



# Waterfront Development

# Opportunity

UTICA, NY

**Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI)**

***1917 Historic Utica Canal Terminal Warehouse***



*Historic Photo of the Utica Canal Terminal Warehouse*

**RFEI #: 2023-001**

**Release Date:** June 5, 2023

**Site Visit Opportunity:** Contact Brian Thomas @ 315.792.0181

**Questions (in writing) by:** July 10, 2023

**Submission Deadline:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 @ 3:15 PM

# Summary

## Plan. Build. Play.

Located at the “front door” of the City, Utica’s Harbor Point comprises nearly 148 acres of waterfront real estate uniquely situated around the City’s historic inner harbor along the Mohawk River and Erie Canal. The City of Utica and the Utica Harbor Point Development Corporation (UHPDC) are advancing the transformation of this former industrial area into a year-round mixed-use waterfront destination for residents and tourists complete with water activities, local foods, craft beverages, entertainment and active and passive recreation opportunities.

The City of Utica and the UHPDC are seeking expressions of interest for a ~ 0.5 acre portion of the Harbor Point Project focused on the 1917 historic NYS Canal Terminal building that immediately borders the east side of the Utica Harbor. The City and the UHPDC completed a master plan for the 148 acres of Utica’s inner harbor to revitalize the former industrial and underutilized land to create a mixed-use destination (see [www.uticaharborpoint.org](http://www.uticaharborpoint.org)). It is anticipated, based on market demand, that the preferred project for this RFEI will focus on the redevelopment of the lands immediately adjacent to the east side of the Harbor and the redevelopment of the historic 1917 Utica Canal Terminal Warehouse. Uses envisioned for the reuse of this building include restaurant(s), marina services, historic interpretation, and other amenities all centered on Utica’s Harbor. Anticipated future development will be consistent with the City’s vision for this area as articulated in the Master Plan (see page 6.)



Figure 1 Example Image: Ponce City Market Atlanta, GA  
Source: [www.eater.com](http://www.eater.com)



Figure 2 Example Image: Outside Seating

# Subject Property Summary

<b>Development Site</b>	Approximately ~ 0.5-acre waterfront site with an historic NYS Canal building and zoned with maximum flexibility through the City’s “Planned Development” (PDD) district.
<b>Site Features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Waterfront location and access</li> <li>▪ Development ready – NYS SEQR Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) complete</li> <li>▪ Easy access from I-90 – (NYS Thruway)</li> <li>▪ ¼ mile from Downtown Utica with a dedicated pedestrian connection via the Genesee Street Bridge</li> <li>▪ Adjacent to new development (hotels and restaurants)</li> <li>▪ Community supported vision</li> <li>▪ Demonstrated market demand</li> <li>▪ NYS Office of Historic Preservation Concurrence</li> </ul>
<b>Location</b>	Adjacent to the newly constructed pedestrian-friendly roadway, named Harbor Way, entrance directly off North Genesee Street
<b>Selection Process</b>	The preferred developer will be selected in accordance with the UHPDC procurement requirements
<b>Expressions of Interest Due</b>	Thursday, August 17, 2023 @ 3:15 PM

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## Utica’s Harbor Point, 2018



# Invitation to Submit

On behalf of the City of Utica, we are excited to share this development opportunity for a premier waterfront property within the City of Utica and New York State's Mohawk Valley. Over the past several years the City has invested a tremendous amount of time, effort, and resources in creating a future vision for the Harbor Point Area; this project site is one of the cornerstones for realizing that vision.

This location provides for a unique opportunity to create a waterfront restaurant and waterside, associated uses such as boater services that are directly adjacent to the heart of the City of Utica and within 15 miles of the existing and emerging major employment centers of Griffiss Business and Technology Park (the region's largest and most diverse business park, with 6,000 employees). It also is near the newly constructed Wolfspeed Mohawk Valley Fab, the world's first, largest, and only 200 mm silicon carbide manufacturing facility that is expected to host upwards of 600+ new employees. In addition to these regional employees, 3,000 employees will soon call Downtown Utica home as a result of a new Wynn Hospital currently being constructed less than 2 miles from Harbor Point. Finally, the City has seen as much as \$125M+ in investment in downtown Utica. These projects are too numerous to mention here, but range from the redevelopment of many historic structures in Bagg's Square into mixed use buildings, investment into anchor buildings such as the DoubleTree Hotel (former Hotel Utica) and the Delta Hotel by Marriott, to key investments in arts and culture including major renovations to the Munson-Williams Proctor Art Institute and the Stanley Theatre, the restoration of the Utica Memorial Auditorium (now the Adirondack Bank Center) home to the AHL's Utica Comets, and the newly constructed Utica University Nexus Center featuring three multipurpose 200ft. x 85ft. playing surfaces that can be utilized as ice sheets or turf all located within a ~ 170,000 SF building. As a result, Utica is a growing hub of downtown housing, hospitality, arts and entertainment, and recreational opportunities.

In summary, Utica is thriving! We are experiencing a renaissance and Harbor Point will become a significant component centered on urban waterfront living, recreation, and craft foods and beverages.

Thank you for your consideration of our city.

Sincerely,

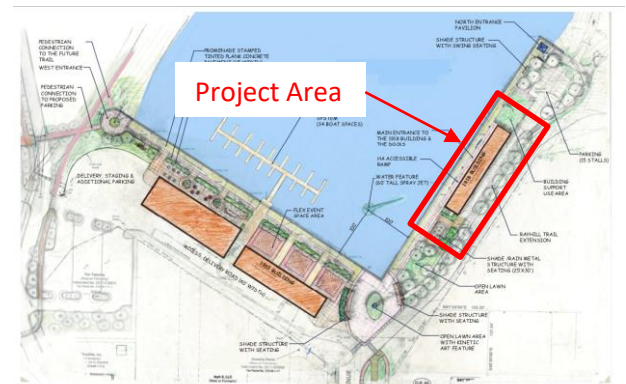
Robert M. Palmieri  
Mayor  
City of Utica

&

Vincent J. Gilroy, Jr  
President  
Utica Harbor Point Development Corporation



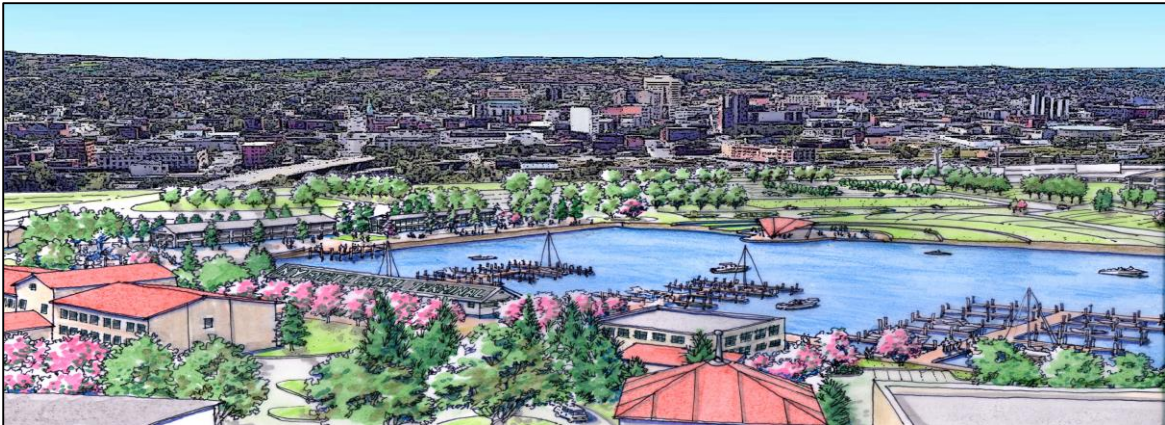
1917 Utica Canal Terminal Warehouse (Historic Photo)



Promenade Improvements adjacent to the project area.



# Utica Harbor Point Master Plan



The ~ 0.5 acre Utica Harbor Point Project Site (UHPPS) that is subject of this RFEI is one of the key components of the Harbor Point Master Plan that establishes a modern vision for this waterfront area in the City of Utica. The Harbor Point Project Site is a unique opportunity to build a new urban waterfront in the Mohawk Valley that is directly bounded by both the Mohawk River and the NYS Canal National Landmark. At full build-out, the Master Plan for all of Harbor Point envisions nearly 500,000 square feet of mixed-use development across 148 acres within walking distance of downtown Utica, historic Bagg's Square, the Wynn Hospital, and Utica sports and Entertainment District centered around the Adirondack Bank Center) and the newly constructed Utica University Nexus Center. At completion, this mixed-use destination will become a four-season attraction featuring a mix of parks, trails, housing, craft food and beverage venues, entertainment and recreation amenities, retail stores, cultural attractions, and waterfront uses.

The redevelopment plan for the entirety of Harbor Point outlines a framework of guidelines for new public- and private-sector construction, identifies areas for public activities and recreation spaces, establishes new connections to downtown Utica including the new hospital, and improves access to the Mohawk River and the NYS Canal System. (See following page for an image of the detailed Master Plan.) In addition, a broader area plan is provided illustrating the relationship of Harbor Point to Utica's other initiatives including the Utica's Sports and Entertainment District, Historic Bagg's Square, the NYS Thruway, and Wynn Hospital which is currently under construction. It is anticipated that the UHPDC will formulate a synergistic relationship with the developer of the ~ 0.5 acres as a key component to realizing the full vision of the master plan.

## A Vision for the Future

Harbor Point will be a destination that captures the essence of Utica's unique history, with modern updates to bring the area back to life. Concepts for the rejuvenated Harbor include:

- Waking up with a view of the Harbor from waterfront lofts
- Enjoying local craft food and beverage near all of the action
- Participating in water-based activities
- Strolling along a newly constructed public promenade



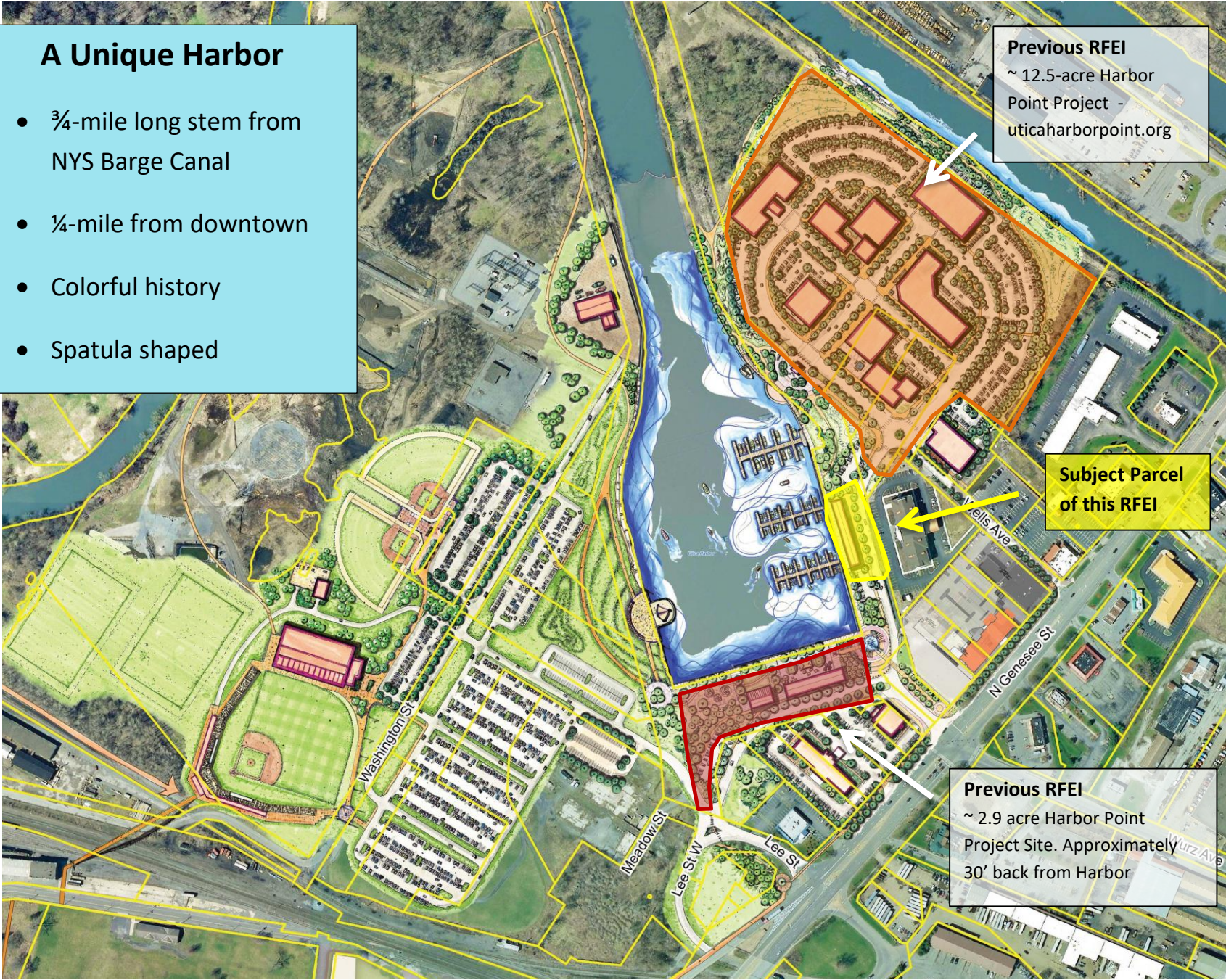
## A Unique Harbor

- ¾-mile long stem from NYS Barge Canal
- ¼-mile from downtown
- Colorful history
- Spatula shaped

**Previous RFEI**  
~ 12.5-acre Harbor Point Project -  
[uticaaharborpoint.org](http://uticaaharborpoint.org)

**Subject Parcel**  
of this RFEI

**Previous RFEI**  
~ 2.9 acre Harbor Point  
Project Site. Approximately  
30' back from Harbor





# Proximity to Area Initiatives





# Harbor Point Investments

Since 2014, the City has made great strides in implementing public improvements associated with the Master Plan including the construction of a new prominent gateway that will serve the district and the Harbor Point Project Site, reconstruction of the bulkhead walls, and the soon to be constructed 45' wide public promenade along the bulkhead walls expected to be complete by Fall 2023. A market analysis was completed that clearly demonstrates significant demand for mixed-use urban waterfront development. Design guidelines were also created that articulate the development character expectations. To facilitate development and help bring the project to a build-ready state, the City has already completed a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) and associated Findings for the district. Additional state grant dollars have been received to continue the public investment components of the site. All information pertaining to completed and planned improvements can be found at [www.uticaharborpoint.org](http://www.uticaharborpoint.org) and are listed as an attachment to this RFEI.

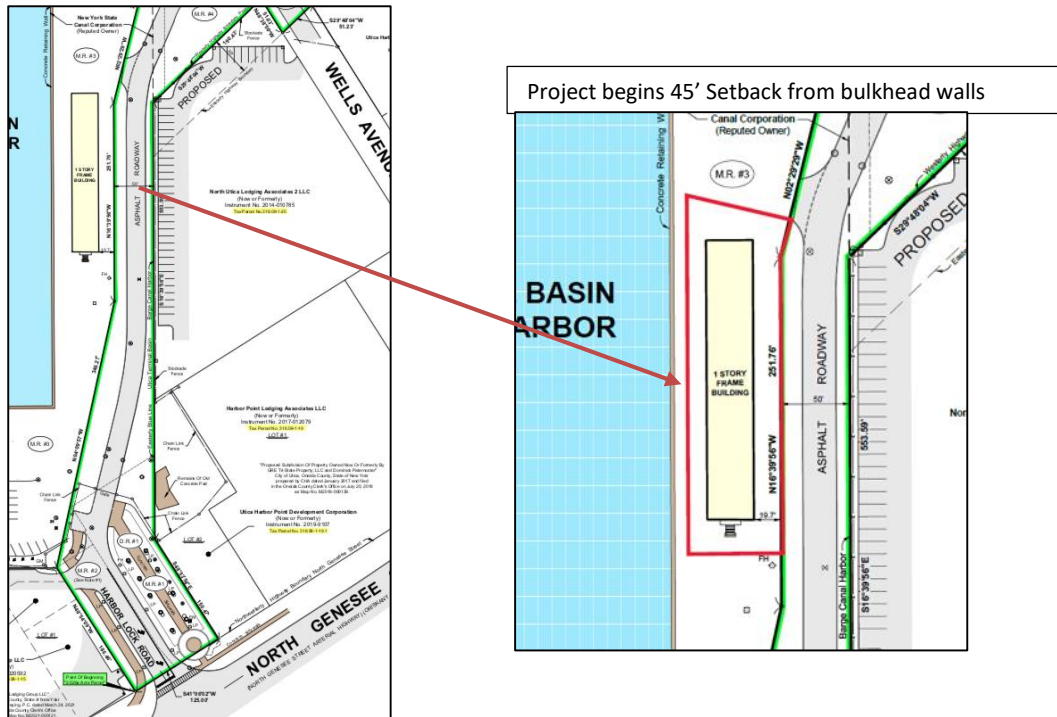
To date, the City and the UHPDC have received nearly \$20 Million for public investments to help realize the Harbor Point vision. Completed activities to date include:

- Initial Master Plan
- Generic Environmental Impact Statements (GEIS)
- Economic and Market Analysis
- Gateway Entrance Design and Construction at Wurz Avenue
- Design and Engineering for replacement of bulkhead walls, Wurz Ave Extension (to access the development pad), and closure of the former dredge spoils area (creating the pad for development)
- Design and Engineering of the Bulkhead Walls and waterfront Promenade
- Design Guidelines
- Property Acquisition
- Permits from USACE (bulkhead wall replacement) and NYS Historic Preservation Office (building demolition and renovation)



*Gateway Concept for Utica Harbor Point. The Gateway was constructed in 2017*

# The Development Opportunity



## A. Site Details

<b>Site Owner:</b>	The UHPDC acquired title to the subject real property from the New York State Canal Corporation
<b>Tax Parcels:</b>	Subdivided portion of UHPDC owned land
<b>Size:</b>	~ 0.5 acres for development (setback 45' from a public promenade)
<b>Existing Conditions:</b>	Level development area surrounding vacant the historic 1917 Utica Canal Terminal Warehouse.
<b>Terms of Sale:</b>	Purchase price to the selected developer will be determined through negotiations between the developer and the UHPDC and based on the appraised value.
<b>Utilities:</b>	Public access road with 8" sewer, 8" water, telecommunications, stormwater, bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Parking on each side of the building.
<b>Environmental:</b>	SEQRA is complete pending conformance with the Generic Environmental Impact Statement Findings. Memorandum of Understanding with the NYS Office of Historic Preservation outlining compliance requirements.
<b>Land Use &amp; Zoning:</b>	PDD – Planned Development District (providing flexibility from standard zoning area and bulk regulations).



## B. Preferred Development & Design

It is the intention of this RFEI to determine interest in the development of a portion of the Harbor Point Project Site (i.e., ~ 0.5 acres that is subject of this RFEI). The UHPDC is seeking expressions of interest from potential developers to redevelop the 1917 Utica Canal Terminal Warehouse that sits directly adjacent to the Utica Harbor that reflects the vision for the Harbor Point Master Plan and to have the ability to have a synergistic effect when the entire project is developed. The UHPDC will consider alternative development programs that creatively address, but still adhere to, the goals and vision of the Harbor Point Master Plan. A desired outcome of the project is the creation of new jobs, and it is also desired that the successful redevelopment plans will make ample use of sustainable building principles and practices.

## C. Zoning and Design Guidelines

The Harbor Point Project Site is located within the PDD - Planned Development District zoning district (*reference Article IV, Chapter 229, Division 7 of the City's Zoning Code.*) Planned development districts in the City of Utica are intended to “encourage innovations in land development and renewal techniques so that the growing demands of the community may be met with greater flexibility and variety in type, design and layout of sites and buildings and by the conservation and more efficient use of open spaces and other amenities generally enhancing of urban life.” As such, there is a high level of flexibility to encourage creative development proposals.

However, to ensure that development proposals meet the city’s design objectives, The City of Utica has adopted Redevelopment Design Standards and Guidelines ([http://uticaharborpoint.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Harbor-Point\\_Design-Guidelines\\_FINAL\\_08.18.16\\_2.pdf](http://uticaharborpoint.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Harbor-Point_Design-Guidelines_FINAL_08.18.16_2.pdf)) that are applicable to the PDD zoning district.

Developers will be expected to submit design proposals that adhere to the established standards and guidelines.

## D. Incentives Available

The UHPDC, City of Utica, the Utica Industrial Development Agency, Mohawk Valley EDGE, and others are facilitating land acquisition and may provide financial and technical assistance to successfully develop the Harbor Point Project Site. Incentive opportunities **may** include:

- Financial Assistance in the form of New York State and local sales and use tax exemptions, mortgage recording tax exemption, and real property tax abatement benefits through the City of Utica Industrial Development Agency
- Historic Tax Credits
- Grants and Loans (potential)

## E. Market Support

A real estate market analysis was conducted and found that this portion of the Harbor Point project area can serve as a unique destination retail/food/beverage area capitalizing on the unique waterfront location. Overall, an estimated 135,000 square feet of targeted retail and restaurants was found to be supported by market conditions.

# RFEI Submission Requirements

Submissions should adhere to the following requirements and be a maximum of three (3) pages in length.

## A. An Introductory Letter of Interest

The letter should address the following questions:

- Why is the respondent interested in the project?
- What is the respondent's experience working on a similar project?
- What is the respondent's previous experience working with public sector partners and types of public-private partnerships?

## B. Contact Information

Contact details should include the name, title, phone number, and email address of the individual who is authorized to represent the respondent as the primary contact that will be available to provide additional information, if necessary.

## C. Vision and Redevelopment Approach

A brief paragraph of the general vision for redevelopment including your thoughts on the mix of uses desired.

# Administrative

## A. Site Visits

Opportunities can be made for those wishing to tour the area available for development. If interested please respond to Brian Thomas, Commissioner, Department of Urban and Economic Development at (315) 792-0181 by June 30, 2023 as arrangements will need to be made to access the site.

## B. Submission instructions

RFEI deadline: **A hard copy of the proposal must be submitted by 3:15 PM on Thursday, August 17, 2023.**

Responses should be limited to 3 pages and must be delivered by the above deadline to:

City of Utica  
Board of Contract & Supply  
c/o Engineering Department  
1 Kennedy Plaza  
Utica, New York 13502

*\*Note that submitting letter of interest is a requirement of receiving the official RFP if issued.*



## C. General Provisions

The issuance of this RFEI and the submission of a response by a respondent or the acceptance of such a response by UHPDC does not obligate UHPDC in any manner. UHPDC reserves the right to:

1. amend, modify or withdraw this RFEI;
2. revise any requirement of this RFEI;
3. require supplemental statements or information from any responsible party;
4. extend the deadline for submission of responses hereto;
5. negotiate potential contract terms with any respondent to this RFEI;
6. hold discussions with any respondent to this RFEI to correct and/or clarify responses which do not conform to the instructions contained herein; and
7. cancel, or reissue in whole or in part, this solicitation, if UHPDC determines in its sole discretion that it is its best interest to do so.

UHPDC may exercise the foregoing rights at any time without notice and without liability to any respondent or any other party for its expenses incurred in preparation of responses hereto or otherwise. All costs associated with responding to this solicitation will be at the sole cost and expense of the respondent.

All information submitted in response to this solicitation is subject to the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL), which generally mandates the disclosure of documents in the possession of UHPDC upon the request of any person unless the content of the document falls under a specific exemption to disclosure. In addition, all responses may be discussed at meetings of the UHPDC, which meetings are subject to the Open Meetings Law.

## D. Questions and Addendums

All questions should be submitted via email to Brian Thomas, Commissioner of Urban & Economic Development (bthomas@cityofutica.com). Deadline for Questions: **Monday, July 10, 2023**. Responses will be posted at <http://cityofutica.com/departments/harbor-point-development-corporation/index> by **Friday, July 14, 2023**. No questions will be answered unless submitted in this manner.

This RFEI imposes certain restrictions on communications between the UHPDC, its sole member, and the members of the UHPDC board of directors and its staff, and an RFEI respondent during the procurement process.

## E. Next Steps

UHPDC intends to use responses from this RFEI in order to develop a plan of action for the Utica Inner Harbor. However, based on the responses submitted, UHPDC may decide to proceed in any of the following manners, or others:

- UHPDC may select a “short list” of teams for a second-round process that might entail interviews or requests for more details

- UHPDC may recommend that two or more teams consider forming a partnership, if in its judgement such a partnership would be conducive to achieving the goals for this project
- UHPDC may enter into direct negotiation with one of the respondent teams

## Resources

Project documents are located on the Utica Harbor Point website located at [www.uticaharborpoint.org/project-documents/](http://www.uticaharborpoint.org/project-documents/) and include:

- Project Documents:
  - Project Brochure
  - Preferred Harbor Master Plan
  - Program of Uses and Parking
  - GEIS Brochure
  - Design Guidelines
- State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) Final Generic Environmental Statement (FGEIS) Documents
- State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) Scoping Documents
- State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) Draft Generic Environmental Statement (DGEIS) Documents
- Utica Master (Comprehensive) Plan
- Photographs