Council Communication

Department: Community Development	Resolution No.: 25 -	City Council: 7-14-2025

Subject/Title

Resolution selecting Lockwood Development as the preferred developer for approximately 8.5 acres of City-owned land situated south of Hwy 275 and between E. Manawa Drive and the Council Bluffs Country Club, and to enter into a purchase, sale, and development agreement.

Background/ Discussion

Background

On April 21, 2025, the Council Bluffs City Council approved Resolution No. 25-109 which authorized the Community Development Department to release a Request for Proposals (RFP) for City-owned property situated south of Hwy 275 and between E. Manawa Drive and the Council Bluffs Country Club.

Additionally on April 21, 2025, City Council approved Resolution No. 25-110, which established the minimum development requirements, competitive criteria, and procedures for disposition of said property. Since the property is located within the East Manawa Drive Housing Urban Renewal Area, the disposition of the land must comply with Iowa urban renewal laws. As part of the disposition, Iowa urban renewal statutes require the City ensure a reasonable competitive bidding procedure and 30 days to respond. This also includes providing notice by publication in a newspaper having a general circulation to the community 30 days prior to the execution of a contract involving the transfer of property.

On April 22, 2025, the City released a Request for Proposals (RFP) through their IonWave online bidding portal, which included an email notification to approximately 80 real estate developers/brokers throughout the Council Bluffs-Omaha Metropolitan Area and Midwest region. All proposals were due June 26, 2025 and interested developers were required to submit proposals that demonstrate their capacity to satisfy the requirements of the RFP including:

1. Application
2. Project Summary – A brief written description of the project.
3. Project Plans – A scaled plot plan of the proposed development. The plot plan should illustrate the location of structures, parking areas, ingress and egress, open or landscape areas, etc. The developer must also submit additional information such as elevation drawings, photos of similar projects, typical floor plans, etc.
4. Developer Experience – Provide a listing of previous projects completed, especially with regard to projects that are relevant to the proposed development.
5. Project Timeline – A timeline for the project design, bidding, construction and occupancy.
6. Financial Summary – Developer must provide a proposed cost and source of funding for the project, including a 10-year project proforma. Developer must also outline expected funding sources and projected date all financing will be secured.
7. Project Contingencies – Indicate any special assistance needed to implement the project, such as financial assistance, state or federal applications, or other public participation.

Each proposal was reviewed by staff of the Community Development Department and was scored using the following criteria, which was detailed in the RFP ensuring developers knew how they would be evaluated.

a. Design, Aesthetics and Quality of Construction Materials and Landscaping (40%): As an affordable redevelopment project in the E. Manawa area, the quality of design and materials is essential. A combination of durable materials and transparency with an urban appearance must be utilized. Preference will be given to developers that:

i. Create a multi-family environment following the R-3 zoning district and the applicable Overly Standards.
ii. Utilize architectural details such as color changes, material changes, minor wall offsets, height variations,

wall setbacks, accent lines and upper floor step back to articulate building elevations. A list of acceptable building materials is outlined in the "Architectural" section of the East Manawa PR Development Standards. A list of materials and visual renderings of the site layout, units and exterior design must be provided as a part of this submittal.

b. Developer's Experience and Capacity (30%): The makeup/description of the developer's project team. The preferred developer will have significant experience in the construction of multi-family complexes. The names of individuals involved and the roles they will perform must be listed. Provide a description of the qualifications and experience of the specific individuals who will be involved in the work described in this RFP, including staff and other professionals.

c. Number of Units Proposed, Unit Sizes and Timeline (15%):

   i. Preference will be given to developers who maximize the number of units as well as the number of market rate units. Affordable is defined as at or below 80% of the median family income (MFI). Provide a target resident type (senior, family, etc.) if applicable.
   ii. Proposals will also be scored on the length of time it will take to construct and occupy the project.

d. Funding Sources (15%): Preference will be given to Developers not utilizing either 4% or 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). Provide a list of proposed funding sources and when the funds are expected to be awarded/confirmed.

Discussion

One developer responded to the RFP. Lockwood Development, in partnership with Lutheran Family Services and Holland Basham Architects, submitted a proposed 186 unit community-focused, multi-family rental housing project. The project proforma models 100% of the apartment homes to be priced below the rental rate ceiling of 120% of the AMI (market rate). In alignment with Lutheran Family Services mission to support affordable housing, it is the goal to dedicate a portion (10-30%) of these apartment homes at households earning at or below 80% AMI. The developer does not anticipate applying for low-income housing tax credits (LIHTC).

Staff reviewed the proposals and believes the Lockwood Development project fully complies with the requirements of the RFP and the development proposal achieves the City's long-range vision for the Lake Manawa Neighborhood. Staff will have discussions with the selected firm regarding additional goals and design ideas. Once this is complete, contracts for the project with the firm will be brought back to City Council for approval including a purchase agreement and development agreement (including incentives) with the selected developer.

Recommendation

Staff recommends selecting Lockwood Development as the preferred developer for approximately 8.5 acres of City-owned land situated south of Hwy 275 and between E. Manawa Drive and the Council Bluffs Country Club, and to enter into a purchase, sale, and development agreement.

Attachments

1. Lockwood Development Submittal
2. Resolution