St., a 1.6 acre site on the west side of Main St., between Freight St. and St Joseph St., which is adjacent to historic neighborhoods, NYC Railroad Museum, places of worship, established businesses, downtown, and other planned developments.

The purpose of this request for proposal (RFP) is to identify and partner with a qualified design-build organization. While the objective is to collaborate with a single organization to oversee the project from inception to completion, the Redevelopment Commission reserves the right to select multiple organizations, a team of organizations, or any combination it determines will result in the most effective implementation of the plan.

The City of Elkhart has invested in property acquisition and environmental remediation to provide the right organization a prime site for redevelopment.

The City intends to support the development with investments in the public streetscape along this portion of South Main Street including 8’ wide sidewalks, curb extensions and mid-block crossings, decorative lighting, native trees, on-street parking, and any necessary municipal water and sewer improvements required by the development. Preliminary plans for these improvements are currently under review. Developers are encouraged to respond to this RFP with concepts that can be implemented without additional public sector investment.

2. PROPERTY/OFFERING

The property consists of multiple parcels totaling approximately one and a half (1.6) acres. Proposals should be submitted for all of the parcels as a collective development.

The Redevelopment Commission is offering to sell the collective parcels for the following price: \$350,000.00. See *Section 4 Proposal*, item 3a, of this document for additional information on offers.

The property is currently zoned Central Business District. Permitted uses and development requirements can be found at the City of Elkhart website www.elkhartindiana.org and by selecting the Government drop-down menu, then Departments, Planning and Zoning and then selecting the Comprehensive Plan & Zoning Ordinance.

This property is located within Census Tract 26.

This property is within a CDBG Low to Moderate Income Area.

This property is within the Downtown TIF District. See map below.



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3. OBJECTIVES

The Redevelopment Commission prefers:

- A two to four story mixed-use development including street level retail, upper level residential, and open-air spaces
- A proposal that will support and diversify the neighborhood economy by providing local conveniences as well as creating an attractive destination for the greater region
- A design incorporating a relationship between the neighborhood's historic elements while providing an inspiration for future improvements and growth
- Proposals that intentionally reference the new Benham Ave. Comprehensive Plan, excerpts are referenced below
- A program illustrating how the proposal may be completed and establish occupancy within the time period specified in the development agreement
- A streetscape that focuses on pedestrian circulation and limits motor vehicle access

While Benham Ave. is the physical and programmatic center of the neighborhood, S. Main is the preferred location for commercial and mixed-use development due to its proximity to downtown. Proposals should maintain a "main street" feel by incorporating a character and scale consistent with the existing historic main street building fabric.



Image courtesy of University of Notre Dame School of Architecture *Dean's Charrette #6, Elkhart, IN Restoration, Regeneration & Reconnection of the Benham Neighborhood, 2024*



Building Cornice

Decorative top of building, practical use to keep water away from the face of the building and transition from the materials used on the finish wall to the roof.

Windows — Punched Openings

Fabric buildings typically have a simple wall plane with punched openings with double hung windows.

Storefront Cornice with Signage

The storefront cornice divides the retail portion of the building and the residential or office upper floors as well as providing a place for store signage. If using an awning, attach it below the storefront cornice so signage remains visible. Also, if using an awning, specify a deep one, minimum 8".

Shop Display Windows

Display windows come in all configurations, but will typically have a low panel for protection from foot traffic, a large display area, and transom windows above.

Outdoor Seating

Storefronts scaled to people attract people. For restaurants, this presents the opportunity for outdoor dining and seating areas.

FIGURE XX: Key Design Elements of Mixed-Use Fabric Buildings

Fabric buildings work together to define the character of the public realm. The coordinated nature of these buildings relieves the pressure on each individual design to be the center of attention. Rather, the best fabric buildings are simple forms with great proportions. The details that matter most are the details you can touch and feel at the level of the storefront.

Image courtesy of University of Notre Dame School of Architecture *Dean's Charrette #6, Elkhart, IN Restoration, Regeneration & Reconnection of the Benham Neighborhood, 2024*



PRECEDENT: Example of the scale and character for the new mixed-use buildings on S. Main Street.



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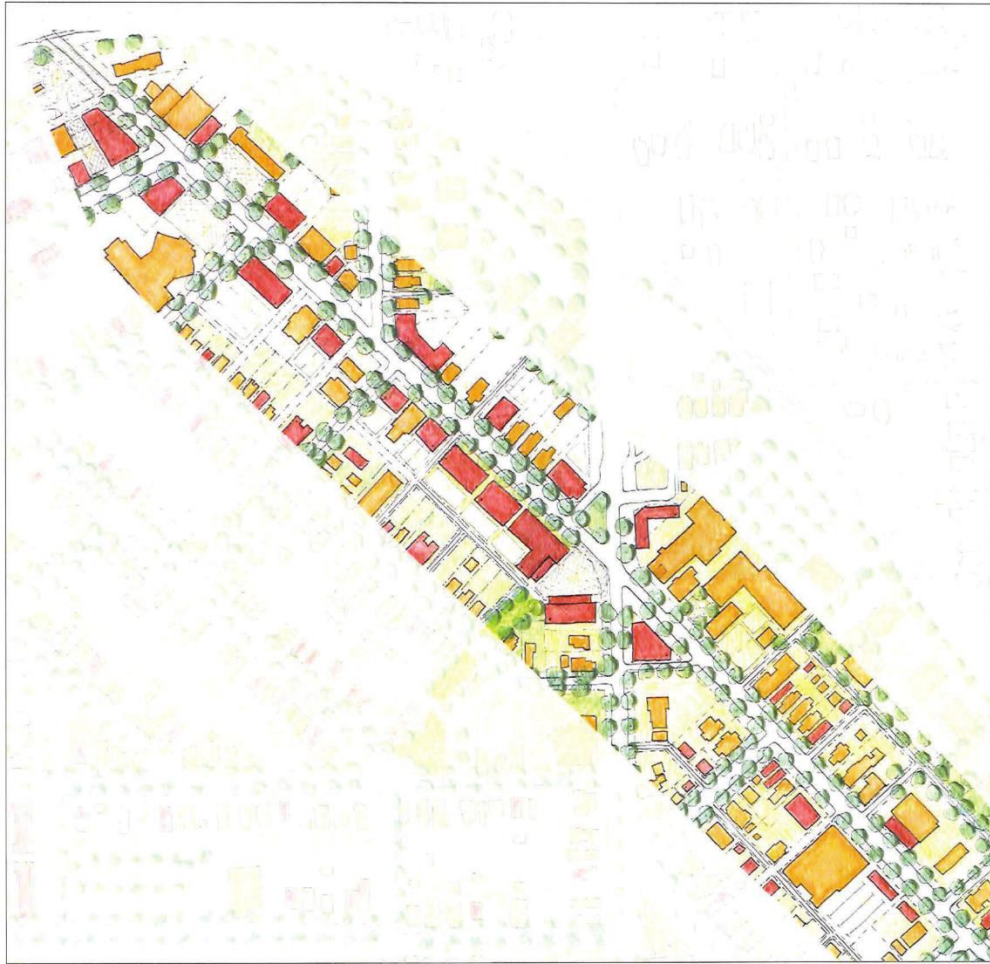


FIGURE XX: Masterplan Detail at S. Main Street



FIGURE XX: Proposed Zoning Code Snapshot for S. Main Street

New buildings lining S. Main Street should be designed to fit within a Form-Based zoning code in coordination with a comprehensive zoning reform for the entire city.

The proposed zone for this corridor, with the working title Neighborhood Center, should be 2-4 stories with buildings set close to the sidewalk and parking at the rear.

Typical Lot Width	Varies
Attached or Detached Buildings	Attached, closely spaced
Building Height	2 - 4 stories
Building Placement	Buildings set close to the sidewalk
Frontage	Shop fronts, stoops, dooryard or courtyards required
Parking Placement	At the rear
Use Type	Mixture of store front retail, professional offices, and multi-family residential mixed vertically or horizontally

Image courtesy of University of Notre Dame School of Architecture *Dean's Charrette #6, Elkhart, IN Restoration, Regeneration & Reconnection of the Benham Neighborhood, 2024*



FIGURE XX:S . Main Street Design Priority 1
 Recreate the Kelby Love mural printed from the high-resolution photograph. Make sure the paint is specified to ensure longevity of the art.



FIGURE XX: S. Main Street Design Priority 2
 Create a new plaza at the intersection of S. Main Street and Prairie Street. Frame the plaza with buildings that provide activities that encourage community engagement such as an art gallery or coffee shop.

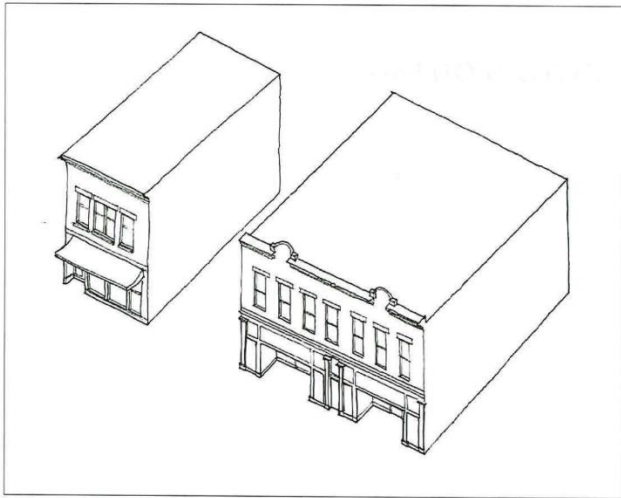


FIGURE XX: S. Main Street Design Priority 3
 Design the character and scale of the buildings to have a 'main street' quality. See page 64 for photographs of predated building, page 65 for storefront design principles, and page 66 for a framework zoning code to enable these designs.

Image courtesy of University of Notre Dame School of Architecture *Dean's Charrette #6, Elkhart, IN Restoration, Regeneration & Reconnection of the Benham Neighborhood, 2024*

4. PROPOSAL

The proposal must be submitted to the City of Elkhart Redevelopment Commission no later than Tuesday, July 9th, 2024 at 4:00 pm. The condensed timeline for submittal allows this project to be in consideration of REDI grant award which is anticipated in late July or August. The deadline may be extended at the discretion of the Redevelopment Commission.

All proposals must include the following information, ordered accordingly:

1. Cover Letter

Provide a cover letter on your company or organization's letterhead, indicating your interest in the project and certifying that the proposal is being made on behalf of the company, and that the signatory is an authorized representative.

2. Company Description

Provide a brief description of the company, history and organizational structure. Experience with similar projects should be included. Identify all team members with roles and responsibilities relevant to the proposed redevelopment project.

3. Project Scope

Please include all relevant information including:

- a. Property to be purchased and price offered. If offer is less than the offering price, please include a detailed explanation.
- b. Development vision and conceptual design plan. The conceptual design should be scaled and include site improvements for the entire project area.
- c. Proposed development details including, but not limited to:
 - i. Description of uses (commercial, residential, for sale or leasable space)
 - ii. Site plan for the project area including locations for parking, landscaping, public art and amenities, building locations, etc.
 - iii. Building elevations including proposed materials
 - iv. Number of buildings including number of floors and square footage for each building
- d. Business plan, including market study and leasing/sales strategy
- e. Comprehensive development pro forma
- f. Anticipated Development budget in excel format, which should include:
 - i. Itemized list of hard costs, soft costs and financing costs
 - ii. Detailed sources of funds
- g. Project schedule including the start and completion date, as well as timeline for design and construction and any phasing

5. EVIDENCE OF FINANCING CAPACITY

Demonstrate the company's/organization's ability to finance the construction and complete the necessary site improvements. Developers will receive additional points during the evaluation if they demonstrate existing investment/lending commitments and relationships with local/regional lending institutions for the purpose of financing development.

6. CONTINGENCIES

Provide information on any conditions that must be satisfied before the project can proceed.

7. SUBMISSION FORMAT

Submit one electronic version and one hard copy version of the proposal in a clear and legible format. Proposals must be complete in all respects; incomplete proposals will not be considered. All materials submitted become the property of the Elkhart Redevelopment Commission.

Submit all proposals to:
City of Elkhart Redevelopment Commission
Sherry Weber, Development Services Office Administrator
201 South 2nd Street
Elkhart, IN 46516

8. EVALUATION CRITERIA

In reviewing and evaluating proposals, the Elkhart Redevelopment Commission will consider the following:

- Proposal
 - Completeness of the proposal
 - Quality of the design concept
 - Conformity with the objectives outlined herein

- Team
 - Strength of the overall development team, including commitment and availability of key staff
 - Ability to execute/deliver on commitments
 - Professional and technical competence as evidenced by:
 - Professional qualifications and specialized experience of the developer and/or development team
 - Current and past performance of the developer and/or development team on similar projects
 - Developer and/or development team's financial qualifications, including a proven ability to obtain financing for this project and other similar projects

- Additional Considerations

Additional consideration will be given to respondents who seek to maximize the overall economic benefit to the City by:

 - Maximizing community benefits (e.g. inclusive approach to housing, cultural and neighborhood-serving amenities)
 - Maximizing the long-term value to the City through increased tax revenues and economic input
 - Ability to secure all financing and complete the property closing within six months of proposal acceptance by the Redevelopment Commission
 - Ability to start within a reasonable time period to be specified in the development agreement

9. PROPOSAL SELECTION PROCESS

- Step 1: Submit complete redevelopment proposal by Tuesday, July 9th, 2024 at 4:00 pm.
- Step 2: Reviewed by staff and forwarded to the Redevelopment Commission for review
- Step 3: Developer presents proposal to the Redevelopment Commission at the regularly scheduled Redevelopment Commission meeting on Tuesday, August 13, 2024 at 4:00 pm.
- Step 5: The Commission will consider the proposals and use its best efforts to take one of the following actions within 30 days:
- Reject the proposal
 - Accept the proposal
 - Request additional information prior to acceptance/rejection
- Step 6: Commission will request staff to negotiate a development agreement.
- Step 7: Staff and developer negotiate development agreement terms.
- Step 8: Development Agreement will be considered for approval by Redevelopment Commission.

The Redevelopment Commission reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.

All materials submitted through this process become the property of the City of Elkhart's Redevelopment Commission. With the exception of financial information, these materials are subject to public records request as applicable under federal law.

10. LEGAL DESCRIPTION AND PLAT

Parcel numbers included in this RFP are inside the boundary of the below image. Parcel consolidation and legal description are forthcoming.



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11. OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC/PRIVATE INVESTMENTS

Public investment in support of the redevelopment of Freight Street properties includes the following:

S Main Streetscape

- Roadway improvements
- Sidewalk improvements
- Utility improvements

Notre Dame School of Architecture Benham plan

- Comprehensive neighborhood plan
- Pathways to funding single family homes
- Zoning changes for greater density

Tolson Center

- \$12 million community center
- Sports complex
- Health services
- Meeting spaces

Woodland Crossing/Neighborhood Opportunity HUB

- \$13 million investment to retrofit vacant former Sears building
- Health facilities with 24/7 urgent care, mental health, and dental services
- Employment training in partnership with area employers and child care facilities
- 300-400 units of multifamily apartments and townhomes; public/private partnership projected \$50 million investment