

Updated ~~April 7~~ May 6, 2022
DRAFT - Not for distribution as a published RFP

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Disposition of Interest in Real Property and Redevelopment of the following school buildings: Maple School, 7 Chapel Street; Pepin School, 4 Park Street; and Center School, 9 School Street.

RFP # [XXX]

City of Easthampton, Massachusetts

Insert City seal, map, and/or images here.

Date issued: Date

Due Date for Responses: Date by time

Issued by:

City of Easthampton

50 Payson Avenue

Easthampton, MA 01027

<https://easthamptonma.gov>

This Request for Proposals was developed under the requirements of Chapter 30B and the requirements for the Disposition of Land in the Chapter 30B Manual (2016) issued by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Office of the Inspector General. The Chief Procurement Officer for the City of Easthampton is Michael Owens.

Legal Notice: Request for Proposals

The City of Easthampton seeks proposals for the disposition of one or more of the buildings associated with the former Maple Street School at 7 Chapel Street, Pepin School at 4 Park Street, and Center School at 9 School Street. The purpose of this disposition is to develop affordable housing across a range of affordability levels to address the need for such housing needs within the city. The City anticipates disposition by sale to a development team responsive to the criteria in this request for proposals.

| | Maple Street School | Pepin School | Center School |
|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Building footprint | 12,335 SF | 16,507 SF | 5,559 SF |
| Building area | 37,233 SF | 49,058 SF | 16,677 SF |
| Lot size: | 1.48 acres | 0.7 + 0.31 acres | 0.85 acres |
| Building constructed | 1896 | 1912, 1989 | 1902 |
| Stories | 3 | 3 | 3 |

Process and Timeline

The RFP is available by emailing Michael Owens, Procurement Officer at mowens@easthamptonma.gov on or after July 28, 2022. The City will conduct an in-person preproposal meeting at City Hall, followed by a site walk on August 18, 2022, at 10 am. If the City cancels the briefing and site walk because of inclement weather, the site walk will be rescheduled to August 19, 2022, at 10 am. Please register for the briefing and site walk by emailing Michael Owens at mowens@easthamptonma.gov.

Questions may be sent in writing to Michael Owens. Questions may be submitted by email at mowens@easthamptonma.gov or in writing to the address below on or before 2:00 pm on August 25, 2022.

Proposals are due on or before September 15, 2022, by 11:00 am. Applicant must submit one unbound original, two (2) bound copies, and one electronic copy to:

Michael Owens
Procurement Officer
City of Easthampton
50 Payson Avenue – Suite 120
Easthampton, MA 01027

The proposals will be opened and recorded at 11 am on September 15, 2022. Late submissions will not be accepted. Unsigned proposals will not be accepted. The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and/or limit or refine this project's scope as deemed in the City's best interest.

The City of Easthampton has determined that the award of this contract is subject to the Uniform Procurement Act. M.G.L.c.30B. Therefore, the provisions of M.G.L. c. 30B are incorporated here by reference. Submissions will be evaluated according to the requirements of M.G.L. 30B and the evaluation criteria outlined in this RFP. The preferred developer will be notified within four (4) weeks of completing the interviews.

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Disposition and Redevelopment of Former School Properties
Easthampton, MA**

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SECTION 1: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Development Offering

The City of Easthampton seeks proposals for the disposition of one or more of the buildings associated with the former Maple Street School at 7 Chapel Street, Pepin School at 4 Park Street, and Center School at 9 School Street. This disposition aims to develop affordable housing across a range of affordability levels to address housing needs within the city. The City anticipates the disposition of these properties by sale to a development team responsive to the criteria in this request for proposals.

The three schools have been provisionally declared surplus to school requirements by the Easthampton School Committee ~~on April 12, 2022 [anticipated vote April 2022]~~ and provisionally accepted by the City Council and declared surplus to municipal requirements ~~[anticipated vote July 2022]~~. The schools will be vacated, and all non-surplus fixtures and fittings removed during the summer of 2022. The City of Easthampton anticipates that the schools will be vacant by August 2022, and the provisional declarations will be ratified.

The successful respondent must enter into a Purchase and Sale Agreement materially on the same terms as set forth in the Purchase and Sale Agreement in **Section X** and incorporated herein within thirty (30) days of the award of the sale. Conditions applicable to the sale are included in **Section IX**. The closing shall occur no later than sixty (60) days from the date the parties enter into the Purchase and Sale or such other date acceptable to the parties.

Proposals may be withdrawn upon written request to the Procurement Officer before the submission deadline. Proposals shall not be modified, amended, or withdrawn for a period of one hundred and twenty (120) days after the date scheduled for the opening unless mutually agreed to by the City of Easthampton and the selected respondent.

The background information in this Request for Proposals (RFP) has been assembled from various sources. Links to these sources will be provided in **Section VII**. While the city has no reason to believe the information in this RFP is inaccurate, the City of Easthampton makes no representation or warranty, express or implied, as to the accuracy and completeness of the information. Respondents to this RFP should undertake their own review and analysis concerning physical conditions, environmental conditions, applicable zoning, required permits and approvals, and other development, ownership, and legal considerations.

Introduction

The redevelopment of the three schools (Maple Street, Center, and Pepin) is one of the key recommendations for the *Easthampton Downtown Strategic Plan* (March 2020). This plan evaluated several options for the reuse of the schools, including options for housing, including affordable housing, and commercial uses.

The City Council and Planning Board approved the *Easthampton Housing Production Plan 2021-2025* on February 17, 2021, and the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) approved the HPP on April 15, 2021. The plan was prepared by the

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City of Easthampton, Barrett Planning Group LLC., and Dodson & Flinker. With the approval of that plan, and the focus on the need within the city for affordable housing, the primary focus for the redevelopment of the three schools became affordable housing across a range of affordability levels.

Easthampton's Subsidized Housing Inventory is 530 units, or 7% of the year-round housing count identified in the 2010 Census. Demand for housing has increased as household growth has grown more quickly than population growth since 1990. To create incentives for more housing, the City has adopted a 40R Overlay District, established an emergency rental assistance program, supported and approved comprehensive permits, and identified surplus City-owned sites for affordable housing, including these three schools.

The Housing Production Plan identifies five City goals for housing:¹

- **Goal 1:** Create a wide variety of affordable and mixed-income housing that helps to keep Easthampton a welcoming, inclusive community.
- **Goal 2:** Provide more housing options, including affordable and market-rate housing options, for low-income families, seniors, and individuals with disabilities, through a variety of mechanisms to increase housing choice.
- **Goal 3:** Actively strive to achieve the Chapter 40B 10 percent minimum for affordable housing by annually producing at least 38 units that count on the Subsidized Housing Inventory, through local actions and approval of private development, especially development of rental units.
- **Goal 4:** Encourage new development and repurposing of existing buildings to create affordable and mixed income housing that reinforces the development patterns of Easthampton's downtown urban neighborhoods and maintains a predominantly single-family character in established single-family neighborhoods; strengthens the vitality of downtown with diverse housing types; and promotes housing in walkable areas convenient to shops, services, transportation, parks, and schools.
- **Goal 5:** Promote the development of surplus institutional or town-owned property and redevelopment of the mills to create desirable mixed-income and mixed-use neighborhoods, where feasible.

¹ City of Easthampton, Barrett Planning Group LLC., and Dodson & Flinker, *Easthampton Housing Production Plan 2021-2025*, p.5.

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All five goals are relevant to the disposition of these three schools.

Key Facts: Housing Needs

- ADA-accessible features for aging and physically impaired residents.
- More affordable units, both unrestricted and deed restricted.
- Additional affordable units to meet the City's statutory requirement under Chapter 40B.
- Units that are affordable at different levels of affordability (% of Area Median Income or AMI).
- Smaller units to address the needs of people who don't want larger homes.

The City has also identified the need for units that can accommodate families.

In support of this project, the City established an Elementary School Reuse Committee in September 2021. The group reviewed available information gathered during the Downtown Strategic Plan process and the Housing Production Plan. The effort was aided by a \$21,000 EEA Planning Assistance Grant, with which the City hired Innes Associates to facilitate the preparation of the RFP. All of the meetings were recorded and are available along with the information gathered. See **Section VII. Attachments** for a link to the meetings.

In 2022, the City secured a grant from MassDevelopment to undertake specific due diligence for the school properties. The project includes the completion of appraisals for each building, an existing condition survey for each school property, an evaluation of underground infrastructure in the vicinity of each school, and existing conditions survey of the surrounding streets and sidewalks. In addition, the project included the creation of one conceptual site plan per site to explore feasibility of incorporating some of the identified community needs such as public parking and/or a community playground. The plans include conceptual designs for surface level infrastructure improvements that the City would pursue via state grants to support the chosen project. See **Section VII. Attachments** for a link to the reports.

In 2021 and 2022, the City successfully made amendments to its existing 40R Smart Growth Zoning District to ensure that permitting for the reuse of the schools would be eligible for by-right permitting, the flexibility to include first-floor residential use, and to place all three school properties are properly within the district boundaries. **On April 6, XXX, 2022**, the City received its conditional approval from DHCD, and **on May 6, 2022XXX, 2022**, the City Council voted to adopt the newly amended ordinance.

Location

City of Easthampton

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Easthampton is a post-industrial, 16,000-person city with a long history of high civic engagement, commitment to the arts, and innovation. As family-run farms, manufacturers, and businesses operate throughout the City, the businesses and municipal offerings downtown are experiencing increasing recognition and popularity in the region. The City strives to re-activate abandoned and underutilized mill buildings, encourage retainment of small businesses and expansion of existing businesses, and enable increased foot traffic between our four distinct downtown areas.

The City has made significant investments over many years that strengthen the desirability of Easthampton for new residents. These include the following:

- The completion of the new \$109 million Mountain View [Pre-K-8 Elementary School](#) in 2022 will replace the three historic elementary school properties that are part of this RFP. This new state-of-the-art school is long overdue; combined with a more recent high school completed in 2013, the City anticipates the new school will result in continued interest in people seeking to reside in Easthampton.
- The long-awaited \$4.5 million reconstruction of Union Street in 2023 will begin in the summer of 2022. This will fill a much-needed gap in pedestrian and business connections in our downtown. The complete reconstruction will include new underground infrastructure, pavement, sidewalks, crosswalks, a bike lane, and an upgraded crossing for the Manhan Rail Trail. Construction will be completed in late 2024.
- The City completed a \$400,000 MassWorks grant in 2020 to add a turning lane on Route 10 to support the completion of the River Valley Coop, which has brought over 70 full-time jobs to Easthampton.
- The anticipated renovation of Old Town Hall into a 300 person-theater space on Main Street in 2023/2024 will create an arts and culture anchor destination in the heart of the downtown.
- [The completion of the redevelopment of the Ferry Street Mills over the next 4-7 years will cap a 20-year vision to revitalize a series of former manufacturing mills into a thriving and diverse mill district. In June 2022, the City will complete the \\$4.51 million-dollar MassWorks project, which created a new roundabout, parking areas, pedestrian safety improvements, an upgraded crossing for the Manhan Rail Trail, and a new Lower Mill Pond Promenade in support of private development.](#)
- [In the summer of 2022, the City through its Planning Department will be completing a Municipal Engagement Initiative through the Citizen's Housing and Planning Association \(CHAPA\) to identify, advocate, and create a network of residents who will support projects that create new affordable housing.](#)
- In the fall of 2022, the City will begin a \$2.8 million reconstruction of Cherry Street, replacing underground infrastructure and installing green infrastructure with funding from the MVP and CDBG programs.

The City has a recent pattern of partnerships with the Commonwealth and private entities to support investment in housing, commercial development, and public infrastructure. These projects include the following:

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- In March 2021, the City completed a \$394,000 MassWorks Infrastructure grant to support River Valley Co-op's \$20 million investment to construct a new 20,000 square foot cooperatively owned grocery store supporting approximately 100 new jobs.
- Over the past three years and through the strong support of the Mayor, City Councilors, and City officials, Easthampton enacted Adult-Use Cannabis Regulations in early 2018 and supported a robust but carefully crafted market, including ~~three-four operating adult-use dispensaries, two additional dispensaries in permitting,~~ and a 100,000 square feet of cultivation in a revitalized mill building. Easthampton has supported the growth of this new industry, and it has allowed for the revitalization of several vacant or underutilized properties.
- In ~~summer fall 2021~~ 2021, the City anticipates a long-awaited redevelopment of a dilapidated auto repair garage in the heart of the Cottage Street Cultural District into a three-story mixed-use building with 1923 apartments, including ~~four~~5 affordable units. This will be a hallmark development within the City's 40R Smart Growth District.
- In fall 2020, one of the City's largest manufacturing companies relocated within Easthampton and invested in a 50,000 square expansion within our industrial area.

Another essential element of our economic development strengths is arts, culture, and recreation. The City currently supports a popular set of activities (a mix of municipally initiated events and private business-led events) that support visitation to our downtown and mill districts:

- Millpond Live – a privately organized event in a public park consisting of distinct musical acts that has drawn thousands of visitors over four weeks each of the past three summers.
- Food Truck Friday – a weekly food truck event held in the mill district which converts a parking lot into a popular courtyard served by two local breweries and draws hundreds of visitors to each event
- Art in the Orchard – a privately organized art display stretching across a picturesque apple orchard with views of Mt. Tom. This premier destination represents many of Easthampton's experienced-based businesses that offer truly unique destinations.
- Cultural Chaos – a municipally organized street festival that has drawn up to 15,000 visitors per event over the past five years and occurs in Cottage Street Cultural District.

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This RFP is a continuation of the City's support for a vibrant Easthampton that supports housing options, small businesses, and local cultural events and activities.

Downtown Easthampton

Downtown Easthampton is home to a wide range of businesses, from small businesses along Cottage Street to large convenience shopping along Union Street. Nashawannuck Pond serves as an open space anchor for the Downtown with a new Boardwalk, nearby

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parcs, and connections to the Manhan Rail Trail. The restaurants and businesses along Cottage Street enhance the Downtown with nighttime activities. CitySpace's long-term lease of Old Town Hall is planned to provide a cultural and entertainment anchor for the community. The Manhan Rail Trail connects Downtown with the Pleasant Street Mills and surrounding communities, which have become home to many artists, businesses, and cultural activities. The Downtown serves as the civic center of Easthampton, with City Hall and other municipal functions clustered close by. Downtown Easthampton is also crossed by several major routes that traverse the region, amplifying the town's visibility as a destination to people traveling through it by car. All of these qualities have allowed the Downtown to thrive.

Transportation and Access

Easthampton is about twenty minutes northwest of Springfield. Easthampton is linked to I-91 via Route 141 and from I-91 to I-90. Easthampton is also connected to Southampton and Northampton via Route 10. By car, Northampton is about thirteen minutes away and is about eight minutes away.

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority runs a bus (R41) from Northampton to the Holyoke Mall. The Cottage and Clark Streets bus stop is around the corner from the Maple Street School. Bus stops are along Union Street. The Union/School Streets stop, across from the Easthampton Senior Center, is less than a ten-minute walk from the Pepin and Center Schools. The buses run weekdays from 6:15 am to 6:05 pm (starting in Northampton) and on Saturday from 8 am to 4:05 pm (as of September 2021).

The Manhan Rail Trail is a municipally-owned bike path that has become a concentrated hub of activity for many pedestrians and bike users, from residents, visitors, families, students, and others. As part of the goals identified in the Master Plan and Open Space and Recreation Plan, the City has actively supported and broadened activity along the Manhan Rail Trail and continues to make additional linkages to existing parks, schools, and neighborhoods.

The City used its 2019 Housing Choice Capital Grant to create four new bike share stations and became part of the regional ValleyBike system. This spring, the City is adding the fifth station in one of its most vulnerable neighborhoods.

SECTION II: DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTIES

[insert map and pictures with each school in final document]

Maple Street School²

Key facts

- Building footprint: 12,335 SF
- Building area: 37,233 SF
- Lot size: 1.48 acres
- Building constructed: 1896

Location

The Maple Street School is on the corner of Maple Street and Chapel Street. The building has its principal entry on Chapel Street near commercial uses along Cottage Street. Maple Street is residential in character.

Building

In the Easthampton Main Street Extension Area Historic Properties Survey report, dated September 3, 2021, PaleoWest notes that the Maple Street School (EAH.347) is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. They based this recommendation on Criterion C: the building must “embody the distinct characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represents a significant and discernable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.”³ The PaleoWest report describes the Maple Street School as follows:

The building was constructed in 1896 in the Romanesque style and greatly expanded in 1924 with a Classical Revival design. The early building was designed by Putnam & Bayley of Northampton. Originally an eight-room schoolhouse, the two-story brick building with brownstone trimmings and slate roof featured a Romanesque arched brick entryway on Maple Street. Architect W. C. Tammat made significant alterations to the heating and ventilation system in 1912 and drew plans for an expanded building that would move the main entrance to Chapel Street. The addition was redesigned by the architectural firm of McClintock & Craig, borrowing heavily from the 1917 plans, and built in 1924.

² Key facts for all three schools from Caolo & Bieniek Associates, Inc. et al., *Maple Elementary School Preliminary Design Program*, 2016.

³ PaleoWest, *Easthampton Main Street Extension Area Historic Properties Survey*, September 3, 2021, p. 8.

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The Classical Revival influence can be seen in the arched stone entryway and detailing of the west façade.⁴

The report notes that further investigation is required to confirm eligibility for listing.

The construction is brick bearing wall with wood-framed floor plate and roof assemblies. Significant changes to the building are likely to trigger complete building code upgrades, including the Energy Code and accessibility improvements. The 3-story building is organized with a central core and broad corridors serving the flanking classrooms on the exterior walls. Detailed information is available in the *Maple Elementary School Preliminary Design Program* in Section 3.1.4, pages 226-272 (see **Section VII: Attachments**). This includes a construction overview, architectural assessment, an evaluation of building code compliance, accessibility assessment, an assessment of structural systems, code review, and assessments of plumbing, fire protection, HVAC, and electrical systems.

Updates

According to the *Maple Elementary School Preliminary Design Program*, an addition to the Maple Street School in 1924 added eight classrooms. Other improvements included replacing the windows and boiler/burner in the 1970s and HVAC repairs in 2005.⁵

Site and Parking

The building is located close to Chapel Street, with parking behind the building and a playground to the right. The site offers opportunities for parking (approximately 75 spaces) and/or open space. [The conceptual site plans \(see Appendix \) demonstrates the potential for separated tenant parking and public parking as well as a relocated greenspace/community playground.](#)

Zoning/Building Code

The Maple Street School is within the R-10 zoning district and the Smart Growth 40R Overlay District. The City of Easthampton has adopted the stretch energy code.

Connections

The existing playground is an important neighborhood connector. However, maintaining a small park for use by the neighborhood is more critical than the exact location of such a park. The ability of the site to accommodate a moderate amount of public parking was a high priority for the community based on the proximity of the site to the Cottage Street Cultural District.

⁴ PaleoWest, *Easthampton Main Street Extension Area Historic Properties Survey*, September 3, 2021, p. 24.

⁵ Caolo & Bieniek Associates, Inc. et al., *Maple Elementary School Preliminary Design Program*, 2016. p. 11.

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Pepin School

Key facts

- Building footprint: 16,507 SF
- Building area: 49,058 SF
- Lot size: 0.7 acres and 0.31 acres lots separated by Clark Avenue
- Building constructed: 1912, renovated in 1989

Location

The Pepin School is on the corner of Park Street and Clarke Avenue, with its principal entry on Park Street. The Center School is also on Clarke Avenue, and the City’s library is on Park Street. Some commercial uses are on Union Street, about a five-minute walk.

Building

Although the Pepin School is a contributing building in the Main Street Historic District (EAH.A), PaleoWest states that the Pepin School (EAH.39) is eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places. They based this recommendation on Criterion C, as defined above.

The PaleoWest report describes the Pepin School as follows:

The building was constructed as the new Easthampton High School in 1912 and historically referred to as the Easthampton High School or Park School. According to Building Inspection permits, the architect was Clarence P. Hoyt (1868-1938) of Boston. Hoyt designed a number of schoolhouses statewide. The masonry construction is clad in brick and cut stone with a ridged hip roof. The building’s primary entrance is located on its front (northeast) elevation featuring symmetrical fenestration and massing, and a corniced soffit. Double doors are set in a large cutstone surround, with a large cornice and “HIGH SCHOOL” carved in the stone. Metal sconces with globe lights flank the entryway. A large arched dormer projects from the roofline over the central bay. Original decorative brickwork including pilasters, lintels, and a cornice remain intact and the exterior demonstrates a high level of historic integrity.⁶

The report notes that further investigation is required to confirm eligibility for listing.

The construction is steel frame with masonry bearing wall and wood-framed floor and roof assemblies. The Pepin School has an elevator. Significant changes to the building are likely to trigger complete building code upgrades, including the Energy Code and accessibility improvements.

The 3-story building has significant attic spaces and is composed of two major elements and a connector. Floor levels are not aligned between the two major elements, and the

⁶ PaleoWest, *Easthampton Main Street Extension Area Historic Properties Survey*, September 3, 2021, p. 26.

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floor plans and interior circulation are complex. The school's gymnasium is ground-level with a large cafeteria/assembly area on the second level. Some spaces may lack daylight.

Additional information is available in the *Maple Elementary School Preliminary Design Program* in Section 3.1.4, pages 279-285 (see **Section VII: Attachments**). This additional information includes a construction overview and summary architectural assessment, but not the code review completed for the Maple Street School.

(see **Section VII: Attachments**).

Site and Parking

The site is divided into two parts: a 0.7-acre parcel accommodates the building, and a 0.31-acre parcel contains staff parking. Clarke Avenue separates these two lots. The section of Clark Avenue adjacent to the school building is currently closed to public traffic and acts as a pedestrian connection between Pepin and the Center Elementary School. The site also has head-in parking spaces next to the building (approximately 34 spaces).

Zoning/Building Code

The Pepin School is in the R-5 zoning district and is expected to be within the Smart Growth 40R Overlay District (a zoning amendment to add the building into the 40R district is underway).

Connections

Clarke Avenue could be an important connecting element between the Pepin and Center schools. The architectural character of the Pepin School's principal façade and the front yard contribute visually to Park Street and the downtown civic environment, especially with the school's proximity to the Emily Williston Memorial Library and Museum. The school's gym is also seen by many as an important community resource and creative ways for a private entity to maintain and allow public access to the gym was a priority for some community members..

Center School

Key facts

- Building footprint: 5,559 SF
- Building area: 16,677 SF
- Lot size: 0.85 acres
- Building constructed: 1902

Location

The Center School is on the corner of School Street and Clarke Avenue. As noted above, Clarke Avenue connects the school to the Pepin School. Commercial uses on Union Street are a walk of less than five minutes as is the Emily Williston Memorial Library and Museum.

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Building

PaleoWest also recommends that the Center School (EAH.226, referred to as the Center Union School) as eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places. They based this recommendation on Criterion C and recommended that the building be included in the Main Street Historic District.

The PaleoWest report describes the Center School as follows:

The school building was constructed in 1903 as a replacement to an earlier school building located within the same parcel. The building was historically known as the Center Union School, likely reflecting the school's location between Center and Union Streets. The two-and-a-half story brick building was designed by architects Curtius G. Page and James E. Hayes. The front (southeast) elevation presents the school's primary entrance, located within a projecting oversized arched opening featuring carved brick ornamentation and circular brick pilasters, topped with poured concrete globes. The second story features brick quoins on the exterior corners of the elevation and a front gable dormer projecting from the center. The eaves of the hip roof are ornamented with a wood entablature featuring brackets beneath the soffit and dentils on the cornice. This detailing is original to the 1903 Richardson Romanesque design.⁷

The report notes that further investigation is required to confirm eligibility for listing.

The construction is brick bearing wall with wood-framed floor plates and roof. Significant changes to the building are likely to trigger complete building code upgrades, including the Energy Code and accessibility improvements. The 3-story building is organized with a central core and broad corridors serving the flanking classrooms on the exterior walls. The floors are relatively small and have windows on all sides. There is a substantial attic space that might be renovated and used.

Additional information is available in the *Maple Elementary School Preliminary Design Program* in Section 3.1.4, pages 273-278 (see **Section VII: Attachments**). This additional information includes a construction overview and summary architectural assessment, but not the code review completed for the Maple Street School.

Site and Parking

The site includes a parking area and playground. A portion of the site shares fences with the parking lots of the surrounding commercial properties. With a shared parking agreement, all the adjacent property owners could remove the fences and redesign the layout to accommodate their current uses and the proposed use of the Center School. ~~If that is not feasible, the conceptual site plans (see Appendix) show the potential he~~ ~~ability~~ to maintain a small community park is more important than the size and location of the existing playground. Creating a small number of public parking spaces is an additional significant community benefit.

⁷ PaleoWest, *Easthampton Main Street Extension Area Historic Properties Survey*, September 3, 2021, p. 28.

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Zoning/Building Code

| The Center School is within the R-405 zoning district and the Smart Growth 40R Overlay District.

Connections

As noted above, Clarke Avenue could be an important connecting element between the Center and Pepin schools. The neighborhood values the existing playground and would be interested in public open space at the site. In addition, enhanced sidewalks along School Street could connect the site to Union Street. The potential for a small to moderate amount of public parking was a high priority for the community.

SECTION III: DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The City of Easthampton is disposing of the three schools to create affordable housing to address some of the City's identified needs (see the *City of Easthampton Housing Production Plan 2021-2025* in **Section VII: Attachments**).

Respondents to this RFP must address the following program in their proposal:

- Housing that is affordable at a variety of income levels and family sizes,
- Impact on the neighborhoods in terms of design, traffic, and parking.
 - The City will require a traffic and parking management plan as part of the permitting process. The respondent will be required to include bicycle storage as part of these plans.
- The integration of community amenities that encourage interaction between the new residents and the neighborhood. Options for community integration include, but are not limited to, public parking, neighborhood playground(s), and public access to the Pepin gym.
 - The respondent will be required to include a wayfinding signage program welcoming the public to any public use on the site.
- Design that is compatible with and responsive to the surrounding neighborhoods, the existing buildings, and the community's values regarding sustainable construction and site design.
- In addition to meeting the stretch energy code, rehabilitated buildings must be updated to meet ADA requirements. The City will give preference for sustainable design, both construction and site, that goes beyond the stretch energy code's requirements and considers low-impact landscape design. At a minimum, air quality standards must include MERV-13 air filtration.

Respondents must use the 40R Smart Growth zoning for their proposed development.

The respondents have certain choices, reflected in **Section V: Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process**.

- The respondent may choose to propose a development program for one or both sites. If the respondent submits a proposal for only one site, Pepin and Center must be treated as a single site. In other words, a single site proposal may be for the Maple School site or the Center and Pepin sites, but not for either Pepin or Center.
- The respondent may choose to retain and redevelop one or all buildings and add one or more new additions. If the respondent proposes to demolish one or more buildings, then the City will require the respondent to retain components of the historic architecture and integrate them into the design of the new buildings and/or additions.
- If one or more buildings are demolished, the respondent must increase the number of affordable housing units or the number of public parking spaces by a

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minimum of 15% and must meet additional environmental and design standards. These standards include the following:

- Preservation of historic architectural elements.
- Creative integration of those preserved elements into the building and/or site design.
- Ability to achieve LEED, SITES, WELL, Passive House and/or other certifications for construction and maintenance of the buildings.

If one or more of the buildings are demolished, the respondent will also be required to have at least one neighborhood meeting prior to submitting a formal application to discuss the demolition process and the design of the new building(s).

The City of Easthampton is prepared to work with a private developer to upgrade public infrastructure, including, but not limited to, the creation of public parking and/or enhanced pedestrian access in the neighborhood via the Community One Stop for Growth, including MassWorks and other programs.

SECTION IV: REQUIREMENTS AND CONDITIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL

The following are the required components of the proposal. All requirements must be satisfied to meet the minimum evaluation criteria.

The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or portions thereof, if it is in the public interest to do so and also reserves the right to waive any informalities of a nonmaterial nature.

All determinations as to the completeness or compliance of any proposals, or as to the eligibility or qualification of any respondent, will be within the sole discretion of the City of Easthampton.

Submission Requirements

1. Cover letter.
2. **Respondent information.** This should include the name, address, telephone number, and email address of the respondent or any representative authorized to act on the respondent's behalf.
3. **Narrative of team members and structure.** This should include the name and contact information of the primary point of contact with the City and the contact information and primary responsibility of each professional on the team.
4. **Narrative of relevant development experience.** This should include projects of similar size, scale, and type in Massachusetts completed or substantially completed within the last six years and a reference for each project.
5. Narrative of response to Development Goals and Objectives (**Section III**).
6. Narrative of response to evaluation criteria (**Section V**).
7. Development concept.
8. Neighborhood benefits and impacts.
9. Conceptual design drawings.

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10. Project development and construction schedule.
11. **Preliminary development budget.** If the project includes phases, all phases must be provided.
- 12.
13. **Pro forma financial projections.** If the project includes phases, all phases must be provided.
14. **Evidence of financial status.** This should include a bank reference(s) and letter(s) of preliminary interest from one or more institutional lender(s) sufficient to fund the development project.
15. Forms.
16. Supplemental Information.
 - i. Resumes for all team members
 - ii. Descriptions for all responding firms
 - iii. Examples of projects relevant in scale, land uses, and community size.
 - iv. References for both completed projects and for financial status.

Proposal Terms and Conditions

- A. **Acceptance of RFP Terms.** Respondent's submission of a proposal in response to this RFP shall constitute its acceptance of all of the terms and conditions of this RFP.
- B. **Proposer's Responsibility to Review all RFP Terms.** It is the responsibility of each respondent to examine the terms and conditions of this RFP. Failure to do so shall be at the respondent's own risk. The City will assume that the respondent has made a full investigation to be fully informed of the extent and character of the requirements of this RFP.
- C. **Compliance with all Applicable Local, State, and Federal Laws and Regulations.** The respondent shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to this project.
- D. **City's Option.** The City reserves the right to cancel this RFP or to reject, in whole or in part, any and all proposals received in response to this RFP upon its determination that such cancellations or rejections are in the best interest of the City. The City further reserves the right to waive any minor informality in any proposals received if such waiver is in the City's interest. The determination of the criteria and process by which proposals are evaluated, the decisions as to who shall receive a contract award, or whether or not an award shall be made as a result of this RFP shall be at the sole and absolute discretion of the City.
- E. **Interviews and Acceptance or Rejection of Proposals.** The City reserves the right to interview any and all respondents. The City reserves the right to modify or withdraw this request at any time, to reject any or all proposals or portions of proposals, to request additional information either in writing or through interviews of selected applicants, to solicit new responses, and to award contracts as it deems to be in its best interest.
- F. **Proposals Become Public Records.** All proposals will become a matter of public record, subject to the Massachusetts public records law (M.G.L. Chapter 66, Section 10) and the corresponding regulations and exemptions. Submission of a proposal acknowledges the City's obligations under M.G.L. Chapter 66 if the City receives a public records request.

SECTION V: EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SELECTION PROCESS

Minimum Evaluation Criteria

Each proposal must meet all the following criteria to be considered for further evaluation:

- Respondent must meet all submittal requirements specified in **Section IV**.
- Respondent must submit all required forms, fully and correctly filled out and executed.

Evaluation Criteria

The Review Committee will use the following criteria to score the proposals and interviews.

Evaluation Criteria are used to help differentiate the proposals received by the City. These criteria are scored on the following scale: Not Advantageous, Advantageous, and Highly Advantageous. Each part of the scale would be weighted to create a score that would factor into evaluating the proposals.

Commented [EKI1]: Suggested weightings:

Points
Not advantageous = 0
Advantageous = 1
Highly Advantageous = 3

Criteria 1-7 = 50%
Criteria 8-10 = 40%
Criteria 11 = 10%

These will not be published in the RFP.

| # | Criteria | Not Advantageous | Advantageous | Highly Advantageous |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| 1 | Affordable housing | Proposal provides units mostly affordable to higher AMIs and with a maximum AMI greater than 80%. | Proposal provides units across a wide range of AMIs, with a maximum AMI of 80%. | Proposal provides units across a wide range of AMIs, with a maximum AMI of 80%, and family sizes. |
| 2 | Community connections (May include, but not be limited to, a publicly accessible gym, public parking, and neighborhood playground.) | Proposal does not create a space that integrates identified community desires into the proposed development. | Proposal creates one or two options for community interactions. | Proposal creates three or more options for community interactions. |
| 3 | Responsive design | Proposal does not consider either building or site in the context of the existing built environment. | Proposal responds to the existing built environment in the design of both building and site. | Proposal is imaginative in its response to the existing built environment in the design of both building and site. |
| 4 | Environmental sustainability | Proposal is not eligible for one or more of the certification programs. | Proposal is eligible for LEED, SITES, or other relevant certification. | Proposal commits to applying for LEED, SITES, or other relevant certification. |
| 5 | Retention of existing buildings | Proposal does not address the retention of any of the existing buildings or historic | Proposal retains at least one of the buildings and incorporates historic | Proposal retains all three buildings and incorporates the history of the building into the proposal. |

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| # | Criteria | Not Advantageous | Advantageous | Highly Advantageous |
|----|---------------------------------|--|---|--|
| | | components of the buildings. | architectural components. | |
| 6 | Number of sites in the proposal | Proposal is for one school only. | Proposal includes Center and Pepin as a single site. | Proposal includes all three schools, with Center and Pepin treated as a single site. |
| 7 | New construction | Proposal includes demolition of the existing building(s) and does not include an increase in affordable units or adequate sustainability features or one or more community facilities. | Proposal includes demolition of the existing building(s) and does the required increase in affordable units and sustainability features but does not include a public park or public parking. | Proposal includes demolition of the existing building(s) and includes an increase in affordable units above required, achieves a responsive design, will apply for a LEED or similar certification, and includes a public park, public parking, and a community space. |
| 8 | Schedule | Proposal requires City to maintain control of the properties for more than 18 months. | Proposal requires City to maintain control of the properties for less than 18 months. | Proposal minimizes the amount of time the buildings remain under City control. |
| 9 | Experience | Respondent has experience with three or fewer completed projects that involve the reuse of schools or buildings of a similar scale for housing in Massachusetts. If the respondent proposes new construction, projects must reflect experience with new construction. | Respondent has experience with more than three completed projects that involve the reuse of schools or buildings of a similar scale for housing in Massachusetts. If the respondent proposes new construction, projects must reflect experience with new construction. | Respondent has experience with more than five completed projects that involve the reuse of schools or buildings of a similar scale for housing in Massachusetts. If the respondent proposes new construction, projects must reflect experience with new construction. |
| 10 | Financial Status | Proposal does not include a letter of preliminary interest or bank references do not indicate a familiarity with the funding sources appropriate for a project of this size and complexity. | Letter of preliminary interest matches the needs in the pro forma and bank references indicate a familiarity with the funding sources appropriate for a project of this size and complexity. | Letter of preliminary interest matches the needs in the pro forma and bank references indicate significant expertise with the funding sources appropriate for a project of this size and complexity. |

Commented [EK13R2]: Jeff noted that this could also be a requirement of the RFP.

Commented [EK12]: Alternative: The City could require the developer to maintain the buildings after signing the Purchase & Sale agreement.

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| # | Criteria | Not Advantageous | Advantageous | Highly Advantageous |
|----|-----------|---|---|---|
| 11 | Interview | Respondent cannot clearly explain the proposal in the interview and is non-responsive to the interview committee's questions. | Respondent can clearly explain the proposal and respond to the interview committee's questions. | Respondent actively engages the interview committee around the proposal and the questions and demonstrates a clear ability to work with the City. |

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Selection and Disposition Process

All complete proposals submitted by the deadline will be opened in public on September 15, 2022, at 11 am and logged. Once opened, all information contained in the proposal is public. The Review Committee will consist of [xxx]. Proposals will first be evaluated against the minimum evaluation criteria. Proposals deemed responsive will then be evaluated against the overall evaluation criteria.

The Review Committee will rank the proposals and interview all responding firms during September and October 2022. Firms may be asked to provide further detail regarding their proposals, qualifications, and finances before or during an interview.

Terms established through negotiations by the City shall be incorporated into the final proposed purchase and sale and land disposition agreement. The terms of and the final award shall be subject to the review and approval of the City Solicitor, and the award shall be made, at its discretion, by the City of Easthampton, the Awarding Authority.

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SECTION IV: PROPOSAL AND DESIGNATION SCHEDULE

The schedule for the proposal and designation process is as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| RFP available for distribution | July 28, 2022 |
| Site briefing and site walk | August 18, 2022 |
| Questions due | August 25, 2022 |
| Responses to questions provided | September 1, 2022 |
| Proposals due | September 15, 2022 |
| Interviews | October 2022 |
| Designation of a Preferred Developer | November 2022 |

Questions may be sent in writing to Michael Owens. Questions may be submitted by email at mowens@easthamptonma.gov or in writing to the address below on or before 2:00 pm on August 25, 2022.

Responses to all questions will be sent in one or more addenda issued by the City of Easthampton to all registered firms. The last addendum will be issued no later than September 8, 2022, by 4 pm). Only answers provided in writing through an addendum may be relied upon by the firms responding to this proposal.

Proposals are due on or before September 15, 2022, by 11:00 am. Applicant must submit one unbound original, two (2) bound copies, and one electronic copy to:

Michael Owens
Procurement Officer
City of Easthampton
50 Payson Avenue – Suite 120
Easthampton, MA 01027

No faxed proposals will be accepted. No electronically transmitted proposals will be accepted.

The proposals will be opened and recorded at 11 am on September 15, 2022. Late submissions will not be accepted. Unsigned proposals will not be accepted. The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and/or limit or refine this project's scope as deemed in the City's best interest.

The City may request interviews with firms whose proposals meet the minimum criteria during October 2022.

The City expects to designate a Preferred Developer in November 2022. The Preferred Developer is expected to execute a purchase and sale and land disposition agreement based on its proposal and the terms outlined in this RFP.

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SECTION VII: ATTACHMENTS

The attachments referred to in this Request for Proposals can be found at [\[link to City's website\]](#) and are listed below.

[List of documents on the website, including the following]

- Site Photos
- Reports from Valley CDC
- Survey
- Reports from MassDevelopment
- Downtown Strategic Plan
- Housing Production Plan
- Maple Street Development Program
- Main Street historic inventory
- Master Plan (excerpt)
- Sample Contract
- Forms:
 - Disclosure Statement for Transaction with a Public Agency Concerning Real Property.
 - Certificate of Tax Compliance.
 - Certificate of Non-Collusion.

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SECTION VIII: FORMS

Michael

SECTION IX: CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Michael

SECTION X. PROPOSED FORM OF PURCHASE AND SALE

Michael