



## PRESS RELEASE

**City Contact:**

**Mayor, Robert B. Mielke 715-261-6800**

**Planning, Community & Economic Development, Christian Schock 715-261-6683**

**The City of Wausau releases Request for Proposals (RFP) for redevelopment of  
411 Washington Street- the former Sears Building**

As reported previously, the Mayor, on behalf of the City and subject to approval of the Common Council, signed an offer to purchase the former Sears building and associated leasehold from Sears Holdings Corporation. The due diligence process on that purchase agreement which includes environmental tests, a survey, a commercial building inspection, etc. is continuing and is expected to be completed in following weeks.

Yesterday, the Common Council unanimously approved the release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for interested parties, developers and stakeholders to present opportunities for the redevelopment of the property. The City is excited to work with a partner to see the former Sears repurposed effectively for the future of Downtown. The City is participating in this process because, as over-landlord, we have an important role in protecting taxpayers and seeing that the Sears building is redeveloped as soon as possible.

We are ensuring that this redevelopment process is entirely open and transparent, the RFP is a completely public process and allows proposals to be reviewed by the Council and the public. The responses are due October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and scheduled to be reviewed first by the Economic Development Committee on October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016- more information is available from City staff and on our website at [www.wausaudevelopment.com](http://www.wausaudevelopment.com).

As we've noted before, with more information, everyone can better appreciate the City's position in this process. The City has established a Mall information line which is available to answer your questions, receive feedback, and consider your ideas- the number is 715-261-6688 or send an email to: [mall@ci.wausau.wi.us](mailto:mall@ci.wausau.wi.us).

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Office of the Mayor  
Robert B. Mielke



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TEL: (715) 261-6800  
FAX: (715) 261-6808

September 28, 2016

Dear Interested Parties,

The City of Wausau is pleased to release a **Request for Proposal (RFP)** for the redevelopment of the former Sears store at 411 Washington Street in Downtown Wausau which the City is in the process of acquiring.

The City of Wausau is proud of a long track record of successful public-private partnerships for development which has resulted in over \$100mil invested in Downtown in the past decade and another \$100mil currently under construction.

Proposals must include 1. proposed use of the building/site, 2. proposed property purchase price or proposed lease rate and term; 3. estimated proposed construction value; 4. estimated proposed taxable value; 5. architectural renderings or like examples of the proposed construction; 6. any request for city participation/assistance.

Successful proposals should:

- Complement Downtown Wausau's successful retail and commercial office mix by filling existing gaps in retail and services demand.
- Maximize the utilization of the land with urban density that maximizes the property tax value of the land to City.
- Propose an architecturally unique or significant building which meets the City's Urban Design Guidelines.

Event	Date
1. RFP Released	September 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2016
2. Proposals Due	October 14 <sup>th</sup> , 2016
3. Initial Review of Proposals by Committee	October 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2016

Questions and/or additional information on this RFP are available upon request. Please contact: Christian Schock – Planning, Community & Economic Development, [christian.schock@ci.wausau.wi.us](mailto:christian.schock@ci.wausau.wi.us)

Sincerely,

Robert B. Mielke  
Mayor

## History & Background

The City of Wausau is pleased to accept proposals for the redevelopment of 411 Washington Street in the heart of Downtown Wausau. The former Sears store location was built in 1982 and renovated/expanded in 1996. The approximately 88,000 sq.ft. existing building sits on an approximately 2.30 acre leasehold parcel.

The City intends to acquire this leasehold parcel and structure from Sears Holdings Corporation, a potential redevelopment has broad latitude in the reuse of the parcel subject to the approval of the ground sub-leaser, which is a willing partner in the active repositioning of the site, and retail, services or other uses customary in regional shopping centers. Any proposer would be potentially assigned responsibility for a relatively de minimis payment of approximately \$3,000 annually until 2066.

Wausau Center Mall is also undergoing a transition and managed by Mid America Asset Management, with a plan to diversify users and reposition spaces towards entertainment, restaurant, office and other nonretail uses which complement the existing retail tenant base- the Mall is currently over 85% occupied/leased. The redevelopment site is adjacent to the 975 parking space city-owned parking ramp structure. Downtown Wausau is home to over 5,000 daytime employees and major boutique and chain retail.



Proposed uses for the site should complement the existing mix of office, retail and housing that exists currently in Downtown Wausau. The following market study information is provided by the Wausau River District:

# JOIN US IN WAUSAU'S RIVER DISTRICT



## WAUSAU

Our city is conveniently located at the intersections of Highways 51/39 and 29.



Source: Wausau Center Mall

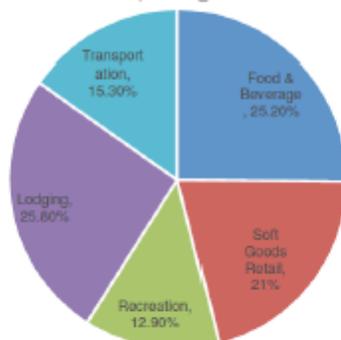
## OUR MARKET

As the Marathon County seat and an employment and retail hub, Wausau is known as a destination for gourmet dining, unique shopping, and world-class entertainment, drawing visitors and customers from a 60+ mile radius as far north as Hazelhurst and as far south as Plover.

## Visitor & Event Traffic:

Average Daily Traffic.....20,700  
 Annual Event Attendance.....54,900  
 2014 Visitor Traffic.....180,200  
 2014 Visitor Spending .....\$16,218,000

Visitor Spending Patterns



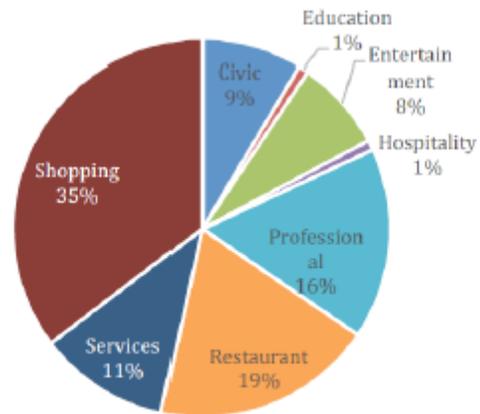
Source: Tourism, 2013

## Industry & Workforce:

Daytime Employment (City).....30,136  
 Downtown Employment.....4,748  
 Employment Growth '03-'15.....92%

## BUSINESS MIX

Wausau River District has a balanced mix of retail, restaurant and service businesses. Local destination businesses include Back When Café, Janke Book Store, Merle Norman Cosmetics, several salons and spas, and Evolutions in Design.



Source: Wausau River District 2014

*"When we were looking for a location to uphold our longstanding tradition of customer service, the River District was first on our list. The mix of independent shops, restaurants, lodging, the Grand Theater and events on the 400 Block makes the River District an excellent return on investment."*

- Ken Haines, Campbell Haines Menswear

Other major destinations in downtown include:

- Library – 245,255 annual visitors
- Hotel – 23,270 annual visitors
- Grand Theater – 130,000 annual visitors
- Eye Clinic – 45,000 annual visitors

316 Scott Street, Wausau, WI 54403 • 715-297-1829 • [www.wausauriverdistrict.com](http://www.wausauriverdistrict.com)

## Demand for Retail and Services<sup>3</sup>:

Within a 10-mile radius of the District, the following industries provide substantial development opportunities due to leakage in the marketplace.

NAICS Industry Subsector	Leakage
Furniture & Home Furnishings	55%
Electronics & Appliance Stores	45%
Food & Beverage Stores	42%
Health & Personal Care Stores	32%
Sporting, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	55%

### Proposal Format and Required Information

- 1. Project Deliverables:** Detail a specific project for all or part of the redevelopment area with a specific offer to purchase price, include descriptions of the types of reports and assumptions utilized to justify the project and provide information on predicted vulnerabilities as they might apply to the project.
- 2. Project Management:** Include biographies and relevant experience of key staff and management personnel. Describe the qualifications and relevant experience of the types of staff that would be assigned to this project. Describe the company's bonding process and coverage levels of employees.
- 3. Level of Investment and Financial Viability:** Include a project construction budget, the status of their organization (whether a corporation, a non-profit or charitable institution, a partnership, a limited liability corporation, a business association, joint venture, or other) indicating under which laws it is organized and operating and include a brief financial history. The developer shall also provide a statement regarding any debarments, suspensions, bankruptcies and/or loan defaults.
- 4. Successful Examples:** Include detailed descriptions and photos of other redevelopment projects completed by your firm and/or partners.
- 5. Organizational Overview:** Provide the following information about your company:  
Official registered name (Corporate, D.B.A., Partnership, etc.), address, main telephone number, toll-free numbers, and facsimile numbers. Person authorized to contractually bind the organization for any proposal against this RFP. Brief history, including year established and number of years your development team has taken on similar projects.
- 6. Scope/Phasing:** Propose a project implementation timeline and performance standards for the construction work to be completed.

### Costs of Proposal

Any costs incurred in the development of the Response to this Request for Proposals are borne by the Developer. The City of Wausau is not responsible for any costs incurred by the Developer in formulating a response, or any other costs incurred such as mailing expenses.

## Evaluation Criteria

Weighting of criteria is used by the City as a tool in selecting the best proposal. The City may change criteria and criteria weights at any time. Evaluation scores or ranks do not create any right in or expectation of a contract award. Proposals will be evaluated on the accuracy and responsiveness of the developer. Background checks and references will also be considered.

Evaluation of Proposals will be based upon the quality of response, the proposed developers background and proposed investment.

The following elements will be the primary considerations in evaluating all submitted proposals and in the selection of a Developer (out of a total of 100):

- *Proposal includes a use or variety of uses which complements Downtown Wausau. (30 Points)*
- *Proposal maximizes taxable value to the City. (30 Points)*
- *Proposal offers a reasonable purchase price/lease rate to the City. (20 Points)*
- *Proposer offers financial strength and can implement/construct quickly. (10 Points)*
- *Availability of high-quality design personnel and contractors to complete the project. (10 Points)*

The response that is deemed to be the most advantageous for the City and region shall be termed the best project. Consideration will be given to cost, level of investment, functionality, use, and other factors. A selection committee at the City of Wausau may be composed of members from the community, Common Council, Community Development, Finance, Attorney, Planning and Public Works Departments.

To be selected, a developer must be able to comply with the general requirements outlined in this document and with any other applicable laws and requirements.

Proposals shall meet the following criteria:

1. Proposals shall be prepared on standard 8 1/2" X 11" letter-size format;
2. Ten (10) copies of each proposal;
3. Email digital copy of proposal to [christian.schock@ci.wausau.wi.us](mailto:christian.schock@ci.wausau.wi.us)

The City of Wausau reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all offers and discontinue this RFP process without obligation or liability to any potential developer,
- Award a contract on the basis of initial offers received, without discussions or requests for best and final offers, and
- Award more than one right to develop.
- Negotiate the nature and scope of the project before final Committee and Council approval of a term sheet.

Developer's proposal in response to this RFP will be incorporated into the final Development Agreement between the City of Wausau and the Developer and the selected vendor(s) of the Developer.

Send proposals by 4:30 p.m. on Friday, October 14 2016 to the attention of:

Christian Schock, Planning, Community & Economic Development  
407 Grant Street  
Wausau, WI 54403-4783  
Phone: 715-261-6683  
[christian.schock@ci.wausau.wi.us](mailto:christian.schock@ci.wausau.wi.us)