

## Glenwood Springs Request for Qualifications Pre Proposal Conference

Lead by DDA Chair Charlie Willman, and Executive Director of the DDA, Leslie Bethel  
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**Q:** Why such a quick time frame?

**A:** The library wants to sell COPs, and they want to do it quickly. We need to know what sites and what uses are going to work best for all parties involved. If the most appropriate site for the library is City owned, the city will have to go to a vote to transfer the land to the library. The quick time frame is designed to meet the library's schedule. And we, the City and the DDA, want to keep the library downtown.

Sometimes quick is good. You just get down and come up with ideas and that's it. We are not looking for a model and elevations, that's not our intention; it's not a beauty contest. It is our intention to get some good conceptual ideas and numbers.

**Q:** One thing you didn't mention was residential. I know the city has expressed some interest.

**A:** The city has been looking for opportunities to do affordable housing downtown for years. The library has indicated that maybe there's a match between the library and the opportunity to stack it with residential. Or in the bigger picture, where we have multiple pieces of city owned land, which as a reminder should be given a monetary value, there might be something in the mix that says affordable housing is feasible. You could convert the existing library to apartments. We don't know what the answers are, but we are asking you to look broadly. Don't get hung up on a very time consuming graphic presentation/ vs concepts/ diagrams/ ideas and numbers.

In the meantime, the City has been working on a comprehensive plan update for about 18 months. Andrew McGregor, Community Development Director, is going to give you a brief update on the downtown because it interesting and it does affect the sites in question.

Andrew McGregor: About ten years ago the city of Glenwood adopted a downtown plan, and that has been influential in both the recent development around town; and perhaps, the lack of development as well. I've got copies of these one-page summaries that help to create the context. In response to that, in early 2000s, we developed a set of design standards for the commercial areas and downtown as part of the implementation of this planning process. So, those are part of what you will be asked to at least preliminarily incorporate into your work. Or at least, to have some awareness of. Then, as Leslie mentioned, we have been working for a year to 18 months on a comprehensive plan update. We have not adopted the plan yet, so everything I am telling you comes with the caveat that this too may change pending the formal adoption process. But what we are hearing, particularly about downtown, seems to be widely held as truths. Downtown is clearly influenced by Highway 82 and much of the discussion has been about how to nullify the effects of Hwy 82. Or even better yet, get rid of Hwy 82 and return Grand Avenue to a local street. One of the things that's generally accepted is that we will try to retake Grand Ave. Perhaps remove some of the parking, broaden the sidewalks and

create some kind of a more positive pedestrian environment, at least for the four or five blocks through downtown and to humanize the streetscape facing Grand Ave.

Also important to you all I think, is this notion of building height. There's general agreement that the building height should stay fairly consistent along Grand Ave. to three stories and then on those blocks faces behind Grand Ave it would go up to four stories. The current state of the zoning says that you can, in the downtown core, go to 40 feet by right and through special review up to 60 feet.

We also have been looking at ways to reconfigure our vehicular traffic patterns through downtown. Looking at some one-way couplets, some street closures, some turn restrictions, those types of things to improve circulation and make it easier to get around downtown. Obviously a big premise of this is public parking. There's a widely accepted knowledge that we need more parking in downtown, where that should go, what that should look like, how big it will be and how much it cost and who will pay for it are all variables that we look to this process for some direction.

And finally, in terms of the land use mix, really more of the same is what we are looking to create, increasing a blend of retail, services uses, enhancing government, giving the college an opportunity to expand and certainly an opportunity to create residential housing units in downtown.

(Additional information can be found online at the City's website or by directly contacting Andrew McGregor.)

**Q:** How many buildings in town have passed the special review and been allowed to build above 40 feet?

**A:** I can think definitively of one. The criteria is oriented toward the shading impact of the building and the view lines.

**Q:** How long does the review typically take and who gets to vote on it?

**A:** Our special review process, typically getting through City Council takes three-four months. If in fact that premise of the comp plan is adopted, then we would seriously look at whether we need to adjust that zoning, take out that special review component and make it a use by right.

Adding to that, I think that the review is often political and often done neighbor to neighbor, and there may be opposition. If the proposal needs the special review we will send the design to the Fast Attack Team to assist. There is a general agreement and support that the library needs to stay downtown, so that should help.

The Fast Attack Team is the group that will also be reviewing all the qualification and development proposals. It is made up of a board member of the library along with the director, two people from Colorado Mountain College; the president and one other, two city council people, two DDA board members; the chair and a board member, the executive director, and the property owner for the US Bank parking lot.

**Q:** Once the RFQ have been submitted, what is the next step in the process?

**A:** The goal is by the end of August to select a development concept and team that we want to work with. From the development concepts, we will identify a site for the library, a parking structure and other uses. There also might be in that mix, reuse of the library. We have five pieces of land that are on the table, so that really depends on how these pieces come together. The DDA (with the City) will lead the design and construction of the parking structure and any other uses within that building footprint. Hypothetically, this could be library uses, CMC classrooms, or it could have some component of an affordable housing project. It has to be financially viable. If all the 'ifs' are met, the DDA will enter into a contract with a consultant team to design and build.

**Q:** Are you going to do a plan next and if so, would you allocate 100K to a plan?

**A:** No, we intend from this point to move directly into design and construction of building/s. If we have multiple buildings we will design streetscape/ infrastructure to support that. It mentioned this in the RFQ, that because the library is a Garfield County branch library, it will go out under a separate RFQ. Now, if within the library footprint there is CMC space, or affordable housing space, we'll have to work all that out. But our intention is to move forward into actual design and construction.

In the Fast Attack route that we have established, if there were to be a team that would have what the library is looking for and the credentials on building library facilities, there is potential that that group could do the parking construction and the library facility. I think CMC is in a similar place. If there are people with specialized areas of experience, classroom, parking, housing and libraries, I think there is a possibility that it could all be accomplished with that group of people. It's all subject to negotiation and intergovernmental agreements between these various entities.

The only other detail I would like to add to that is, remember my examples are not givens, they are just ideas, if the parking structure was wrapped with retail, the city doesn't want to be landlord. So, if there are different components outside of the library, parking, classrooms, there will be a need to look at a developer role.

**Q:** It sounds, to me, like you are looking for something beyond physical design surfaces?

**A:** Absolutely. That's why in the title it says "Preliminary Development Pro forma and Cursory Market Analysis." If you do a cursory market analysis you'll know that Cooper may not have enough of a demand to wrap in retail, but it could be classroom space. That could be an intermediate use and then look ten years in the future at classroom space to be converted into retail space. This is the kind of information we are looking for in the proposals.

**Q:** And then moving forward, you said, "moving right into building projects," but are you looking for an entity that could develop the building projects? That would have the financial interest in those building projects, or are you simply looking for a design team, and the DDA would develop those projects? It sounds to me that you are looking for a

developing partner or developing entity?

**A:** It depends on your solution. If your solution was a parking structure wrapped in classroom space there may be no development partner. The risk in using examples is that I limit your creativity, which is really what I don't want to do. But, in that example, if you had a parking structure and wrapped it in classroom, which may be owned or not by CMC. You may not have a development component. It really depends on how you bring these pieces of the puzzle together.

**Q:** I'm still a little confused. We provide exactly what you said you wanted in the RFQ, the very next step, what's the contract? What are you contracting for at that point?

**A:** Here's the same example. It depends on your solution. If your solution is that the parking structure and CMC are partners within those four walls then that's a contract with the DDA/ City for the design and construction of that particular building with an agreement between the City/ DDA and CMC. If your solution evaluates the capacity of two City owned parking lots and determines that it is possible to accommodate all the parking needs, if it is structured, on one of those sites, and you recommend (through a financial pro forma) to take the second site and design it for affordable housing, that's the potential for a second contract that is completely unique to your solution.

**Q:** So the end result is a contract for design, construction, and potentially development?

**A:** Yes, it's unlikely that you wouldn't have that development component because you need that financial pro forma as a part of this. That team member could be a financial analyst, or a development consultant and/ or a developer.

I think you also need to keep in mind that we are working with a unique group of entities. We are hoping that you can give us ideas that will work for all parties involved. The DDA is committed to keeping the library downtown and making this parking structure work.

Never before in all the years that we have looked at this have we had Colorado Mountain College at the table and interested in paying their way for classrooms, and/ or office space and parking. So, we have a new financial contributor. We have the library at the table with their \$6 million, which is in excess of what they need for just their building. So again, depending on the land cost, the library could be contributing a million dollars to a parking structure. We have the DDA that has seed money, whether it all goes towards this or not we'll see. It depends on how convincing the argument is. It has seed money today of about \$1.2 million. Depending on the economy, when you have tax increment financing, it is entirely dependent on the economy, but that money could grow over time. And then you have the City, who also has resources to commit, possibly a couple million dollars. All of a sudden, instead of just a DDA trying to build a parking structure, which has been the picture in the past, you have a DDA, you have a library, a college and you have a City.

So for those of you in the room that have been looking at this project as a potential for ten years, it's a perfect storm because we have never had so many people come together, especially with current construction pricing being lower than it has been in many years.

For reference, the library just built their parking structure in Rifle. It is a bare bones building, Adolfson Peterson is their contractor, and it's at around \$17,000 a space. But when we, the City of Glenwood did financial pro formas two years ago, our estimates were \$55,000 a parking space. So, we have a different market for construction.

**Q:** What if all this comes to be and the city pulls out for financial reasons? Are you going to reconfigure what's left or kill it?

**A:** Speaking to several City Council people, who are the decision makers, our belief is that the City is very committed to keeping the library downtown, which means helping to provide parking. If the City pulled out, it would depend on the rest of the project.

**Q:** If the team that is selected includes a developer that is interested in being a part of a speculative venture in the future, would they be precluded or disallowed in any way, if they were the consultants chosen now?

**A:** Absolutely not.

**Q:** Are plans available for the existing library?

**A:** Gibson Reno prepared the plans and there are digital files will be available on the City website.

**Q:** I have a question about feasibility. The space needs are for all public entities, there is no apparent income potential like market housing or commercial space. Does feasibility, mean that the city and the library and CMC have a budget, or a bracket of budget to work with? We're talking about public dollars here, not necessarily producing additional income. There might be some sales tax residuals and some property tax increase, but it doesn't appear that there is any real estate income in these projects. Maybe user fees from the parking lot, talk a little about feasibility here?

**A:** Some kind of commercial development on Cooper, 8<sup>th</sup> and/ or 9th would be appropriate, perhaps on the US Bank parking lot or the city lots. That may be done through some sort of land trade. Residential and maybe other commercial spaces may be for sale.

**Q:** You are saying that potential use isn't limited to public use, there are other for sale uses that maybe part of the solution.

**A:** Yes.

Considering all these public uses; there's only a little bit of room for the rest. But, there are five sites, there's an idea out there that we haven't thought of. One of the proposals could suggest something outside the norm that enhances Glenwood's assets. Maybe there is an opportunity for a regional mountain center to relocate here. I don't know, but there is opportunity.

**Q:** Are we going to get any further programming information for other aspects of the project such as; CMC needs, how much parking you ideally want, are there some base line numbers?

**A:** There should be a net gain in parking and CMC currently has 112 employees downtown, so parking for some of them.

**Q:** Have you ever done any parking studies in the downtown?

**A:** Everything that we have is relatively dated, and I wouldn't rely on that in terms of determining the adequate supply and demand.

**Q:** Would you expect that to be a part of this project?

**A:** Yes, we plan to do a parking management plan and a supply and demand plan under separate contract, which would show among other concepts how we are going to deal with paid versus unpaid parking. The logic is we may be taking a large portion of employee spaces off the street and putting them in a parking structure, which would free up more on street parking. Currently, they do the two-hour-shuffle and go out every two hours and move their cars. CMC is in their brainstorming phase right now of their capital improvement plan, so they don't have their answers yet, they are trying to meet the library's schedule. There are no further answers now.

**Q:** There seems to be a lot of programming and feasibility issues that will have to be dealt with before moving forward with a concept, is there some baseline budget for that? Because obviously that cost could be absorbed at the point at which you are building an entire project, you don't even know what project you are building yet, so there is somewhere between 10 and 200 thousand dollars worth of work to figure out what project you're going to build. We're all in the room going to do 30-40 thousand dollars of work to get some proposals in front of you, but is there some piece of mind that has been set aside for the first step of this that is ready to go that you guys are actually going to pull the trigger on?

**A:** The money exists if we determine that it is appropriate to divide it out like you have described. Right now, we don't look at it quite like you're looking at it. We don't look at it as a separate work effort. We look at it as, we've got a puzzle that comes together and maybe the proposal that we choose to proceed with is 75% the way that it might happen, there will be the first phase of the contract that will be sorting it out and making it 100%. We don't look at it separate; it is the development of a concept. Money can be allocated immediately after the DDA board agrees.

**Q:** Does the city have a compellation of downtown floor area and uses?

**A:** We will have that information in a month.

**Q:** From the architect side of things, there is a concern from some of us that you will cherry-pick concepts rather than a single proposal team, it would be nice to have that addressed in someway. The second, part of that, there is nothing really magical about designing this 16,000 sq ft library or this classroom facility. I would venture to say all of us in this room, and those that aren't here, can do that quite easily. CMC doesn't have to go to a classroom specialist, and the library doesn't need a library specialist, but if they could be brought on board as part of this package that would really be an incentive for this group of professionals?

**A:** The library and CMC would probably say they need an expert. But we haven't given

up on that idea yet. Our goal is to have the Fast Attack team, act as a facilitator, to think outside the box.

**Q:** What's the legal relationship between the DDA and the City that allows the DDA to capture the sales tax increment? Is that an IGA?

**A:** The DDA is a board of the city. There is not an IGA, unless I'm mistaken. We are a board of the city but we are somewhat independent because of the funding. The voter approval commits the funding. To that level we have those funds that are committed to the DDA for 25 Years.

**Q:** What is the City's sales tax rate?

**A:** The city's sales tax is 3.7%

**Q:** If the DDA is a board of the city, are other concessions by the city such as use tax, waiver of permit fees or developmental impact fees? Are some of those tools in the tool belt available from a concessions point of view? Or is that something you will have to propose?

**A:** You would have to propose that.

We think it is reasonable if the proposal has enough public benefits, those are options available to City Council. In the case of residential development, the city has specific codified, recapture provision of fees. It's a little less succinct for certain types of commercial activity, although, there is policy in place now for sales tax recollecting. Businesses can recover a portion of their contribution to public infrastructure.

**Q:** You mentioned affordable housing a few times, and I wonder if the city would have a desire to, or has a history of acting as a developer of affordable housing?

**A:** We have almost no experience as a developer historically and my sense is that that is not a direction we want to go. So, we would look to some kind of partnership with some other institution or private entity, as opposed to us being principle owner, manager and landlord.

**Q:** Has the library or CMC made any commitments towards affordable housing as apart of the project?

**A:** No.

There has always been interest from the library and CMC, but no solid commitment or quantification.

**Q:** The first paragraph of the RFQ reads, "...soliciting qualifications and development concepts from a firm to lead a multidisciplinary team of professionals, including development and market strategists, architects, planners, engineers, etc. Yet you state that one of the things you are really hopeful of getting are concept and ideas for these five properties. If some of us just choose to do that, and intuitively talk about things such as feasibility, are you still expecting a team that is lead by some leader; not an architect, not engineers. Are you expecting that?

**A:** The team could easily be lead by an architect or somebody else.

**Q:** Are you still expecting, let's call it a roster or directory, of the team members along with their contact information, is that what you're expecting? Or can it be any entity, or just simply some planners, or some architects, does a team have to be specifically named?

**A:** It would be our preference to have a team, and it can be lead by anybody, but we would like to have a team put together. It is our professional opinion that different skills would be an advantage verses one person that could do everything. There is an advantage to assembling a team with a broad resume of experience. I would say that if a single or sole proprietor has some amazing experience but was missing a component, we might just ask them to team up with someone to get the job done. We are trying to be open minded but there is a very attractive component to having your team come in ready to do the work for us.

**Q:** Does the DDA have a percentage on vacancy rates downtown?

**A:** We will in one month.

**Q:** Is the library or Garfield County currently in the process with a financial advisor through the COP process? And where are they in the COP process?

**A:** We haven't met or been introduced to this person, but because of their overall plan I believe so. As for where in the process, I don't know.

**Q:** What I'm really getting at... is helping the library acquire COPs a part of this RFQ?

**A:** No

**Q:** Will you be short-listing or is it a one-shot deal?

**A:** We will most likely be short-listing. We meet again with the Fast Attack team on August 12<sup>th</sup>, so we would hope that within 2-3 business days after that we will have a short-list.

**Q:** How late before the submission date can we ask questions?

**A:** August 2<sup>nd</sup>

We would say to any out of town consultants: local participation is a part of our selection criteria. We really want to keep work in the valley. We are welcoming out of town proposals, as there are great people with some great experience, so find your locals to build your team.

**Q:** What is local?

**A:** It's in the city code as 45 miles from the center of downtown Glenwood Springs. This group isn't bound by the city code but will use it as a guideline.

**Q:** Can I make a humble suggestion? If you guys would consider limiting or outlining exactly what's going to be delivered for the RFP. That would give you a better chance of comparing apples to apples. I think that the way it is suggested in this RFQ, you may get

submissions that are 150 pages, that are hard bound and covered. And you may get submissions that are going to be 10 pages, and that makes it tough. I see some big firms in the room. Are you going to get sheet size of 24x36, are you going to get discs with power points that are an hour and a half long. Can you narrow it down?

**A:** That's a really good suggestion.

**Q:** Do you feel bound if you choose a concept, to hire the team that developed that concept? Or do you feel you have the flexibility to say that you like this concept but these are the qualified people, we're going to hire them to execute that concept?

**A:** I think you will find that you are dealing with people that put integrity before anything else. There may be an idea we hear along the way that we may weave into the final solution, but we will act with the utmost integrity.

**Q:** Can you put up a timeline for what the city needs done by when, and what the library needs and what those deliverables are? If there are concept drawings, narratives and what the deadlines are so we kind of know the minimum of what you anticipate at different timelines in putting together our concepts and at what point we need to bring other team members in?

**A:** We will look at that. We know now that we may draft an ordinance, before your development proposals come in, with the opportunity to make a recommendation to transfer land. That is an example of how we have to stay that much ahead of things. A lot of the answers are in how the pieces come together.