

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Waterfront Downtown Development Opportunity

City of Huron, Ohio

**Response Due Date:
November 8th, 2019**

Prepared and Issued By the City of Huron

Part I: Opportunity Overview

The City of Huron, Ohio is seeking qualifications from interested developers regarding a unique waterfront development opportunity.

The development site (exhibit A) is the northern 10 acres of a 20-acre parcel. The southern half houses a public boat launch owned and operated by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

The site was initially developed in the late 1930s with the construction of a grain elevator and silo. The operation, under ownership of ConAgra Foods, was shuttered in 2006. The City partnered with the State of Ohio to claim the property and initiate a large-scale cleanup effort. The property was purchased for \$3.5 million by the state of Ohio. The city was then selected as the project manager for the installation of a public boat launch facility and received a grant of \$3,100,000.00 to complete by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. Upon completion of the boat launch project, the city received a \$2,000,000 Clean Ohio Revitalization grant for the demolition and clean-up of the site. The facility was imploded on January 8th, 2012.

Since the conclusion of the site cleanup, the City conducted a year-long citizen driven master plan; Huron Vision 2020 Master Plan. The plan identified 9 areas to be considered in the citywide redevelopment process. The former ConAgra site was the focal point of the plan serving as a catalytic opportunity for the City. The focus of the development targets a mix of commercial/office and residential units to address needs in the community and to support the vibrancy of Huron's high-visibility waterfront. The City of Huron began to aggressively implement the community guided plan by pursuing control of all applicable properties, investing millions in capital infrastructure and site enhancements, completing environmental assessments, and preparing the area for redevelopment.

The City has expended funds to further site readiness including completion of a boundary survey, topographic information, soil borings, soil compaction study, and Phase I & II environmental assessments.

Project Site

The project area is located along the Huron River, surrounded by water on the north, east, and west boundaries (highlighted within the exhibits below). The site comprises 10 of the total 20 acres on the site. The site can be identified as County Permanent Parcel Number: 42-

61270.001. The City was able to leverage millions in grant funds to bring the site to its existing condition. The City is currently exploring options to further the site's development readiness, including installation of utility infrastructure, site compaction, and installation of a public park (exhibit below).

There are many existing factors that contribute to the viability of a project within the community:

- Since adoption of the Master Plan in 2013, there has been close to \$100 million in private capital invested in the City in the form of new or expanding businesses:
 - Mucci Farms (95-acre high-tech greenhouse facility): \$70 million
 - Ohio Patients Choice (Medical Marijuana Cultivation and Production Facility): \$20 million
 - Huron Corporate Park (News 2 You, Central Ohio Paper and Packaging): \$5 million
 - Huron Industrial Park (South Shore Marine, Label Aid / Paper Resources): \$2 million
 - Goodwill Industries: \$500,000
- In addition, the City has invested millions in capital infrastructure and quality of life enhancements to complement existing development and promote further investment:
 - Main St. enhancements: \$3 million
 - Huron Public Power Expansion: \$4 million
 - Showboat Site revitalization: \$1.5 million
 - Quality of life enhancements (parks, paths, etc.): \$3 million
- Additional economic development incentives can be made available including, but not limited, tax increment financing (TIF) and community reinvestment area (CRA) property tax abatements.

The City of Huron is excited to work with a qualified developer to achieve a successful project that will serve as a regional and national model for progressive, community driven mixed-use development. The availability of 10 acres of land within the core of the community presents a unique opportunity for both the City and to the selected development team.

Part II: Vision 2020 Master Plan

In 2013, the City completed a comprehensive citizen driven planning effort to establish a re-development plan for the City. The effort, monikered the Vision 2020 Master Plan, focused heavily on the development site. The Plan should serve as a guide to the development team; however, the City of Huron encourages responders to provide their expertise and creativity to the development.

Key findings of the Plan which will guide the development design include:

- Develop an integrated and multi-modal mixed-use development site, comprised primarily of commercial office and residential uses. Retail should be considered viable as well.
- Ensure that new development is complementary to the existing size, scale, and fabric of the character of the surrounding community.
- The development area represents an opportunity to provide a mixture of housing types and densities including both rental and owner-occupied units.
- The proposed development should be designed in such a fashion that accounts for seasonality, with an influx in warmer months, but should be viable year-round.
- New development should enhance walkability and bike-ability and encourage multiple modes of transportation to encourage public access.

Exhibits of Development in “Exhibits”

Part III: Community Background

The City of Huron is located on the southern-most point of Lake Erie, midway between Cleveland and Toledo, Ohio. Huron is located in the middle of what’s considered the Lake Erie Shores and Islands tourism area, which boast sandy beaches, fertile fishing grounds, walking and birding trails, breweries and wineries, recreational water sports and the nation’s best amusement park (Cedar Point).

Quality of Place

Huron has been a vacation destination since the late 19th century. As a resort spot, the City offers an abundance of recreational opportunities, including fishing, boating, birding, sandy beaches, and miles of recreational trails. Even as its popularity as a summer getaway is growing, Huron is increasingly becoming a sought-after place to live year-round.

Full-time residents praise Huron's quality of life, close-knit atmosphere, and excellent schools, as well as many projects constructed for the benefit of the community. For example, the Huron Boat Basin and Amphitheater, the focal point of the downtown, is constantly touted as one of the best public venues in the area. Lake Erie Living has donned it the best live

music venue in the region 2 out of the last 3 years. The Park has both a public marina and a outdoor amphitheater, which hosts concerts, events, and movies throughout the summer. The space is home to various community events and festivals throughout the summer including the Boppin' on the Basin concert series, along with movie nights and a full slate of food and arts festivals.

Just west of town, Cedar Point draws nearly 3.5 million visitors a year to enjoy its many features. A recently completed traffic study showcased that Huron is the most used exit for motorists as they come to the park. Sawmill Creek Resort, a 240-room lodge, provides a number of on-site recreational opportunities, conference and business facilities, and multiple dining facilities. The Resort was recently acquired by Cedar Fair - parent company of Cedar Point.

Healthcare

The Huron area has excellent medical facilities, both for inpatient and outpatient medical services. Firelands Regional Medical Center offers full, state-of-the-art medical services. Physicians from all fields practice at the hospital. Admiral's Pointe, a 100-bed licensed/certified long-term nursing facility, provides healthcare services to Huron and surrounding localities. Because of its proximity to Cleveland and Toledo, the Huron area has well-established referral patterns to the major tertiary medical centers. The city and township are served by an excellent team of full-time paramedics who are fully trained in basic and advanced life support. The Department has 2 stations located throughout the community which help to better serve through reduced response times. Should the need arise, life flight helicopters have the ability to transport to a major center in Cleveland and Toledo.

Education

Huron's education system is one of the finest in the state, sustained by an effective Board of Education, involved parents and supportive businesses. The public schools enjoy an average pupil/teacher ratio of 14:1, with 82 percent of the high school students pursuing higher education after graduation. Huron High School students consistently score above both the state and national averages on the SAT and ACT exams. Huron's parochial and Montessori schools serve students from kindergarten through eighth grade. Four nursery schools, two of which are private, operate in Huron as well. EHOVE Career Center, just five miles south of Huron, offers engaging career tech and academic courses to high school and adult ed students by incorporating real world experiences and the latest technology. Students have an opportunity to earn industry credentials and college credits to prepare them for transition to a post-secondary program, or for entry into an in-demand, high level, technical job. EHOVE also provides customized training programs to local business and industry to meet the diverse needs of all levels of an organization from pre-employment assessments and post-employment technical training to leadership development and more.

On the west side of Huron is the satellite branch of Bowling Green State University. BGSU Firelands offers area students an opportunity to obtain much or all of their college education near home. In addition, BGSU Firelands offers a variety of visual and performing arts programs, plus a comprehensive curriculum of non-credit, lifelong learning courses such as computer training, supervisory skills, customized workforce training, professional development and personal enrichment classes. Credit offerings at BGSU Firelands include associate, baccalaureate and master's degree programs.

The James H. McBride Arboretum, located on campus, provides the community a 47-acre preserve of ponds, trees, gardens and walking paths. The Arboretum includes the Deering Family Terrace, an instructional terrace that overlooks Parker Lake

Area Colleges and Universities:

- BGSU Firelands: located in Huron.
- Oberlin College: in Oberlin, 30 miles.
- Baldwin Wallace: in Berea, 40 miles.
- Cleveland State University: in Cleveland, 50 miles.
- Case Western Reserve University: in Cleveland, 50 miles.
- Ashland University: in Ashland, 50 miles.
- Ohio State University, Mansfield: in Mansfield, 50 miles.
- Bowling Green State University, Main Campus: in Bowling Green, 60 miles.
- Heidelberg College: in Tiffin, 50 miles.
- Toledo University: in Toledo, 70 miles.
- Ohio State University, Main Campus: in Columbus, 112 miles.
- Terra Community College: in Fremont, 40 miles.
- Owens Community College: in Findlay, 80 miles

Tourism

Located on the south shore of Lake Erie, Huron lies midway between Cleveland and Toledo on State Route 6 and State Route 2 in the heart of Ohio's Lake Erie vacationland. The City of Huron is quickly becoming one of the premier tourist destinations in Northeast Ohio.

Recent statistics and forecasts have shown that more people are taking advantage of destinations that are closer to home.

- 10 million trips are made to Lake Erie each year
- 3.5 million people go to Cedar Point every year
- Huron is located 30 miles from Kelleys Island
- Put in Bay, a highly popular tourist destination, is one hour from Huron

- The Erie County tourism industry was \$1.6 billion in 2015
- Lake Erie is a year-round destination
- 88% of visitors said they are likely to return

The City is a growing community made of passionate residents, vibrant business community, and a thriving tourism industry. This opportunity ties into the City's long-term development plans by building on the continued success of the progress to-date.

Part IV: Statement of Qualifications Content Requirements

The text shall be concise, with emphasis upon completeness and clarity. Responders shall be evaluated based on the following submitted information and interview:

- **Background:** Provide a brief description of the development team and individuals involved listing the project manager, general experience and specific capabilities. A single developer may respond with a stated interest in the full development, a team of firms may partner for the various office and residential components, or a developer may respond with only an interest in a portion of the development area. In addition to the background of the developer(s), list key members of the team including the project architectural firm and other team members, if known, that may oversee engineering, landscape design, marketing, or other key components.
- **Management Summary:** Provide a concise description of the organizational structure, subsidiary companies, identification of principals or parent companies, length of time in business, office locations and size, and overall number of personnel by discipline. If the developer is a joint venture, the developer shall furnish this information for each entity forming the joint venture and indicate the reason for the joint venture as it directly applies to this response. Provide a brief statement of the team's capacity to finance the project through completion.
- **Relevant Experience:** Provide brief descriptions of at least three current or completed projects your team has performed, which are similar to the complexities of this project. Representative projects should demonstrate experience with public-private partnerships, mixed use developments, and development within historic downtowns. Indicate relevant experience with LEED certification, green infrastructure, or related sustainable development practices. With each project provide a contact name, address and phone number of the person who would have the most knowledge of your firm's performance on that project.
- **Understanding of the Development Area and the Waterfront Development Plan:** Discuss the intent your team is proposing for the development. Provide a brief

narrative and visuals as necessary to demonstrate the team's understanding of the project area and the local community. The developer shall demonstrate an understanding of the plan, provide general insight on the viability of the plan, and indicate if any significant changes or alterations to the plan should be considered due to market conditions or creative ideas of the development team. The responder shall also demonstrate the ability to utilize development practices that are sensitive to the adjacent neighborhoods and maintain compatible scale and exceptional design quality. Responders are not requested to prepare site specific site plans or renderings.

Part V: General Information Requirements

- **Purpose:** The purpose of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is to solicit qualified development teams for the redevelopment of 10 acres of land within the downtown core of the community. The City of Huron desires the successful redevelopment of the area to serve as a regional and national model for progressive, community driven mixed-use downtown development.
- **Issuing Department:** The Office of the City Manager has prepared this RFQ. Questions regarding its content shall be addresses to Mr. Andrew White, City Manager. Inquiries shall be in writing utilizing the email address: citymanager@huronohio.us.
- **Rejection of Qualifications:** The City of Huron reserves the right to reject any and all responses received as a result of this RFQ, or to negotiate separately with any source whatsoever, to serve the best interests of the City.
- **Completeness of the Submittal:** The response shall address all items completely and thoroughly in accordance with the format requested and shall be signed by an officer of the firm authorized to bind the responder to its stated provisions. The contents and commitments in the qualification shall remain firm for one hundred twenty (120) calendar days from the submittal due date.
- **Selection Process:** After the qualifications have been reviewed, the selection committee may elect to invite a limited number of responders for an interview before the final scoring and selection. The selection committee will recommend the preferred responder to the City Administration. The City will then work to negotiate a development agreement with the preferred responder for review and acceptance by City Council. If an agreement cannot be reached, the City may

proceed to negotiate with the next highest rated responder until an agreement can be reached.

- **Responses:** Five (5) print copies of the Statement of Qualifications shall be submitted to Mr. Andrew White, City Manager, City of Huron, and one electronic pdf version emailed to citymanager@huronohio.us by November 8th, 2019 at 4:00 PM. Hard copies shall be mailed to:

City of Huron
Attn: RFQ Submission
417 Main St.
Huron, Ohio 44839

- **Anticipated Timeline:**

Request for Qualifications Released	October 17 th , 2019
Responses Due	November 8 th , 2019
Initial Review Completed; Responders Contacted for Interviews	November 15 th , 2019
Interviews Conducted	December 2 nd , 2019
Selection Committee Recommendation	December 11 th , 2019

Part VI: Appendix and Exhibits









Figure 1 - Development Concept created by Vocon in 2017

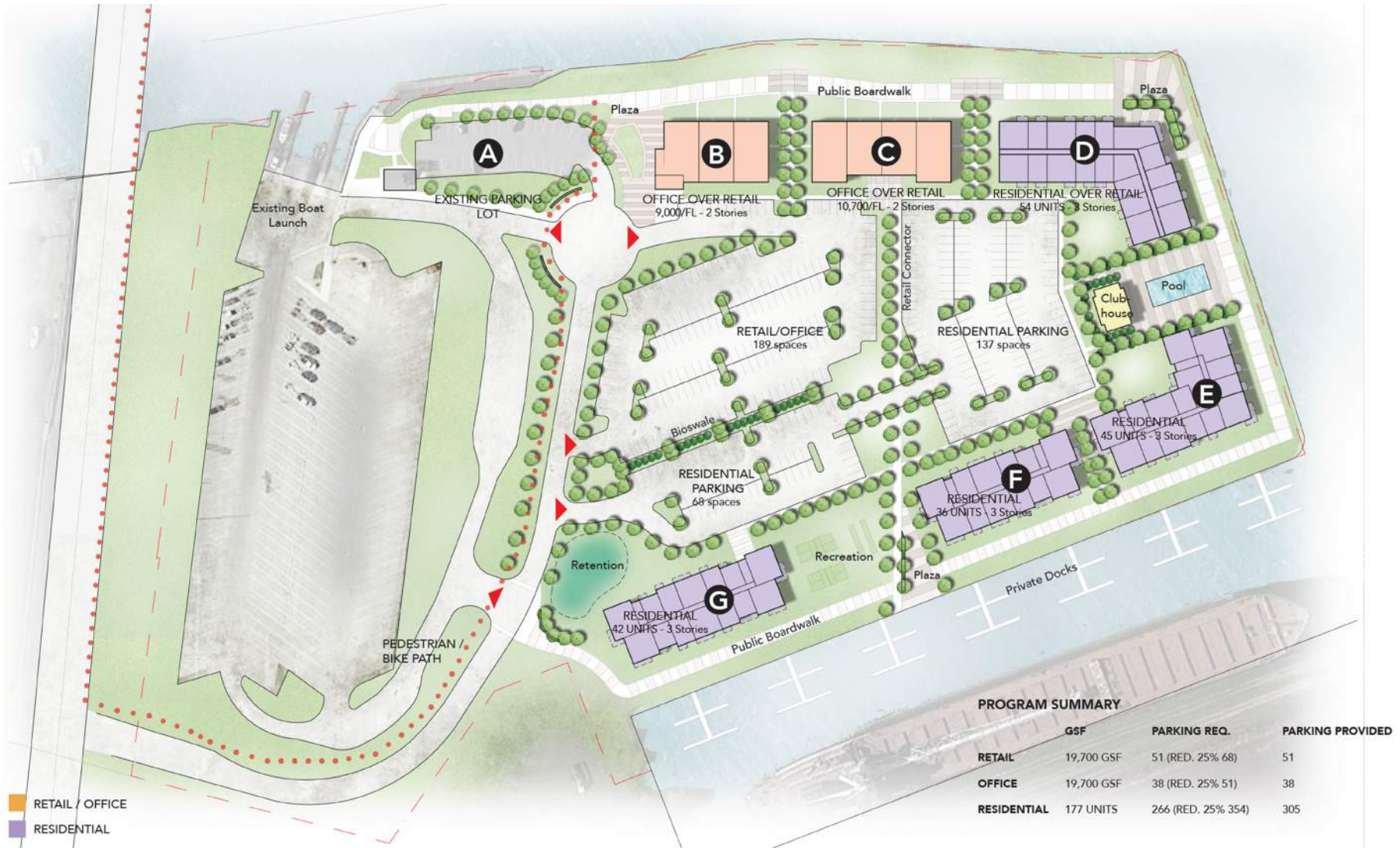
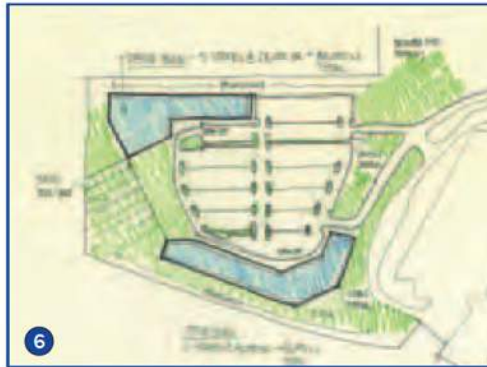
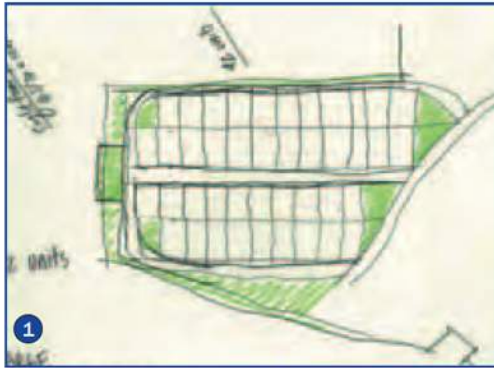




Figure 2 - Development Site and ODNR Boat Launch Aerial. Orange area shows City right-of-way.



Multiple Options Studied:

A full range of development scenarios was studied to fully investigate the potential of the ConAgra Peninsula. Fully vetting these options led to the creation of Three Primary Redevelopment Options (discussed on the following pages). The potential yields and outcomes for examples of preliminary studies are summarized below:

- 1 Luxury Single-Family Homes**
 - Construction of 3 streets
 - 11 lots with direct water access
 - 42 total larger lots (70'x120')
- 2 Cluster / Courtyard Homes**
 - Construction of 5 streets
 - 88 cluster / courtyard units
 - 16 single-family homes
 - 104 total units
- 3 Single-Family and Townhomes**
 - Construction of 4 streets
 - 86 townhome units
 - 12 single-family lots with direct water access
 - 98 total units
- 4 Townhomes**
 - Construction of 4 streets
 - 112 townhome units
 - Small retail building
- 5 Mixed-Use Development**
 - Construction of 2 streets
 - 40,000 s.f. retail (assume 2 stories)
 - 135 multi-family units
- 6 Corporate Headquarters**
 - Parking lots privately constructed
 - 80,000 s.f. office (assume 2 stories)

Figure 3 - Park Overhead Design

CONCEPT FRAMEWORK A - "NATURAL CONNECTION" PRECEDENT IMAGERY



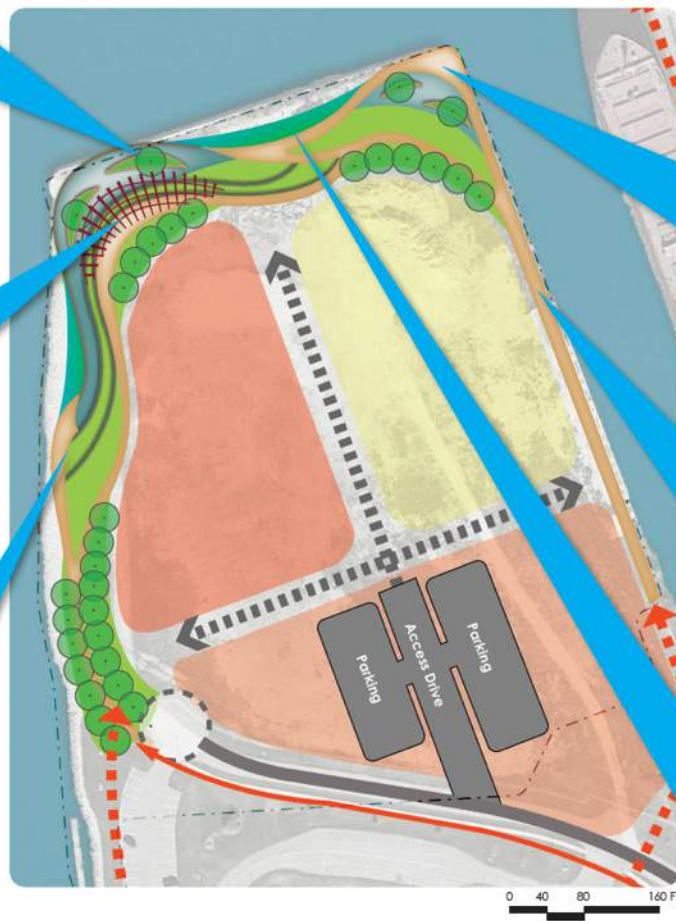
Waterfront Plaza w/ Seating & Planting Islands



Iconic Architectural Shade Structure



Terraced Waterfront Trail With a Natural Edge



Water Level Access for Kayak Launch



Waterfront Boardwalk



Stormwater Treatment Buffer