

Bedford Master Plan RFP – Questions and answers received up to 3/26/2018

- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SECTION:** The description of this portion of the work states: “The plan should also examine the economic impacts of Route 101 widening and other significant roadway improvements.” What level of analysis is expected here exactly?

We would not anticipate a “full blown” economic impact analysis, however this is an important topic to the town and the last master plan effort had an economic development consultant as part of the project team. The scope should be similar to a typical master plan, knowing this is an area of concern and interest to the town.

- The **TRANSPORTATION** portion of the scope mentions an inventory and needs assessment of the existing road network, including identification of street capacity ratings. Can you be more specific on the expectations for this portion of the work?

We would expect this chapter to build on the work done as part of the current master plan. There is a map of the functional roadway classifications in the existing plan, as part of the update we want to review this and document any changes. We believe the information is also available at the MPO/RPC. We would want to include this, if only in the appendix. Transportation is important to the town, but we would not want this chapter alone to monopolize the budget. The key issues are improving bike/pedestrian accommodations, planning for passenger rail, improved public transit and improvements to major corridors (Route 114, Route 101, New Boston Road, South River Road, Everett Turnpike).

- The project deliverables section mentions MS Word Format for preparation of the plan. Is the Town open to using InDesign instead of MS Word?

InDesign is acceptable.

- The RFP mentions that a Steering Committee will be used to lead the project. Has the committee been set up already? How many members are anticipated and what will the role of the committee be?

The Planning Board has used a Steering Committee in the past to guide master plan efforts and is planning to appoint a committee to help with this project, but we would be open to ideas as to how often they meet, when they meet, or if they break into smaller groups. The committee will likely be 12 -14 people with members from Boards, Commissions, Town Council, School District and community members. The Town is open to new ideas, especially with regard to public engagement. Planning Staff is also accessible to consult and bounce ideas off of as well.

- Do you have a thought about how you want people to handle expenses? And are you hoping to see cost per task?

We would like to see cost per major task/project milestone to give us an idea of how money is being allocated.

- Are you entertaining in-person meetings in order to discuss the RFP for the Master Plan in advance of the submittals?

We are not offering in-person meetings to discuss the RFP, but I would be happy to answer any questions by email or phone.

- Regarding the Vision development, the RFP mentions a “consensus on character, status, and function of the community in 2030...” Is there an understanding of this consensus already documented somewhere, or do you intend this process to develop it?

The Board is expecting the vision to be developed as part of the Master Plan process through community outreach and discussion. The current Master Plan includes a vision statement and we would expect this to be updated.

- Redevelopment opportunities and increased density/infill are called out as a major issue going forward for the town. Has an acceptable amount of “increased density” already been identified or is this something that this process will flesh out? Are the current redevelopment projects what the master plan envisioned? How is the new development being received and are they the type of mixed use “down town” style type of developments desired?

We hope the Master Plan process will flesh out areas for increased density and infill. The Market and Main project (former Macy’s site) along with the Wayfarer redevelopment project introduce a more compact/urban style of development which closely resembles the plans that were developed by Celebration Associates as part of the current Master Plan. The town is excited about the Market and Main project and this style of development was well received by the community.

- As part of the Land Use task, zoning changes are recommended. The 2010 Plan mentions the development of TND Overlay zones. Has any work on TND overlays been done to date? If not are these still of interest? Have areas or Centers been identified or could this be part of re-invigorating this Task and is that a desired direction?

The town has adopted the River Corridor Smart Growth Overlay District which is based on a Smart Code, but the zoning has not yet been put into practice because the design guidelines have not been adopted. The Master Plan process should gauge community interest in where higher density development should occur.

- Community Design and Codes – Is the Planning Board interested in graphic conceptual designs as well as some language-based model form-based or other design-based zoning/coding?

Yes, the town would be interested in exploring alternatives to the River Corridor Smart Growth Overlay District for achieving similar development outcomes. The River Corridor Smart Growth zoning is complicated and may not be the best option for smaller scaled projects, or incremental growth.

- Transportation – following national trends, has there been an increase in vulnerable user crashes with motor vehicles? Are there any citizen concerns or groups committees addressing bike/pedestrian issues? How has the current Route 101 project been received?

There are no citizen groups spearheading conversations about bicycle pedestrian improvements that the Town is aware of, but as stated in the RFP we hope to identify practical recommendations for bike/ pedestrian improvements. The Route 101 project has been priority for the town and will introduce much needed safety improvements. Overall the project has been well received but is currently under construction.

- Sustainability -- Energy, Natural Resources and Resiliency - This appears to be important from the RFP but only an Energy Committee and the Conservation Committee are mentioned. Is there a Sustainability group or committee?

There is no specific sustainability group or committee.

- How important is economic development and what are the major pain points? Is the town focus on increasing development or maintaining existing conditions/rural character?

Economic development is of interest and concern to the town. The town would like to see its existing commercial districts and Performance Zone developed with the highest and best uses. The town is concerned about maintaining a tax base to support schools and municipal expenses and maintaining AAA bond rating. The Board would like to maximize development in the Performance Zone to provide high quality jobs and services for residents. We would suggest reviewing the existing economic development chapter in the current Master Plan.

- Are the schools increasing enrollment?

Unlike state/national trends, the schools have seen increased enrollment and Bedford is known for its excellent school system.