



*Rendering of Potential Buildout*

**Request for Information/Qualifications  
For a Master Developer  
Former Niagara Falls Army Reserve Center  
Date: September 1, 2016**

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### **For a Master Developer**

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The Town of Niagara, New York, serving as the approved Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) for the acquisition and redevelopment of the former Niagara Falls United States Army Reserve Center/Area Maintenance Support Activity #76, located at 9400 Porter Road, Niagara NY, is seeking a Master Developer to operate and maintain the facility for economic development purposes. Through this RFI/RFQ, the LRA invites qualified individuals or firms to provide a variety of property management, marketing and development services in exchange for the right to develop the property.

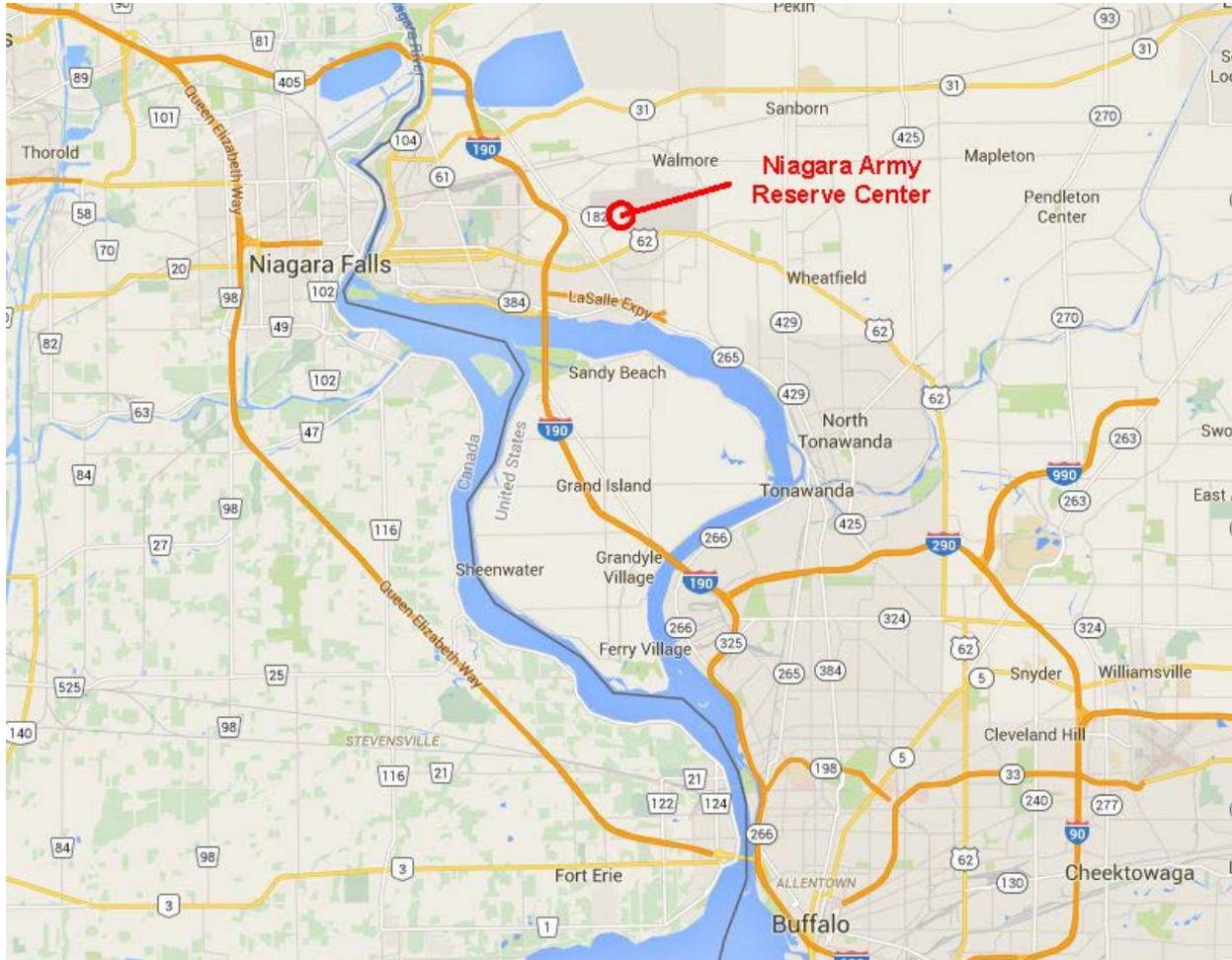
#### **BACKGROUND**

In 2005, the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission recommended that the Niagara Falls Army Reserve Center/Area Maintenance Center #76 (NFARC) in the Town of Niagara, New York be closed, as part of the Reserve Component Transformation in New York. Many of the activities of the Reserves were transferred to a new joint-use facility located nearby. The NFARC site includes an estimated 19.85 acres of land and approximately 155,000 square feet of space in ten buildings. The facility fronts on Porter Road in Niagara, and abuts the Niagara Falls International Airport.

The Town of Niagara LRA is seeking to acquire the site and improvements from the United States through a less than fair market value Economic Development Conveyance (EDC). The LRA is uniquely positioned to redevelop the site in a cooperative manner with the private sector and potential public users in order to create new employment opportunities and to support existing public and private enterprises in the western New York region.

The LRA proposes to acquire all real and personal property at the NFARC from the U.S. Army via a less than fair market value Economic Development Conveyance (EDC), as described by CFR 32 § 174.9, with a structured payment agreement which will allow the LRA to accomplish the successful redevelopment of the site, while minimizing the financial risk to the Town. An EDC is necessary to generate new employment opportunities for the Town of Niagara and the larger region. This redevelopment of the site by the LRA will help replace the jobs lost as a result of the BRAC 2005 recommendation to close the NFARC and to help revitalize the local economy. Only the approved LRA is eligible for this means of transfer. Terms of the EDC transfer include payment of the negotiated purchase price over an extended time period or a one-time discounted payment at the time of transfer. The EDC requires that the LRA provide the Army with financial

performance reports for seven years to ensure that all proceeds from the operations of the facility are utilized for economic development purposes. The selected Master Developer will be required to assist the LRA with these mandated reporting requirements.



The LRA is seeking a *development partner* to operate and market the site as a competitive location for business investment, undertake selective demolition, attract and manage tenants for existing buildings, and oversee new construction as appropriate. The LRA intends to lease the facility in its entirety to the selected master developer, with the potential for future fee transfer.

In 2008 the LRA commissioned a Reuse Plan for the facility to guide the redevelopment. This was followed by an EDC Application which was submitted to the Army in December 2011. Since that time, the Army has been working to complete the necessary environmental reports required under law prior to transfer, along with a Memorandum of Agreement detailing the terms of conveyance of the property to the LRA including consideration and payment schedule. Actual title transfer is tentatively scheduled for early 2017.

The Town of Niagara, in cooperation with the Niagara County Economic Development Corporation, has been approached by a consortium of emergency preparedness/first provider

organizations to use portions of the property. This consortium effort is being partially funded through grants from the State of New York. These potential tenants are to be given priority as potential tenants for portions of the facility. The LRA is currently negotiating with the Army to lease all or portions of the property prior to conveyance, if necessary, in order to expedite redevelopment and allow interested tenants to occupy certain buildings.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY

The property consists of 19.85 acres improved with 10 buildings containing approximately 154,260 square feet (SF). The largest building, Building 4, includes a barrel arch aircraft hangar with approximately 33,750 SF of open floor space (hi-bay), along with adjacent office, shop and classroom training space totaling another 63,000 SF. Four additional buildings are considered to be in good condition and range from 2,400 to 20,000 square feet. The site is also improved with extensive paved areas and is fenced around the perimeter.

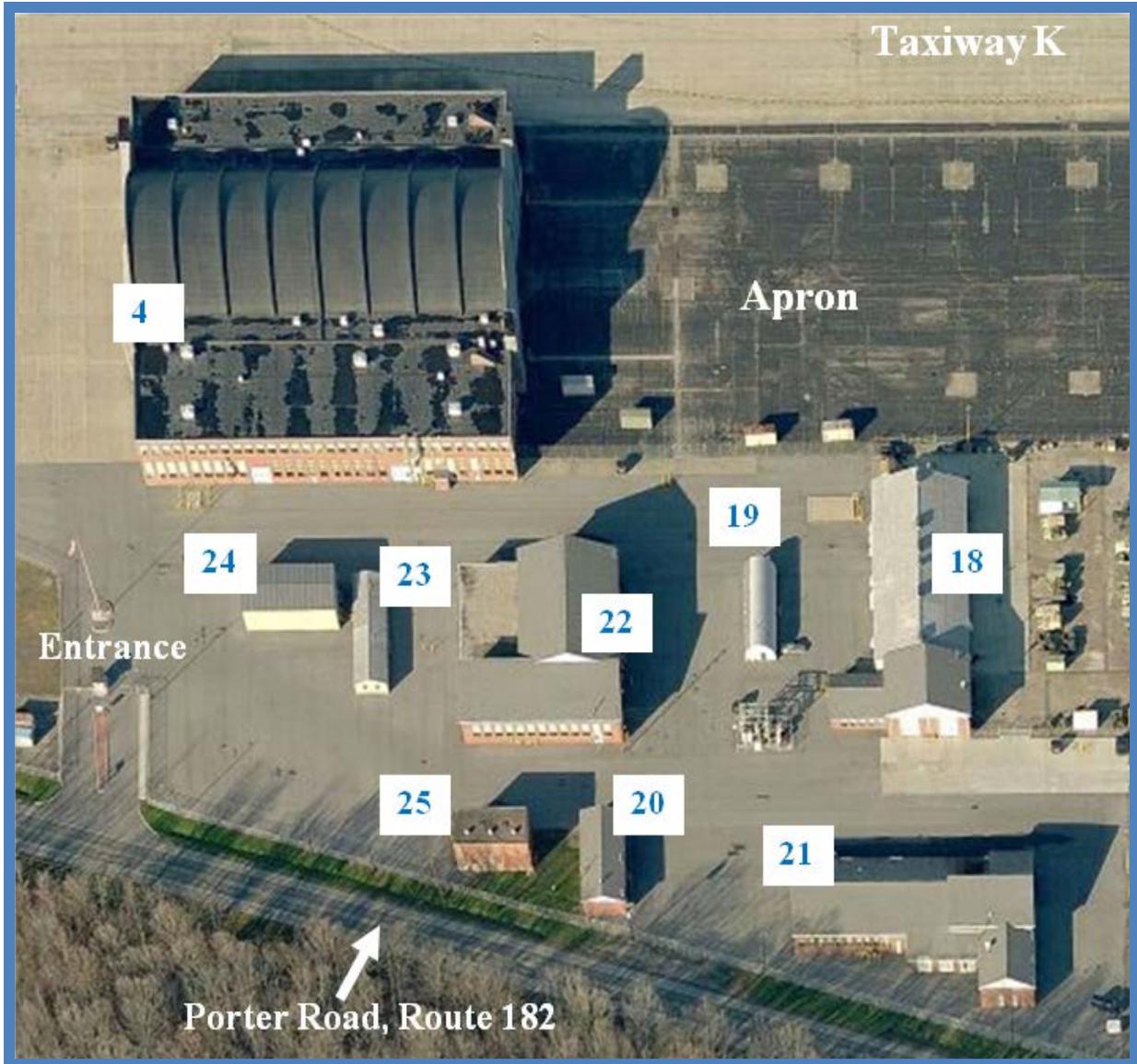


The EDC Application calls for the demolition of 5 buildings totaling 9,900 SF due to their age and generally poor condition. The site is served by all major utilities including electric, gas, water, sewer and telecom. All utilities are currently centrally metered.

The primary focus of the LRA is to utilize the site to enhance economic performance and job creation in the region. This effort will include the reuse of many existing facilities, and may also include the development of new facilities on-site. Public and private sector entities have expressed interest in aviation and non-aviation facilities. These intended uses are allowed under the existing Light Industrial (LI) zoning for the site. The LI zoning permits a wide variety of uses including manufacturing, offices, assembly, warehousing and research & development. In addition, special permits can be obtained for beneficial uses that fall outside of the stated zoning regulations, following the Town of Niagara regulatory process.

A consortium of public agencies is advancing a plan to use a portion of the property, in particular the Hangar (Building 4, 4N & 4S), for an Emergency Response center that may include aviation uses, training facilities and emergency preparedness programs. As currently envisioned, these users would be leasehold tenants. The Town, in concert with the County, has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for architectural programming, design and engineering, and facility management planning for this effort. A copy of that RFP is available as indicated in the Attachments section that follows.





Although the current plan calls for reuse of Building 4 and four additional buildings, the LRA must and will remain flexible to the dictates of the market, in order to take advantage of any opportunities to create new jobs. This may include demolition of the remaining buildings and site preparation to develop new build-to-suit space for a prospective tenant or tenants, including the development of speculative aviation-related or R&D facilities. Long term, it is envisioned that much of the site will be redeveloped with new aviation-related, light industrial, technology and/or flex-space buildings to serve a variety of businesses.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION**

The U.S. Army has undertaken and completed extensive environmental assessments and investigations as required by law, and has completed or will complete all necessary mitigation efforts required under applicable federal and state law. The Army completed a No Final Action

Record of Decision (ROD) for the property in January 2015, and is preparing a Finding of Suitability to Transfer (FOST) for the property which documents all known information and actions taken by the government. A copy of the ROD, draft FOST and other environmental documents are available for download at the web location indicated below.

## MASTER DEVELOPER RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Maintenance & Operation:** The Master Developer will be responsible for the ongoing operation and maintenance of buildings, infrastructure, and grounds at the facility throughout all phases of development.
- **Property Acquisition:** The Master Developer will be expected to coordinate with the LRA for the acquisition of the property from the United States (Army).
- **Development Approvals:** The Master Developer will be responsible for procuring all regulatory approvals, environmental documentation, land development approvals, building permits and other approvals and permits necessary for the redevelopment of the property.
- **Coordinate with the LRA:** The Master Developer will need to work with the LRA to implement the Redevelopment Plan.
- **Development Schedule:** The Master Developer will be responsible for developing detailed schedules for the planning, land development approval, design, financing, construction and maintenance activities. This activity includes the coordination of all agencies, consultants, architects, engineers, contractors and property management functions
- **Financing:** The Master Developer is responsible for devising a financing structure and obtaining the financing for the development. The Master Developer will be responsible for financing the entire cost of its project, including predevelopment costs such as design, engineering, legal, environmental and other professional expenses, and entitlements, and development costs such as demolition, infrastructure, off-site improvements, utilities and construction.
- **Business Plan:** The Master Developer will be responsible for developing a viable and financially feasible business plan for the on-going operations and future development of the property.

## MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Respondents to this RFI/RFQ will have extensive experience in industrial and commercial real estate development and property management in western New York or other equivalent markets. Respondents must also have the financial capacity to undertake a project of this size and magnitude.

## SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The following information is required for each key member of the master developer's project team and respondents are requested to highlight projects in which members of the project team have previously collaborated:

- i. Description of experience within the most recent ten-year period related to major mixed-use redevelopment projects that are similar in scope to redevelopment of the NFARC.
- ii. Demonstrated experience in completing projects of the scale and complexity envisioned in the Redevelopment Plan on budget and on schedule.
- iv. Extent of the experience of specific individuals on the Respondent's proposed project team in public/private development projects.
- v. Demonstrated ability to structure public/private development projects to minimize the public partner's capital investment and associated risk, particularly for infrastructure improvements.
- vi. Resumes of all key Project Team members to be involved in the project are required and should include: education and professional licensing qualifications and relevant experience.
- vii. Respondents should identify any other relevant organizational, consultant or other available resources that could be committed to the project.

The Respondent must also describe and list in their submission the following information:

- a. The team's ability to arrange financing for similar scale redevelopment projects;
- b. Two examples of projects in the last five years similar in scope and scale to his project, with brief descriptions of such projects and their financing structure; as well as
- c. Two financial references.

The Respondent shall provide references including names and contact information for recent projects accomplished by the Project Team. Information shall be provided identifying project location, scope, development costs, dates of development and other information as appropriate

## EVALUATION PROCESS

The LRA will appoint a committee of qualified individuals to evaluate submissions received from respondents relative to the qualifications and submitted information. One or more respondents may then be selected to enter into negotiations with the LRA, or be asked to submit more a detailed and specific Request for Proposals stating proposed financial terms and conditions. The LRA reserves the right to conduct interviews with selected respondents in order to further clarify proposals.

## SCHEDULE

The LRA is seeking to come to agreement with a suitable Master Developer as soon as possible, and no later than December 31, 2016.

In order to meet this schedule, interested parties must submit their qualifications package to the Town of Niagara on or before close of business on **October 30, 2016**.

## SUBMITTALS

Respondents should limit their responses to not more than 25 pages, including resumes and qualifications. Fancy brochures or extraneous marketing information is not encouraged. All respondents are requested to submit three (3) printed copies and one electronic copy (on flash drive or CD) of their entire response to this Request for Information/Qualifications to:

Niagara Local Redevelopment Authority  
c/o Town Supervisor  
7105 Lockport Road  
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

## QUESTIONS

All questions regarding this RFI/RFQ should be submitted via e-mail to the LRA's redevelopment consultant, Craig Seymour at RKG Associates, Inc. at [crs@rkgassociates.com](mailto:crs@rkgassociates.com) on or before October 15<sup>th</sup>. Please use the term **Niagara RFQ** in the Subject line. Questions and responses will be disseminated to all respondents.

## SITE VISIT

Site visits may be scheduled by contacting Craig Seymour by e-mail at the internet address above. Please do not contact the Town directly.

## ATTACHMENTS

The following information is available for review at the following Dropbox link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/r4z3auqsc71nytk/AADEsXrbh0wf83MT1USVOxILa?dl=0>

Background information includes:

- EDC Application (partial – financial information has been redacted)  
(recommended starting point)
- Site Plans
- Survey Map
- Utilities
- Building Data
- Environmental

Please contact Craig Seymour by e-mail for additional information

Approved:

Town of Niagara Local Redevelopment Authority & Board of Supervisors

July 19, 2016

Lee Wallace, Supervisor