

# REQUEST FOR Qualifications

## Design/Build Option for Union School, Union Maine

### TOWN OF UNION

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The Town of Union, Maine seeks qualifications from developers with design/build experience for the design and adaptive re-use of the Union School wing of the Thompson Community Center for senior rental housing.

**Proposals must be submitted no later than 2:00 p.m. on March 1.  
Please see specific proposal submittal requirements as outlined below.**

Please submit proposals to:

Jay Feyler, Town Manager

**Mark envelopes plainly and label them: Design/Build – Union School**

**Thank you for your interest!**

## 1. Project Summary Sheet

<b>Purpose of Project</b>	The goal of this project is to redevelop the “Union School” into senior rental housing (55+). Tax proceeds from the project will fund a credit enhancement and provide revenue to rehabilitate and maintain the adjacent Thompson Memorial Building
<b>Property Location</b>	Corner of Common Road and South Union Road
<b>Land Area</b>	Adjacent to Town Hall, park, and Thompson Memorial Center
<b>Building Use</b>	Vacant School building
<b>Building Size</b>	Two stories, with basement, approximately 10,900 +/- s.f.
<b>Current Zoning</b>	Community Center District
<b>Anticipated Project Dates</b>	2024-2026

## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is to evaluate and select a Design-Build Team (D-B) to provide design, pre-construction and construction phase services for the redevelopment of the Union School portion of the Thompson Community Center.

### 2.2 Project Background

The Union School is located at the corner of Common and South Union Road adjacent to the Union Town Hall and is part of the Thompson Community Center complex. The complex consists of two structures: the Union School and the Thompson Memorial Building. The Memorial Building, in particular, needs building maintenance and some structural adjustments while the Union School is in need of some roof maintenance and upgrades. All the building systems are described in much greater detail in the Capital Needs Assessment Report. This report and all other background material, can be found at:

<https://www.union.maine.gov/index.asp?SEC=FED812DC-A18B-400A-A193-6E4C9D5DAFEB> .

The community conducted several studies and surveys prior to the development of this RFQ. **In fall of 2023, the community took these additional steps to ensure the adaptive reuse of the Union School for Senior Apartments. The Planning Board and Board of Selectmen unanimously approved that the community consider the following changes at a special town meeting:**

- **The town authorized the Board of Selectmen to enter into a development agreement with a selected developer, rather than go back to Town Meeting (1080 votes cast; 64% yes)**
- **The town approved a TIF district in support the project (55% yes)**
- **The Town voted to create a new zoning district with higher densities and minimum coverage requirements (56% yes) to permit the adaptive reuse of Union School.**

**As a result, the vote to demolish the building was rejected and the Town released the use of redevelopment funds previously frozen at Town meeting Town Meeting.**

### 2.3 Project Overview

Each of these buildings, served by private water and septic, needs maintenance and rehab. After much debate, ordinance revisions and approval of a TIF, the community agreed to utilize the adaptive reuse of Union School to create senior rental housing and revenue flow to the Thompson Memorial Building. That revenue flow will maintain Thompson as an ongoing community center. The community, through this RFQ process, is seeking a development team to achieve that goal.

Union is interested in hearing adaptive reuse concepts that meet the goals cited above, while also putting Union School back into productive use. Expansion of the existing building on the site will be considered. There is a recognized need for senior housing, including subsidized low-income options in this unique village center.

### 2.4 Response Requirements for this RFQ, Generally.

The Community asks those responding to this RFQ to provide a conceptual description for the redesign of Union School to provide senior rental housing, including conceptual sketches, an estimate of program costs, and an identification of funding options to be pursued to complete the project.

Using appropriate tools, the community is asking the respondents to share their vision for the property. The community has worked hard in creating its own community vision for this important village corner. They are

interested in understanding how a developer will, in turn, implement that vision.

### **3. Scope of Work to be Considered**

The scope of work to redevelop the Union School by a private developer will be memorialized in a Joint Development Agreement (JDA) between the selected developer/design team and the Town. The design build team, in responding to this request for qualifications, is asked to consider the following scope of work, but not address it directly in this response.

#### **Phase I: Design/Pre-construction**

Upon being selected, the design team should anticipate the following development responsibilities:

- Meet, as necessary, with Town staff, or contracted professionals, to refine design documents.
- Develop construction documents for the building, including all engineering documents as needed.
- Boundary site survey.
- Acquisition by the Team of all required permits from federal, state, county and local agencies
- Site Planning
- Landscape Design.
- Civil Engineering, including stormwater management.
- Mechanical and Plumbing, including septic design and necessary upgrades
- Electrical Engineering
- Fire Alarm/Security
- Cost Estimating – An early estimate is required. Additional periodic pricing updates will also be required to confirm conformance with the Town’s budget goals
- Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification – Not anticipated, but the Town would like to discuss any energy saving operations
- Public outreach and meetings – To be discussed.
- Selection of materials

The design work will include a submittal of a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) proposal reflecting the entire cost, scope of work, schedule, and quality intent of the Project before any construction funds are committed. It will be the first benchmark of the Joint Development Agreement. The GMP Proposal shall be supplemented with a clearly defined and detailed breakdown of costs for the entire Project. All proposed allowances included shall be approved by the Town and shall include estimated quantities and values justified by the Design-Build team. All clarifications, exclusions, exceptions must be identified as part of the GMP.

#### **Phase II/Finance Plan**

As part of the RFQ process, the Town is asking for conceptual cost estimates and a financial plan, including proposed resource options for the redevelopment of the site. The Town is providing a very complete inventory of building needs developed by Merriam Architects, and their team (see website for report). As part of the second JDA benchmark, the parties will work together to identify appropriate financing and the subsidies that may be necessary to redevelop the site. The design team and Town will work together to secure funding elements prior to entering the construction phase.

#### **Phase III/Construction**

In the RFQ, the community is asking for a description of what will be anticipated for the construction phase and how the developer will proceed. In that phase, the Town anticipates the Design-Builder services to include, but are not limited to:

- Preparatory site work and grading.
- Quality control and Quality Assurance of design and construction.
- Coordination and cooperation with any and all other entities participating in construction activities.
- Construction management.
- Field supervision.
- Coordinating of subcontractors.
- Maintaining quality.
- Meeting schedules.
- The entire design-build process shall allow for “open book” policy and facilitate review of all Project contracts, records, accounting and other documentation.

### **3.2 Project Characteristics and Design Considerations**

**Design Considerations.** The two buildings represent a prominent corner in the community. Since the Town inherited the structures, each building has been actively marketed or used by the community. A variety of tenants have been there, although those revenues have not kept pace with building needs. The community would like to see the Center re-emerge as a vibrant corner of activity. Design should consider the visual importance of this location, the architectural integrity of the Union School, and the flow of people and traffic to the two structures.

The Union School was built in 1932 and housed all grades. It operates with two full floors and a basement. School was last held in 1987, with modifications to the building done by the newly formed MSAD40. The building has two full floors with 18 rooms of varying sizes and central bathrooms.

The community (see the Town’s website) has spent a great deal of time considering the mixture of uses and what to ultimately do with the Center. There is a consensus around keeping the Thompson Memorial Center as a community-based program, while redeveloping Union School for senior housing. The community will take responsibility for rehabilitation of the Thompson Community Center; that will require deeper looks at the internal infrastructure to understand what must be separated between the two buildings. Energy efficiency options, including solar panels and new heating plants, could be part of the design.

Design and development considerations are left in the hands of the selected design build team. The RFQ process is meant to provide an opportunity to share with the community their vision of the future for Union School and how that future can be realized.

There are two important options to consider when responding:

1. The community is willing to consider reuse that involves the expansion of the Union School. The property could absorb the expansion of the existing footprint in one of several directions.
2. While the community is desirous of the adjoining Thompson Community Center being the community center of the future, it will consider adaptive re-use of that facility, incorporating it into housing. Part of such a plan, and through the joint development agreement, would include assisting the community in providing for that community center at an alternative site.

In the event the development team and community agree to consider either of these options, such

agreement possibilities shall be recognized in the joint development agreement, noting further flexible building schedules, based on the scale of use of additional space beyond the Union footprint and the additional funding resources that may become applicable as a result of the change. Please note that use of the Thompson Community Center for housing will require further town meeting approval.

## **Selection Process and Schedule**

### **4.1 Anticipated Project Schedule**

The following are schedule milestones for this project.

The site is visible from Common and South Union Roads and may be viewed at any time without coordination with the Town. Individual tours will be available on request.

Event	Date	Time
Issuance of RFQ	January 15	12:00 p.m.
Letter of Interest in Responding	February 1	4:00 p.m.
Site visit and tours	on demand	
Receipt of Questions and clarifications	February 16	4:00 p.m.
RFQ Response due	February 29	2:00 p.m.
Finalists Selected	March 7	4:00 p.m. (or sooner)
Interviews with Selected Firms	Week of March 11	
Final Selection Announced		
Joint Development Agreement Presented to BOS for Approval	TBD	

## 4.2 Proposal Submission Instructions

Please submit 7 copies of your proposal, on or before February 29 before 2:00 p.m. to:

C/O Jay Feyler, Town Manager  
Union Town Hall  
567 Common Road  
Union, Maine

**Late submittals will not be evaluated, and the firm will be disqualified from further consideration.**

## 4.3 Evaluation Criteria

The Town will evaluate all proposals based on the following. The Town reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, to alter the selection process in any way, or to postpone the selection process in any way. The successful proposal will serve as a basis for further negotiations and design resolution and is therefore subject to modifications.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Points</b>
Design/Build Team	Assess team qualifications, management capability, workmanship and reviews from past projects. The committee will award the following specific points within this category: Previous experience with staying on budget (up to 10) Experience with Housing Finance tools (up to 10).	35
Vision Description for the Property	The design shall consider the character of the corner, be innovative and energy efficient, and maximize the potential for senior rental units.	35
Financial Plan	The proposal must be cost-effective, meet the needs of the community, and identify attainable financial resources	15

#### **4.4 Proposal Content**

Proposals are sought from development teams with recognized expertise in Design Build projects and in the housing development arena. The developer and their design and construction team will be viewed as a package. With the exception of example projects, the design concepts shall be presented in black and white.

The RFQ response shall be organized as follows:

1. Design Team Qualifications
  - a. Resumes
  - b. Project history and examples
2. Developer vision for the property
3. Conceptual design and cost estimates.
4. Summary information deemed by the development team to be important to the Community's decision process.