



2024-004 RFQ
TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT
AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING AT
LYNDEN TRANSIT STATION
Addendum No. 002 March 14, 2024

Attention Bidders:

NO changes and additions are made to the bid documents:

Pre-Submittal meeting attendees

David L. Foreman - Opportunity Council
Adrienne Solenberger - Opportunity Council
Jeanne Le Duc - Catholic Housing Services
Allen Dauterman - TWG Development
Brien Thane - Bellingham & Whatcom County Housing Authority

Clarifications:

Question 1:

- Q) Would WTA consider homeownership opportunities, along with the rentals, such as in a land trust model?
- A) Yes, WTA would be open to those discussions. We would have to ensure this model complied with legal requirements, such as RCW 39.33.015's definition of permanently affordable homeownership. Link : [RCW 39.33.015](#)

Question 2:

- Q) Section 1.5. 2 of the RFQ states "at least 40% of the housing units in the Affordable Housing Component shall be restricted to use by tenants whose income is at or below 60% of the area median income". It then goes on to say, "of which at least 20% of such units shall be restricted to use by tenants with incomes are at or below thirty percent 30% of the area median income". Is this intended to be 20% of the total area median income, or 20% or 40%? Is it a further restriction? I would like clarification on the intent of "of which".
- A) This provision is a requirement under the manual for the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, [Interim Asset Disposition Guidance](#), Section 2(c). The manual provides further clarification on this obligation: "The 20% of units that must meet 30% AMI are included within the total 40% of units that must meet the 60% AMI, meaning that at least 8% of the total amount of housing units must be restricted at 30% AMI." Link: [FTA Interim Asset Disposition Guidance](#)

Question 3:

- Q) Are there any further restrictions or expectations on the other units? Could they be market value? Is there a desire to have them restricted? Is a Statement of Qualification that offers further affordability restrictions going to be scored better than one that does not?
- A) No, proposals will not be scored any better. The purpose of this is to look for a good partner in this project. For background, in terms of potential “market value” units, under the current proposal, no residential units could be leased for a rental rate above that allowed under RCW 39.33.015(8)(i), which is “30% of the household’s monthly income for rent and utilities, other than telephone.” Link: [RCW 39.33.015](#)

Question 4:

- Q) Will there be an opportunity to do a community assessment specific to the Lynden area so that we can gather relevant demographic information?
- A) Yes.

Question 5:

- Q) I am concerned about the thirty-year lease term. Our regulatory restrictions would go beyond that.
- A) The language in the RFQ states “at least” due to legal requirements but WTA is open to and expects the term could be longer.

Question 6:

- Q) At Section 3.3.E of the RFQ, it states that “WTA’s right to request modifications to the design of the Affordable Housing Component”. Is there clarification on what might trigger a modification request?
- A) This was added to protect the transit component of this project and to ensure transit access.

Question 7:

- Q) Exhibit A of the RFQ states that “the first phase of the development will provide affordable multi-family units serving the farmworker community”. Is WTA open to other communities other than the farmworker community?
- A) WTA is open to considering other communities.

Question 8:

- Q) Do you know what the support is for this project with the City of Lynden and the County? Do you know of any action they would need to take to move this project forward?
- A) Mayor Korthuis, mayor of Lynden, is on WTA’s Board and supports this project in both its concept and where it will geographically be located. We understand that there is general support from Lynden City Council as well. At this point, no further action is needed from the City of Lynden or the County; however, the City of Lynden is permitting authority for the project.

Question 9:

- Q) In this process will there be a federal review and an environmental review? If so, who will be the lead agency expected
- A) WTA will work with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration Region 10 to determine if a NEPA analysis must be conducted. SEPA will be determined by the City of Lynden requirements.

Question 10:

- Q) Is the expectation that a development team will have been assembled with the submission of Statements of Qualifications?
- A) WTA would like to see what your development team may look like. We would like to partner with a developer that has experience at the company level and at the individual level. This is what we are looking for Statements of Qualification to demonstrate.

Question 11:

- Q) Is there a preferred timeline to get this project off the ground in terms of construction?
- A) We hope to have our Board of Directors approve the ground lease in the fourth quarter of this year. The lease for Grants Burgers terminates in April of 2025. We have notified Grants Burgers we are not renewing. Construction timelines will be discussed in the ground lease negotiations, and from our perspective it would be two years; however, this is open for discussions. WTA would expect the selected proposer to demonstrate good faith and due diligence in pursuing the project.

Question 12:

- Q) On the actual affordability, the 30% household income at Section 1.6.1 of the RFQ, is that a mandatory number? Is that a hard restriction or reflective of the goal of affordability?
- A) At this state in the process WTA is looking for responders to the RFQ who are willing to comply with the requirements. This rate is set by RCW 39.33.015. Link : [RCW 39.33.015](#)

Question 13:

- Q) There is a program, either state or federal, that offers reimbursement for NEPA review costs for affordable housing projects. Have you explored this option?
- A) WTA is not aware of such a program but we haven't looked into it. WTA is willing to follow any authorized procedure to allow for reimbursement of any NEPA expenses.

Question 14:

- Q) Would WTA be open to a buyout of the land if it made sense to do that for this project? If it had a guarantee of transit.
- A) WTA's ultimate goal is for housing and transit to work together at Lynden Station, to enhance transit and benefit the community. In partnership with the developer, WTA is open to creative ways to accomplish that goal. WTA's policy is not to sell the property. However, we would consider the possibility if there were a persuasive business case.