

**MEETING DATE:** November 9, 2017

**TITLE:** Authorization to release the Request for Qualifications for Master Developer for 325 Blake Road

**RES. NUMBER:** 17-068

**PREPARED BY:** Michael Hayman

**E-MAIL:** mhayman@minnehahacreek.org      **TELEPHONE:** 952-471-8226

**REVIEWED BY:**     Administrator       Counsel       Program Mgr.  
                          Board Committee     Engineer       Other

**WORKSHOP ACTION:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Advance to Board mtg. Consent Agenda.	<input type="checkbox"/> Advance to Board meeting for discussion prior to action.
<input type="checkbox"/> Refer to a future workshop (date): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Refer to taskforce or committee (date): _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Return to staff for additional work.	<input type="checkbox"/> No further action requested.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <b>REQUESTING FINAL ACTION NOVEMBER 9, 2017</b>	

**PURPOSE or ACTION REQUESTED:**

Authorization to release the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Master Developer for the 325 Blake Road – Hopkins Cold Storage redevelopment site. The RFQ solicits developer interest to develop a transit-oriented neighborhood on the current Hopkins Cold Storage site at 325 Blake Road in coordination with the District’s vision for the Minnehaha Creek Greenway and regional stormwater goals for Minnehaha Creek and Lake Hiawatha.

The proposed action authorizes the administrator to release the RFQ, allowing for non-substantive edits to the document and schedule based on advice of counsel, Hopkins City Council and the Blake Road Station Subcommittee.

**PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION:**

325 Blake Road North, Hopkins MN

**PROJECT TIMELINE:**

See *Estimated RFQ Schedule* on page 2 of the attached RFQ for a draft timeline.

**SUMMARY:**

Background

The MCWD’s overarching organizational strategy is founded in its Balanced Urban Ecology policy. This policy was established as the District’s fundamental philosophy and way of doing business – developed to guide all future planning and watershed management activities in order to achieve its mission of protecting and improving land and water.

The overarching strategy described in Balanced Urban Ecology is a vision of integration with government agencies, private landowners and developers, and philanthropic partners through multi-jurisdictional partnerships, emphasizing the economic and social value that natural systems generate for the built environment. It further describes how MCWD's work will be strengthened through such collaborative efforts to not only offer greater community impact, but to produce creative public-private funding opportunities that will leverage scarce resources and maximize benefits.

The origin of the Balanced Urban Ecology policy lies within the Minnehaha Creek subwatershed, in the most urbanized section of Minnehaha Creek in Hopkins and St. Louis Park. As the landscape in this stretch was developed over the past 80 years, wetlands were filled and the creek was straightened, creating a significant tension between the natural and built environments that degraded water quality, increased flood risk and limited recreational access.

Since 2010, the MCWD has been working to manage regional stormwater, and expand and connect the riparian greenway, in a manner that both recognizes and supports the built environment. The MCWD has been focusing on the most degraded section of Minnehaha Creek – between West 34th Street and Meadowbrook Lake in St. Louis Park and Hopkins – to implement a comprehensive corridor restoration that focuses on reducing pollutant loads, mitigating flashy hydrology, reconnecting the riparian corridor, and restoring the physical character of the stream channel in a manner that protects and connects natural resources to the urban fabric and surrounding communities.

This geography, known as the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, produced the highest pollutant loading per unit area of any other land area along the entire stream system. The effort to-date has yielded significant results, often through innovative public and private partnerships, resulting in hundreds of acres of regional stormwater management, nearly two miles of restored stream, over ten acres of wetland restoration, public access to over 50 acres of previously inaccessible green space, two miles of new trail network, and improved ecological integrity through a series of vegetative restoration and invasive species management.

### 325 Blake Road Greenway and Stormwater Management

In 2011, the District made a strategic acquisition of land at 325 Blake Road as part of a regional scale effort to establish the Minnehaha Greenway. This effort identified opportunities for area wide stormwater improvement, ecological restoration of the Minnehaha Creek riparian zone, and corridor linkage with upstream/downstream restoration projects. Portions of the site not utilized for watershed restoration would be sold for redevelopment to capture a return on the initial investment.

In July 2013, the Board of Managers ordered the 325 Blake Road Stormwater Management Project, taking advantage of the opportunity to manage stormwater runoff from approximately 260 acres of developed urban land at 325 Blake Road. The Minnehaha Creek Greenway expansion and regional stormwater effort requires approximately four (4) acres of the 325 Blake Road site to implement and involves the diversion of surrounding urban watersheds into the property, construction of on site management facilities to receive the runoff, and restoration of the riparian corridor for public access and trail connections.

The project includes two primary stormwater diversions – Powell Road and Lake Street – and construction of the on-site infiltration/filtration facilities. These projects are to be phased over a period of years:

- Powell Road Stormwater Diversion (St. Louis Park) – Design 2014; Construction 2015 (completed)
- Lake Street Stormwater Diversion (Hopkins) – Design 2015, Construction 2016-2018 (agreement with MCES and City in place for MCES construction as part of upcoming sanitary sewer work)
- 325 Blake Road Stormwater Facility (Hopkins) – 2018-2019

Regarding the main stormwater facility to be constructed on the 325 Blake Road site, the District has developed a pre and post project monitoring plan that will inform project design and establish a strong baseline

for future project effectiveness monitoring. Pre-project stormwater collection provides the District with valuable data that can both calibrate the model used to estimate volume and nutrient loads coming from the approximately 260 acres being diverted, and set the stage for effectiveness monitoring once the future facility has been constructed. Most importantly, these data will inform the design development of the future facility on the site to ensure that the most effective management practices are incorporated to remove particulate and dissolved phosphorus as well as sediment loads.

In order to effectively incorporate the future infrastructure and greenway enhancements on the 325 Blake Road site, the main stormwater facility will be planned and designed as an integrated component of the overall site redevelopment, as described in the RFQ.

In addition to the stormwater management components, the District initiated draft demolition planning in 2014-2015 in order to be prepared to immediately act in securing and/or clearing the site once the property becomes vacant. Layering in corridor plans for Blake Road, the potential Greenline Extension (SWLRT) light rail station area, and current tenant agreements, finalizing demolition plans and securing outside funding assistance has been a major priority throughout 2017, and will continue into 2018. With Board authorization, staff recently submitted applications for grant funds to the Met Council Tax Base Revitalization Account (TBRA), Hennepin County Environmental Response Fund (ERF) and Hennepin County Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and is anticipating initiating demolition in early 2018.

#### Solicitation for Master Developer

For nearly two years, the District has been working collaboratively with the City of Hopkins (City) and Hennepin County to outline a master development strategy – Blake Road Station TOD Early Implementation – that frames and layers the cornerstone 325 Blake Road site with other critical projects and sites throughout the Blake Road Corridor. Given the District's investment in 325 Blake Road and the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, a critical component to successful redevelopment and community transformation is an understanding of corridor connectedness.

Throughout numerous past studies and planning efforts, Blake Road was repeatedly identified as an area of great opportunity. With a diverse population base, proposed light rail transit station access, several underutilized properties, and connections to natural systems through Cottageville Park and the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, the Blake station area has strong redevelopment potential that has been described as catalyst through the County's Transit Station Area Action Plan (TSAAP). The Blake Road Station TOD Early Implementation plan advances this potential by identifying feasible development scenarios for multiple parcels within the corridor, including 325 Blake Road, and creates a shared vision and implementation roadmap for project partners to follow as a means of helping this area reach its full development potential.

The District, City and County are working in close partnership to select a master developer for the portion of the site that will not be used for greenway expansion and regional stormwater management. For the District's water resource goals relating to the creek corridor and the public's relationship to it, as well as the community redevelopment goals of the District's public partners, it is critical that this redevelopment promote connections with the surrounding community and revitalize the Blake Road corridor in Hopkins.

In order to ensure the development meets the vision of the partners, the District and City are seeking a development team with a shared commitment to the following guiding principles for the site:

- Creative approach to design that is thoughtful of the environment and the social relationships between residents and the larger community, and brings something vibrant and new;
- Embrace elements of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) based on its proximity to the Blake Road Station and the adjacent Green Line Extension. TOD parking ratios and shared parking are encouraged, as well as other transit-supportive uses such as jobs and retail;

- Feature Minnehaha Creek, the Greenway, and storm water management elements as central to the identity and orientation of the site;
- Encourage sustainable development;
- Provide open design that allows public access into the site so that Minnehaha Creek becomes a community amenity;
- Enhance physical and visual connections across Blake Road and to the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, Cedar Regional trail, and Cottageville park;
- Provide a variety of housing types, including ownership and rental for people at a mix of income levels. If mixed-income development cannot be accomplished within a particular development, shared common areas and amenity spaces between developments should be the goal.

The attached RFQ was developed to provide the District with the appropriate level of clarity from potential master developers in order to meet the vision, goals and principles of the District and City. The RFQ was developed in coordination with numerous advisors to the District and is currently in final draft review with City staff and the City Council, the Southwest Community Works Blake Road Station subcommittee, and District legal counsel. It is anticipated that any final revisions will be non-substantive, and will serve to provide clarifications to process of impact elements such as schedule for release and selection.

Upon release of the RFQ, which will provide a window of approximately 60-days for interested parties to respond, staff will continue to refine the process by which it will review responses, both internally and with public partners, and the criteria to evaluate respondents and select a development team with which to negotiate. The required response content, along with a general description of the selection process, is presented in the RFQ.

Once the process is complete, it is anticipated that the MCWD and selected developer will negotiate a Master Development Agreement (MDA), negotiate property conveyance, and work together with the City to engage in a master planning process throughout 2018, including a Master Planned Unit Development (PUD) and formal platting of the property.

Please refer to the RFQ for more detailed descriptions of the developer selection process and contracting requirements. The RFQ also defines in general terms the District's role in the redevelopment process and the timing of its conveyance of the property fee interest to the developer, and invites respondents to describe the relationship with the District that they might propose.

**Recommendation:**

Staff is recommending that the MCWD Board of Managers authorize release of the Request for Qualifications for Master Developer for the 325 Blake Road – Hopkins Cold Storage redevelopment site with such non-substantive edits to the document and schedule the District Administrator may determine, based on advice of MCWD legal counsel, Hopkins City Council and the Blake Road Station Subcommittee.

**Attachments:**

- 325 Blake Road – Hopkins Cold Storage Solicitation for Master Developer (Request for Qualifications)
  - Attachments are listed in the RFQ and are available for review upon Board request.



## RESOLUTION

---

**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 17-068

**TITLE:** **Authorization to release the Request for Qualifications for Master Developer for 325 Blake Road.**

- WHEREAS, the area between West 34<sup>th</sup> Street and Meadowbrook Lake has been determined to be one of the most degraded sections of Minnehaha Creek; and
- WHEREAS, the MCWD Board of Managers has designated this area, known as the “urban corridor”, as a high priority strategic geography for capital project implementation and programming; and
- WHEREAS, the MCWD Board of Managers has developed a series of strategic capital project initiatives within the urban corridor to advance goals of improving the ecological integrity of Minnehaha Creek, while reintegrating the stream corridor into the surrounding urban fabric; and
- WHEREAS, in 2011 the District acquired the 325 Blake Road property (the “Property”) for the purposes of stream restoration, stormwater management, corridor improvements, public land expansion and the opportunity to integrate redevelopment with these and related public purposes; and
- WHEREAS, the MCWD Board of Managers has adopted a policy “In Pursuit of a Balanced Urban Ecology”, establishing MCWD’s fundamental philosophy and way of doing business, including joining with others to pursue watershed management goals integrated with land planning; intensifying and maintaining focus in high priority areas; and being flexible and adaptive to new ways of doing business with partners, to effectively leverage assets;
- WHEREAS, the MCWD has progressed in its redevelopment efforts for the Property in areas of regional stormwater infrastructure planning and construction, Minnehaha Creek Greenway expansion, environmental remediation, demolition preparation and preliminary redevelopment planning;
- WHEREAS, the District partnered with the City of Hopkins and Hennepin County to conduct a master development strategy – Blake Road Station TOD Early Implementation – that frames and layers the Property as a redevelopment keystone along with other critical projects and sites throughout the Blake Road Corridor;
- WHEREAS, the MCWD, through its partnership with the City of Hopkins, as the local land use authority, has identified shared guiding principles for redevelopment of the site:
- Creative approach to design that is thoughtful of the environment, the social relationships between residents and the larger community, and brings something vibrant and new;
  - Embrace elements of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) based on its proximity to the Blake Road Station and the adjacent Green Line Extension. TOD parking ratios and shared parking are encouraged, as well as other transit-supportive uses such as jobs and retail;
  - Feature Minnehaha Creek, the Greenway, and storm water management elements as central to the identity and orientation of the site;
  - Encourage sustainable development;
  - Provide open design that allows public access into the site so that Minnehaha Creek becomes a community amenity;
  - Enhance physical and visual connections across Blake Road and to the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, Cedar Regional trail, and Cottageville park;

- Provide a variety of housing types, including ownership and rental for people at a mix of income levels with shared common areas and amenity spaces between developments.

WHEREAS; the MCWD drafted the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) in coordination with the City and Southwest Community Works Blake Road Station Subcommittee so that the document meets the vision and public goals of all partners;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers hereby authorizes the District Administrator to release the Request for Qualifications for Master Developer for the 325 Blake Road – Hopkins Cold Storage redevelopment site, with non-substantive edits to the document and schedule based on advice of MCWD legal counsel, Hopkins City Council and the Southwest Community Works Blake Road Station Subcommittee.

Resolution Number 17-068 was moved by Manager \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by Manager \_\_\_\_\_.  
Motion to adopt the resolution \_\_\_ ayes, \_\_\_ nays, \_\_\_ abstentions. Date: \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary Date: \_\_\_\_\_

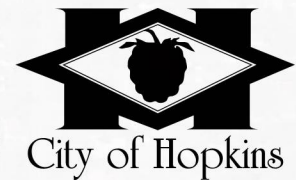


# 325 BLAKE RD - HOPKINS COLD STORAGE REDEVELOPMENT SITE

## Solicitation for Master Developer

### Request for Qualifications

An unparalleled development opportunity on SWLRT and the Minnehaha Creek Greenway



**DRAFT DOCUMENT - FOR REVIEW PURPOSES ONLY**



# REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

## SCHEDULE, DEADLINE, AND CONTRACT

Estimated RFQ Schedule	
Request for Qualifications issued	November 15, 2017
Pre-proposal meeting	November 30, 2017
Deadline for submission of questions	December 14, 2017
Responses to questions posted	December 22, 2017
Proposals due	January 24, 2018
Review proposals, Joint Working Group evaluation and short list	January 29 - February 14, 2018
Developer interviews and recommendation	February 26 - March 9, 2018
Developer selection	March 22, 2018
Negotiate terms and conditions	March - April 2018

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) reserves the right to extend or modify the above schedule, and will notice potential respondents who notified MCWD of intent and provided contact information (see below).

**Developers intending to submit a response are asked to inform the MCWD via email so they can be notified of any changes or clarifications to this RFQ. Emails should be sent to Michael Hayman at: [mhayman@minnehahacreek.org](mailto:mhayman@minnehahacreek.org).**

## PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING

An optional pre-proposal meeting will be held at Hopkins Center for the Arts (HCA) on **November 30, 2017 at 10:00 a.m.**

## PROPOSAL DEADLINE

Proposals are due in MCWD offices by 4:30 p.m. central time, **January 24, 2018**.

Proposals received after the deadline will not be accepted. The MCWD does not acknowledge receipt of proposals without written request. It is the respondent's responsibility to ensure a proposal is received in a timely manner.

Send proposals to:

**Michael Hayman, Planner & Project Manager  
Minnehaha Creek Watershed District  
15320 Minnetonka Blvd.  
Minnetonka, MN 55345**

Proposal requirements may be found in the RFQ Submission section of this document (page 19).

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions regarding this RFQ should be directed to:  
Michael Hayman, Planner & Project Manager  
952-471-8226  
[mhayman@minnehahacreek.org](mailto:mhayman@minnehahacreek.org)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>RFQ and Site Overview</b> .....	5
Development Opportunity.....	5
Development Objectives and Vision.....	6
Property Description.....	8
Minnehaha Greenway.....	8
Conceptual Site Plans.....	10
Public Financing Assistance.....	12
Developer/Staff Coordination.....	12
<b>Site Background and Information</b> .....	13
Property Details and Existing Site Conditions.....	13
Neighborhood Characteristics.....	16
Transportation Access.....	16
Area Employment.....	17
Existing Land Use/Zoning.....	18
<b>RFQ Submission and Proposal Selection</b> .....	19
Proposal Content.....	19
Proposal Selection.....	20
Project Approval Process.....	21
<b>Contracting Requirements</b> .....	22
Property Acquisition and Letter of Intent.....	22
Master Development Agreement.....	22
Other Requirements.....	23
Cost of Responding to RFQ.....	23
Right to Modify, Suspend and Waive.....	23
Disclosure and Disclaimer.....	24



# ATTACHMENTS

## ATTACHMENTS

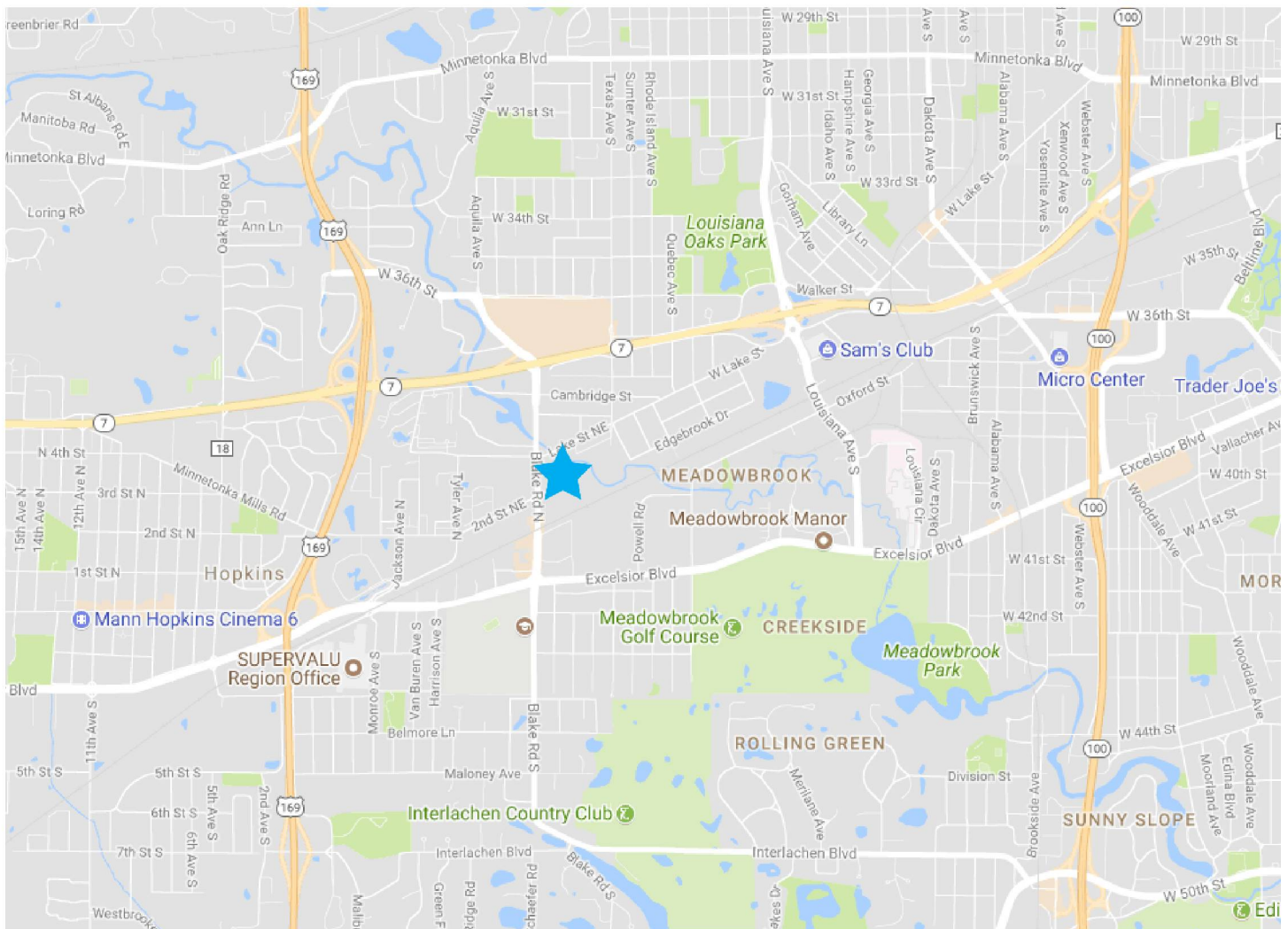
Attachments A-Y may be accessed by the following link: [www.minnehahacreek.org/325-blake-road-RFQ](http://www.minnehahacreek.org/325-blake-road-RFQ).

- A. Blake Road Corridor Small Area Plan
- B. Blake Road LRT Station Area Development Guidelines (Twin Cities LISC-CDI)
- C. Blake Road Station TOD Early Implementation
- D. Blake Road Station TOD Early Implementation Concept Site Plans
- E. Southwest LRT Community Works: Blake and Beltline Station Areas (ULI-TAP)
- F. Southwest Corridor Investment Framework
- G. Blake Station Transitional Station Area Action Plan (TSAAP)
- H. Blake Road Corridor Study
- I. Stormwater Management Feasibility Study for 325 Blake Road North
- J. Stormwater Treatment Concepts at 325 Blake Road
- K. 325 Blake Road Market Analysis Pollutant Loading Study
- L. Economic Impact of Centralizing Stormwater Management on the Cold Storage Site
- M. An Analysis of the Potential Demand for Residential and Commercial Uses on the Cold Storage Site
- N. In Pursuit of a Balanced Urban Ecology
- O. 2017 Watershed Management Plan
- P. Comprehensive Plan for the City of Hopkins, Minnesota
- Q. 325 Blake Road Survey
- R. Blake Road Station Renderings
- S. Community Profile
- T. Major Employers: Blake Area 2017
- U. Preliminary Master Development Agreement
- V. 325 Blake Road No Association Determination
- W. 325 Blake Road Phase I ESA
- X. 325 Blake Road Phase II ESA
- Y. 325 Blake Road Response Action Plan and Construction Contingency Plan

# RFQ & SITE OVERVIEW

## DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD), as owner, and the City of Hopkins (City), as a partner, are requesting qualifications to develop a transit-oriented neighborhood on the current Hopkins Cold Storage site at 325 Blake Road in Hopkins, Minnesota. This rare 17-acre site features the natural beauty of Minnehaha Creek, direct access to Blake Road and the Cedar Lake Regional Trail, and adjacency to both the Blake Road Station on the Green Line Extension and the newly-reimagined Cottageville Park.

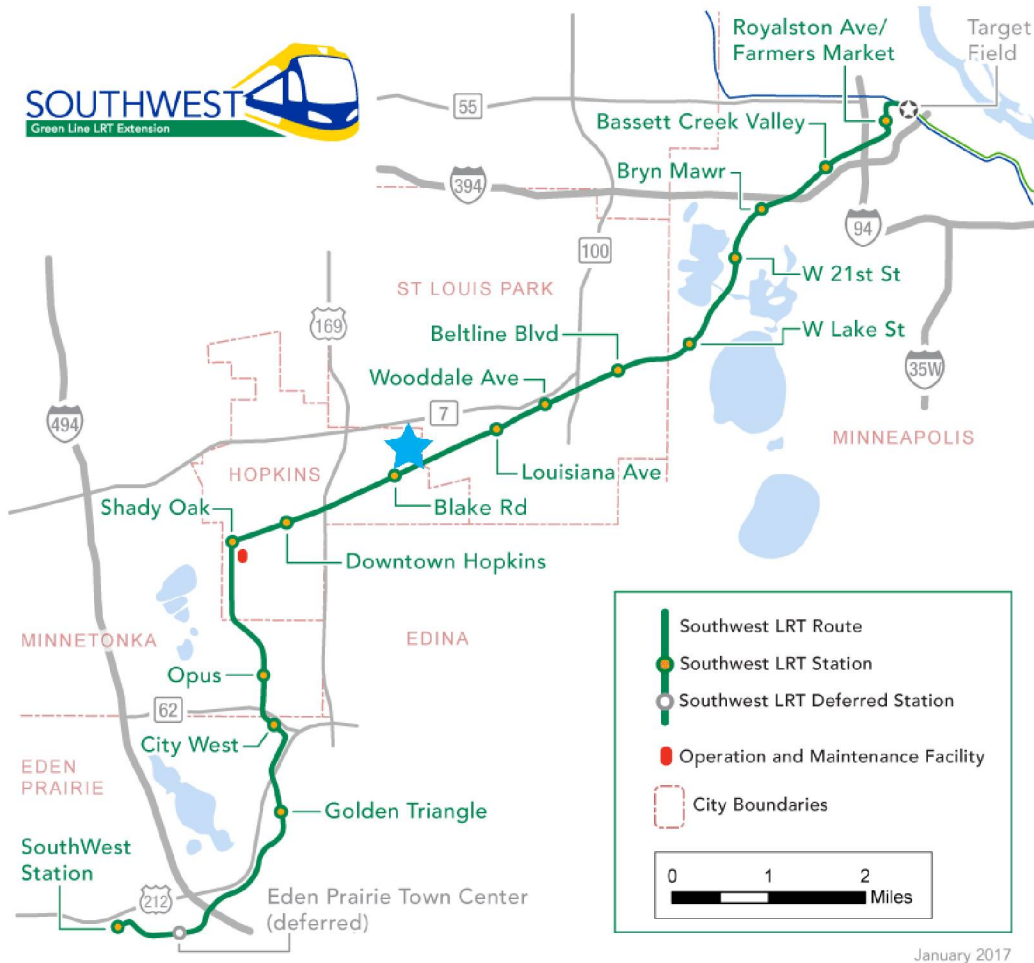


The Minnehaha Creek Watershed purchased 325 Blake Road in 2011 as a key piece of the Minnehaha Greenway, more than 50 acres of continuous green space along Minnehaha Creek through Hopkins and St. Louis Park. With plans to treat over 260 acres of regional stormwater and restore over 1,000 feet of Minnehaha Creek frontage, MCWD and the City seek a creative, qualified master developer to partner with on restoration and redevelopment of the site.

This redevelopment will be a critical site in a greater effort to revitalize the Blake Road corridor in Hopkins, the site of the Blake Road Station on the Green Line Extension-Southwest Light Rail (LRT) line and a host of other redevelopment work. The property offers a unique opportunity for mixed-use, transit-oriented development within a brief walk of vast amenities, transit connections and green space.

*(continued on next page)*





The 14.5-mile METRO Green Line Extension (SWLRT project) will operate on a route from downtown Minneapolis through the cities of St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka, and Eden Prairie. This area, known as the Southwest Corridor, contains a concentration of businesses including several of the state's largest employers. The Blake Road Station Area is adjacent to the 325 Blake Road site and will be connected to the site via grade separated crossing at Blake Road as part of the Cedar Lake Regional Trail. The SWLRT line is scheduled to open for passenger service in 2022.

## DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES AND VISION

MCWD and the City share a vision for the 325 Blake Road site as a catalytic opportunity for public and private investment within the Blake Road Station Area and Blake Road Corridor.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The MCWD and City seek a development team with a shared commitment to the following guiding principles for the site:

- Creative approach to design that is thoughtful of the environment, the social relationships between residents and the larger community, and brings something vibrant and new;
- Embrace elements of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) based on its proximity to the Blake Road Station and the adjacent Green Line Extension. TOD parking ratios and shared parking are encouraged, as well as other transit-supportive uses such as jobs and retail;
- Feature Minnehaha Creek, the Greenway, and storm water management elements as central to the identity and orientation of the site;
- Encourage sustainable development;
- Provide open design that allows public access into the site so that Minnehaha Creek becomes a community amenity;

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES (continued)

- Enhance physical and visual connections across Blake Road and to the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, Cedar Regional trail, and Cottageville Park;
- Provide a variety of housing types, including ownership and rental for people at a mix of income levels. If mixed-income development cannot be accomplished within a particular development, shared common areas and amenity spaces between developments should be the goal.

## DEVELOPMENT VISION

The City of Hopkins and community members have worked together to align their vision for this redevelopment site in a way that integrates this opportunity into the fabric of the community. MCWD supports this community vision its ability to achieve the goals set forth for this site. Please refer to the Hopkins Blake Road LRT Station Area Development Guidelines for specific recommendations from the community. The following are the over-arching goals as described by the City:

**Embrace many elements of TOD.** It is anticipated that the overall density of housing development on this site will be in the range of 30 to 90 units per acre with other transit-supportive uses being encouraged including jobs and retail, as the market allows. In addition to LRT, the development should build on all of the assets that surround the site including the proximity to Minnehaha Creek, Cottageville Park and the Minnehaha Creek Greenway (boardwalk and trail system); Knollwood Mall and the retail/restaurants on Blake Road; the Cedar Regional Trail system; and easy access to Mainstreet Hopkins.

**Open design.** Establish views to Minnehaha Creek and create an open and accessible environment for pedestrians, bikes and automobiles moving throughout the site. Opposite of a gated-community – the site should be inviting to the surrounding community while maintaining the importance of safety through design.

**A new neighborhood.** Create housing with a mix of incomes and a sense of inclusivity. The City of Hopkins is expecting that at least 20% of the housing units will be affordable. All efforts should be made to mix the affordable units with the market rate units. If financial barriers prevent that, site design should encourage interaction between buildings through shared common space. Larger units for families are encouraged, with a portion of the site potentially developed as owner-occupied housing.

**Creative approach to design.** Hopkins is a fully-developed city with opportunities for new development on this scale being a rarity. The expectation is a development that is extremely thoughtful of the environment, and the social relationships between residents and the larger community, resulting in a creative and vibrant design.

**Sustainable.** The development should make all efforts address elements of sustainability: site evaluation, energy and water efficiency, waste management, material selection, long-lasting construction techniques, and sustainability education.

**Zoning.** The site is currently zoned Industrial but is guided as Mixed-Use. The City of Hopkins acknowledges that existing zoning districts may not have the flexibility needed for development on a site as unique as this including its irregular shape, the plans for regional stormwater treatment, and the opportunity to achieve remarkable views and changes in grade. As a result, the City will consider using a Planned Unit Development (PUD) approach to better accommodate the redevelopment.

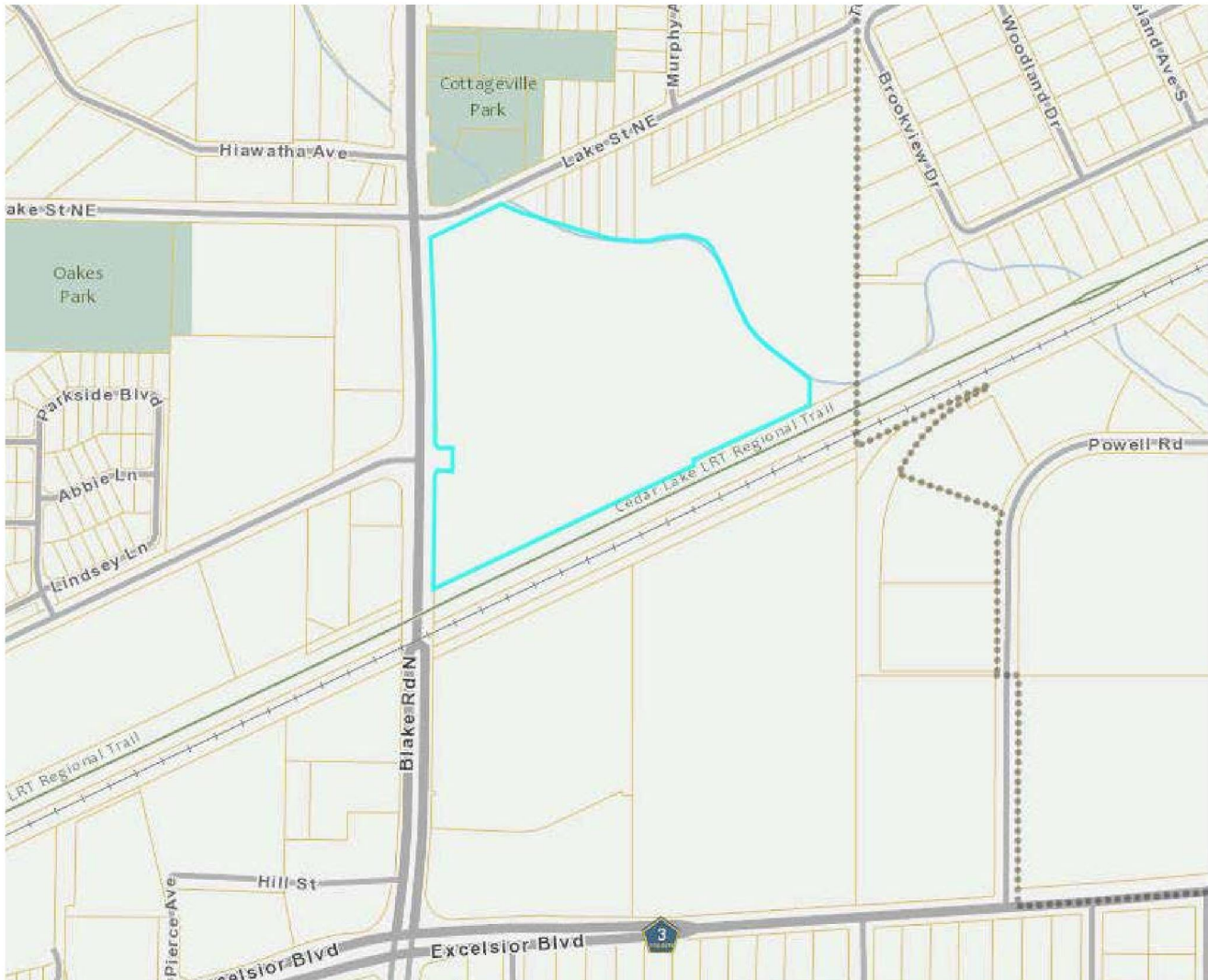
**Parking.** TOD parking ratios and shared parking are encouraged. Parking that can be utilized by visitors to the Minnehaha Creek Greenway and Cottageville Park is also encouraged.

***It is the expectation that the selected development team will work closely with the project partners, including the community, to refine the vision and maximize opportunities for the site.***



## PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The 325 Blake Road – Hopkins Cold Storage site consists of one 16.84 acre parcel located at the southeast quadrant of the Blake Road North (CSAH 20) and Lake Street Northeast intersection; less than ¼-mile from both State Highway 7 to the north and Excelsior Blvd. (CSAH 3) to the south, and within 1-mile of Highway 169. The property is bounded by approximately 1,100-feet of Minnehaha Creek, 1,100-feet of Blake Road and 1,200-feet of the Cedar Regional Trail / future SWLRT as shown in the illustration below. For more information on this parcel see Property Details and Existing Conditions section below and the property survey in [Attachment Q](#).



## MINNEHAHA CREEK GREENWAY

The MCWD’s overarching organizational strategy is founded in its Balanced Urban Ecology policy. This policy was established as the District’s fundamental philosophy and way of doing business – developed to guide all future planning and watershed management activities in order to achieve its mission of protecting and improving land and water.

The overarching strategy described in Balanced Urban Ecology is a vision of integration with government agencies, private landowners and developers, and philanthropic partners through multi-jurisdictional partnerships, emphasizing the economic and social value that natural systems generate for the built environment. It further describes how our work will be strengthened through these collaborative efforts to not only offer greater community impact, but to produce creative public-private funding opportunities that will leverage scarce resources and maximize benefits.

*(continued on next page)*



## MINNEHAHA CREEK GREENWAY (continued)

The origin of the Balanced Urban Ecology policy lies within the Minnehaha Creek subwatershed, in the most urbanized section of Minnehaha Creek in Hopkins and St. Louis Park. As the landscape in this stretch was developed over the past 80 years, wetlands were filled and the creek was straightened, creating a significant tension between the natural and built environments that degraded water quality, increased flood risk and limited recreational access.

Since 2010, the MCWD has been working to manage regional stormwater, and expand and connect the riparian greenway in a manner mutually beneficial to the built environment. The MCWD has been focusing on the most degraded section of Minnehaha Creek – between West 34th Street and Meadowbrook Lake in St. Louis Park and Hopkins – to implement a comprehensive corridor restoration that focuses on reducing pollutant loads, mitigating flashy hydrology, reconnecting the riparian corridor, and restoring the physical character of the stream channel in a manner that protects and connects natural resources to the urban fabric and surrounding communities.

This geography, known as the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, produced the highest pollutant loading per unit area of any other land area along the entire stream system. The effort to-date has yielded significant results, often through innovative public and private partnerships, resulting in hundreds of acres of regional stormwater management, nearly two miles of restored stream, over ten acres of wetland restoration, public access to over 50 acres of previously inaccessible green space, two miles of new trail network, and improved ecological integrity through a series of vegetative restoration and invasive species management.



The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District made a strategic acquisition of the 325 Blake Road site as the cornerstone piece of this regional scale effort to establish the Minnehaha Creek Greenway. This effort identified opportunities for area-wide stormwater improvement, ecological restoration of the Minnehaha Creek riparian zone and corridor linkage with upstream/downstream restoration projects.

*(continued on next page)*



## MINNEHAHA CREEK GREENWAY (continued)

The Minnehaha Creek Greenway expansion and regional stormwater effort requires approximately four (4) acres of the 325 Blake Road site to implement. The project consists of a stormwater management facility that treats over 260 acres of regional stormwater, diverted to the site through municipal storm sewer. The plan includes treatment of the 325 Blake Road site and should be integrated into the vision for the redevelopment, not as a separate stormwater treatment facility, but as an amenity that provides park and greenspace, inviting the surrounding community to the site to experience Minnehaha Creek and the Minnehaha Creek Greenway. For more information on this project see Property Details and Existing Conditions section below.

## CONCEPTUAL SITE PLANS

MCWD, in partnership with the City and Hennepin County, completed the Blake Road Station Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Early Implementation project in 2017 – an exploration of three sites along the Blake Corridor and their interaction with SWLRT. The project developed a set of principles and goals for the corridor as a whole and for each site, including the 325 Blake Road site. The partners explored urban design ideas and market conditions that will shape these sites and was complemented by an analysis by an Urban Land Institute-Minnesota Technical Advisory Panel (ULI-TAP). The project considered likely phasing, financing, and regulatory conditions required to implement the proposed scenarios resulting in two (2) conceptual site plans for 325 Blake Road.



### Concept 1 Components:

#### Commercial:

- 12,100 ft<sup>2</sup> total  
(60 spaces required @ 1 space/200 ft<sup>2</sup>)

#### Office:

- 22,000 ft<sup>2</sup> total  
(80 spaces required @ 1 space/275 ft<sup>2</sup>)

#### Residential:

- 643 units  
(643 spaces required @ 1 space/dwelling)

#### Community Room:

- 3,500 ft<sup>2</sup> total  
(14 spaces reserved)

#### Parking:

- 797 Structured
- 60 Surface

*(continued on next page)*



## CONCEPTUAL SITE PLANS (continued)



### Concept 2 Components:

#### Commercial:

- 3,600 ft<sup>2</sup> total  
(18 spaces required @ 1 space/200 ft<sup>2</sup>)

#### Office:

- 13,800 ft<sup>2</sup> total  
(55 spaces required @ 1 space/250 ft<sup>2</sup>)

#### Residential:

- 462 units (462 spaces required @ 1 space/dwelling)
- 40 townhomes (40 spaces required @ 1 space/dwelling)

#### Gallery/Community Room:

- 3,600 ft<sup>2</sup> total  
(14 spaces reserved)

#### Parking:

- 518 Structured
- 57 Surface
- 40 Townhome Garage

These concepts are meant to guide the development based on MCWD, City and community vision and should not be perceived as a precise or required plan for implementation. For more information about these concepts, guiding principles and the ULI-TAP guidance, see attachments C and D.



## **PUBLIC FINANCING ASSISTANCE**

To achieve the vision of the MCWD, City of Hopkins and the community, there may be a need for public financial assistance. The City/HRA is willing to consider applications for tax abatement or tax increment financing (TIF), should either be proved necessary for the desired development to move forward. The site has been evaluated as a TIF district and was found to qualify as a Redevelopment District under current statutory criteria. Projects may also qualify for public funds through DEED, the Metropolitan Council, or Hennepin County, and the MCWD and City will work to support grant applications to these, and possibly other agencies. As noted in the forthcoming Site Background and Information section, the MCWD is leading efforts to complete demolition of the existing facility and implement stormwater and greenway efforts. This work will be completed in partnership with the master developer.

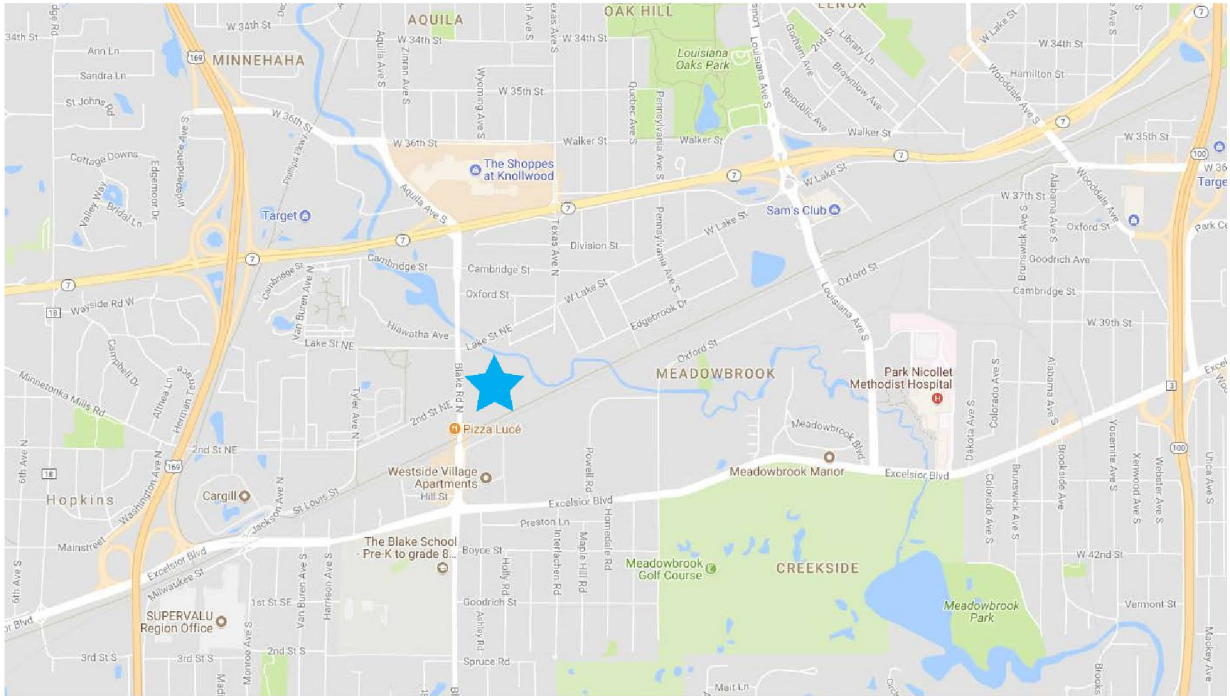
## **DEVELOPER/STAFF COORDINATION**

Due to the extensive planning and construction efforts completed to-date to achieve regional stormwater management and Minnehaha Creek Greenway expansion, as well as the need to refine the vision and maximize opportunities on this site, the selected development team will be expected to meet regularly with MCWD and City staff to coordinate design efforts, various approval processes, funding opportunities and schedules. In order to effectively achieve the vision and goals of the MCWD, City, community and development team, it is expected that the partners will embark on a fully integrated design process consisting of close collaboration. It is imperative that the MCWD and City understand the vision and goals of the developer as much as the developer does so of the partners, and work together to see each other's goals through. This coordination effort will best integrate the vision of the partners and ensure a successful development is achieved.

# SITE BACKGROUND & INFORMATION

## PROPERTY DETAILS AND EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

The 325 Blake Road site is located less than ¼-mile south of State Highway 7 at the SE ¼ of the NE ¼ of Section 19, Township 117 North, Range 21 West at the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Blake Road North (CSAH 20) and Lake Street Northeast. Minnehaha Creek adjoins the site on the north and east portion of the property.



The site has excellent visibility with approximately 1,100-feet of Blake Road frontage, 250-feet along Lake Street Northeast and 1,200-feet on the Cedar Regional Trail / future SWLRT. Vehicular ingress/egress will be maintained at the lighted intersection of Blake Road and 2nd Street Northeast, as well as the entrance off of Lake Street Northeast. Multimodal pedestrian and bicycle access will be improved through the addition of a new trail network as part of the Blake Road reconstruction project and the connections provided to the Cedar Regional Trail and Cottageville Park.

Address: 325 Blake Road North

PID: 1911721140002

Parcel Area: 16.84 acres (733,621 sq ft)

Characteristics: Occupied by an industrial cold storage facility and corresponding parking and trucking lanes

The site is flat, low-lying area and is approximately 10 feet lower in elevation compared to Blake Road North and the adjoining railroad corridor. The site is at an elevation of approximately 908 to 912 feet above mean sea level. Surface drainage is presently directed towards the municipal stormwater sewer system.

Published references note the surface geology at the Site as outwash from the Des Moines Lobe and Grantsburg Sublobe Deposits (Twin Cities Formation). The outwash consists of sand, loamy sand, and gravel overlain by loess less than four feet thick (Meyer and Hobbs, 1989). Surficial bedrock in the vicinity of the site consists of the Platteville and Glenwood Formations that consist of fine-grained limestone with thin shale partings (Olsen and Bloomgren, 1989). Depth to bedrock in the vicinity of the Site is at approximately 51 to 100 feet below grade (Bloomgren, Cleland, Olsen, 1989).

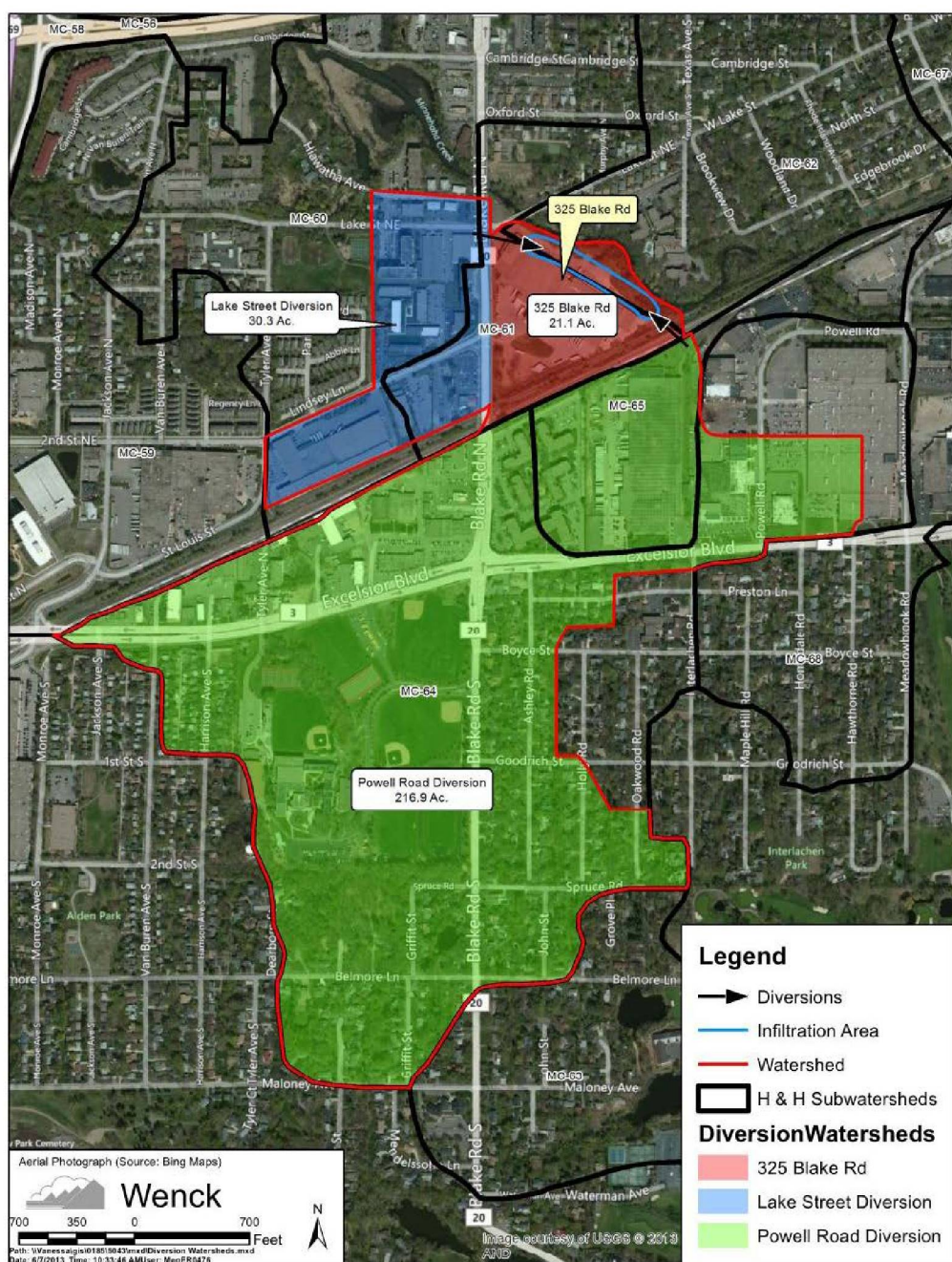
The general direction of regional groundwater flow at the site is reported to be east toward the Mississippi River (Kanivetsky, 1989). Local conditions indicate the groundwater flow is to the northwest due to Minnehaha Creek adjacent to the north. Depth to regional groundwater is noted to be approximately 10 to 15 feet below ground surface in soil borings conducted on the property (see attached environment reports).



## GREENWAY AND STORMWATER

As described earlier, for years the MCWD has focused its efforts in the in the most urbanized section of Minnehaha Creek in Hopkins and St. Louis Park, now referred to as the Minnehaha Creek Greenway. The 325 Blake Road site is the keystone project within the Greenway and the culmination of all of this work, providing an opportunity to connect upstream and downstream work through an expanded open space.

The 325 Blake Road Stormwater Management Project was initiated by the MCWD in 2013 and includes the diversion of two (2) regional drainage areas into the site. The Powell Road diversion was constructed in 2015 and delivers approximately 216 acres of regional drainage to the site. The storm sewer is presently bulk-headed and will become operational once the facility has been constructed at 325 Blake Road. The Lake Street diversion is in active construction as part of the Metropolitan Council sanitary sewer project and will deliver approximately 30 acres of regional drainage to the site, again bulk-headed until the facility becomes operational.





## *GREENWAY AND STORMWATER (continued)*

MCWD, in collaboration with partner agencies, is funding this regional stormwater management project, including construction of the treatment facility at 325 Blake Road site. Stormwater management for the redevelopment of this site is anticipated to be integrated into the regional facility. The final scale and scope of the stormwater facility is still to be determined, but the MCWD has calculated the area necessary to provide regional treatment and create the Greenway expansion is approximately four (4) acres. It is critical that this area be integrated into the overall vision for the site and the planned redevelopment. The concept plans provided as part of this RFQ consider the size, scale and general location of the stormwater treatment facility and demonstrate how the facility can be integrated into the development as an amenity but are not necessarily representative of the final design (e.g. type of treatment facility).

## *ENVIRONMENTAL*

The MCWD has conducted extensive environmental investigations on the site in preparation for the natural resource improvements as well as the redevelopment. Most recently, in August 2017, the MCWD completed both Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) and drafted a Response Action Plan (RAP) and Construction Contingency Plan (CCP). These investigations and reports have been reviewed by the appropriate State agencies and are provided as attachments W, X and Y.

The MCWD also received a No Association Determination (NAD) from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) VIC Program in December 2011 due to an off-site petroleum release that has migrated to the site. The MCWD worked with the MPCA to update the NAD during all subsequent site activities and investigations including 2013, 2014 and 2015.

It is anticipated that the MCWD will partner with the development team to ensure implementation of environmental initiatives such as remediation and mitigation. The MCWD has developed the necessary plans and is awaiting grant funding in order to successfully implement. This will be done so in a way that reflects the developer's needs for excavation, location, final site grades, etc.

## *DEMOLITION/CLEARING*

The 325 Blake Road site was developed with the current commercial building in 1950. Over the years, the building has been expanded and asphalt and gravel parking areas were constructed. The existing facility is approximately 277,000 square feet and consists of a concrete block building at-grade with the first floor at dock level. The building is occupied by approximately 20 separate climate-controlled storage rooms. Asbestos was a common insulation media during the era of construction and is present throughout the freezer facility.

Demolition of the industrial freezer is necessary to advance both site restoration and the reconstruction of Blake Road (see below section on Blake Road Reconstruction). With the reconstruction of Blake Road scheduled to commence in 2018, the building must be removed to avoid conflict with road reconstruction and delay the ability of the City and County to complete their road project. Further, clearing the site in 2018 will allow the development team greater flexibility in site visioning and planning.

It is the intent of the MCWD to deliver the site in a clean condition, prepared for site restoration and redevelopment. MCWD and City are working together to explore multiple avenues for financial assistance with demolition, asbestos mitigation and soil remediation. The partners are presently seeking funding assistance from a variety of State and local agencies with a goal of initiating demolition activities in early 2018.

*(continued on next page)*

## **DEMOLITION/CLEARING (continued)**

It is expected that the selected master developer will work closely with MCWD and City staff to coordinate demolition planning including elements such as phasing and staging. This coordination will provide for ease of transition as the site moves from industrial facility to restoration and redevelopment. Depending on success of grant applications during the present cycle, the developer may be asked to assist MCWD and City staff in development of materials in order to seek additional funds. Lastly, it is anticipated that the development team will have expertise and experience in demolition and site preparation and will provide their professional opinion to assist with efficient and effective clearing.

## **SITE INFRASTRUCTURE (UTILITIES, ROADS, ETC)**

Existing onsite utilities include sanitary sewer, storm sewer, gas service, and overhead electrical lines. It is anticipated that the majority of the existing utilities will be removed/abandoned during demolition. The overhead electrical lines are scheduled to be buried as part of the Blake Road reconstruction project. A portion of the storm sewer system will remain in place for interim stormwater management until the regional stormwater treatment basin is constructed.

It is anticipated that the development team will work with the City through the master PUD process to determine infrastructure needs, funding mechanisms (TOD grant funding, TIF), and who the responsible entity will be for ownership and maintenance.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS**

The neighborhoods surrounding this parcel contain a wide variety of uses and housing types. Major commercial and institutional uses include The Blake School, EDCO, 43 Hoops and Knollwood Mall. Neighborhood and area-serving businesses include Pizza Luce, Goodwill, and Walgreens. Several ethnic and fast food options are also found nearby.

Housing in the neighborhood is even more diverse, ranging from mid to upper-income single family homes in the Interlachen neighborhood to naturally-occurring affordable rental housing in the larger apartment developments along portions of the Blake corridor. Recently, newer infill owner-occupied housing was constructed in the Parkside development as well as the recent construction of Oxford Village apartments by PPL, just north of Cottageville Park.

While historically the development pattern in the Blake corridor did not embrace Minnehaha Creek as an amenity, that is changing through both public and private investments aimed at taking advantage of the natural beauty and connection opportunities that the Creek and Minnehaha Creek Greenway provide. Cottageville Park, a collaboration between the MCWD and the City, expanded a small pocket park with no creek frontage into a community park with full amenities including a pavilion, play areas, community garden and opportunities to explore the creek bed. The park is adjacent to the 325 Blake Road site on the northern boundary (Lake Street)

One of the strengths of the neighborhood is its diversity. In addition to a wide range of incomes in the corridor, there are over 45 languages spoken by its residents. A strong sense of community exists thanks to grassroots efforts to provide opportunities to meet and connect with neighbors at numerous social and civic events.

## **TRANSPORTATION ACCESS**

As noted earlier, the Blake Corridor maintains strong multimodal transportation opportunities, with planned improvements making site access and movement even better including a reconstructed Blake Road, the construction of the SWLRT transit line, and improvements to pedestrian and bicycle transportation through the enhanced Cedar Lake regional Trail and new multiuse trails on Blake Road.

*(continued on next page)*



## **TRANSPORTATION ACCESS (continued)**

### *BLAKE ROAD RECONSTRUCTION*

Blake Road is scheduled to be reconstructed in 2018/2019. The project will reduce the road width designated for cars (without impacting traffic flow) while adding in multi-use trails, pedestrian furniture and ornamental lighting and landscaping throughout the entire corridor. The road project will greatly enhance the aesthetics, safety and functionality of the corridor while improving access and mobility to the site. More information on the reconstruction of Blake Road can be found in the Blake Road Corridor Study (attachment H).

### *SWLRT BLAKE STATION AREA PLANS*

The Hennepin County Southwest LRT Community Works program worked to create 17 individual Transitional Station Area Action Plans (TSAAP) that comprise the Southwest Corridor investment framework. The Southwest Corridor investment framework acts as a living document that guides the public and private sector investments necessary to facilitate the evolution of the station areas into transit-oriented developments with a unique sense of place that relate positively and synergistically with the Southwest Corridor as a whole.

The results of this process are action plans that will assist the public and private sector in understanding infrastructure investments that are needed in the near term to improve business and housing conditions, and in the future to enable the station areas to achieve their long-term vision.

For information on the transitional station area plans for the Blake Road Station, see attachment G or visit: <http://www.swlrtccommunityworks.org/explore-corridor/stations/blake-road-station>.

### *BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN TRAIL*

The site will be well-served by bicycle and pedestrian connections planned for the area. In addition to the multi-use trail that will be constructed as part of the 2018/2019 Blake Road reconstruction project, the Cedar Lake Regional Trail will be re-established as part of the Green Line Extension (Southwest LRT) project and new bike lanes established on local streets.

## **AREA EMPLOYMENT**

There are several large and mid-size employers in the area including SuperValu, EDCO, Park Nicollet-Methodist Hospital, Target and Japs Olson as well as numerous destination businesses. The area also includes the Excelsior Crossings campus. This office development, originally occupied by Cargill, is in the process of being leased to several new tenants. The 760,000 square feet of class A space creates an opportunity for thousands of well-paying jobs within walking distance of the site.

## EXISTING LAND USE/ZONING

Comprehensive Plan: Mixed Use

Current Zoning: General Industrial (I-2)

Anticipated Zoning: Mixed-Use w/ Planned Unit Development Overlay

### HOPKINS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The City's Comprehensive Plan designates this site for Mixed Use. The Mixed Land Use category is intended to capture anticipated redevelopment initiatives associated with the proposed LRT stations. Each station area is likely to redevelop in a mix of housing and commercial uses. The Hopkins Station Area Plan completed in 2008 addresses preferred density ranges and uses at each LRT station. Additional planning efforts have also addressed station locations. The East Hopkins Land Use and Market Study provides a framework for future land uses near the Blake Station Area. The Hopkins Station Area Plan and East Hopkins Land Use and Market study both support mixed use development and are reflected in the land use plan. The primary focus of the Blake Road Station area is to provide higher density uses near and around the proposed LRT station. Desired uses include a mix of high density housing with retail commercial and offices.

### ZONING

It is anticipated that this property will be rezoned to Mixed Use with a PUD overlay as part of the approvals for redevelopment on this site. More detailed information about the City's Mixed Use District and the regulatory requirements associated with it can be found in Section 543 of the City's Zoning Code: <http://www.hopkinsmn.com/weblink8/0/doc/112463/Page1.aspx>.

The intent of the Planned Unit Development process is to allow greater flexibility in the development of land than would be possible under a conventional zoning district. The decision to zone property to a PUD is a public policy decision for the Hopkins City Council. The expectation is that the PUD will be of higher quality than traditional development and meet several City and community goals, as described throughout this document.



# RFQ SUBMISSION & PROPOSAL SELECTION

## PROPOSAL CONTENT

Please prepare a response of no more than 30 pages including appendices. The response text must contain responses specific to the submittal requirements listed below. The appendices may contain resumes, sample project graphics, references, etc.

Submittals should clearly demonstrate the capability, knowledge, experience and financial capacity to realize a signature development on this important site including the following:

- Cover letter including the developer's name and primary representative's contact information and signature.
- Identification of development team including, but not limited to, description of the lead development firm, specifics on the source of capital for development activities, and project team consultants. Please include resumes of appropriate principals and projects leads and descriptions of the respective roles.
- Describe how your team envisions the relationship among the MCWD, the City, and the master developer based upon the background provided above and in the appendices. Specifically, address the following:
  - Describe your vision of a successful development. What are your specific expectations of the MCWD and City to achieve that development?
  - What would you envision as the set of formal agreements establishing the roles, rights and obligations of the MCWD, the City and the master developer?
  - Describe the anticipated financial arrangement between the MCWD, the City, and the master developer. Identify the anticipated expenditures in the next two to three years. When would the master developer purchase and close on the property, or parts thereof?
  - Describe your capacity and plans for financing components of the site. How do the master developer and MCWD arrive at a fair price for the land?
- Describe how you will work with the MCWD and City to achieve the goals of these two jurisdictions. Consider items such as:
  - How the development team will work to deliver a project that meets the vision set forth by the MCWD and City, as described within this document.
  - How the developer will integrate the redevelopment with the Minnehaha Creek Greenway and the regional stormwater project. Demonstrate an understanding of the MCWD's Balanced Urban Ecology philosophy and the asset of stormwater and natural spaces in creating vibrant development.
  - How the site might best leverage the nearby Southwest LRT transit station and Cedar Regional Trail.
  - Demonstrate an ability to function in a multi-jurisdictional setting.
- Summarize and describe past experience by this development team that are most applicable to this site, especially transit-oriented development. Address the following:
  - Qualifications to accomplish a project of this size and scope, including experience in development of mixed-use projects featuring the type of housing, retail and office anticipated on the site.
  - Organizational and project management experience and vision for integrating cohesive design elements into a community project such as this.
  - Understanding of the nuances of creating an inviting development by incorporating a pedestrian focus, transit-oriented design, mixed use and mixed income, cohesive design elements, structured parking, public green space, and sustainable development.
  - Demonstrated ability to engage the community to achieve the intended development outcomes.

*(continued on next page)*

## PROPOSAL CONTENT (continued)

- Describe the financial ability of the development team to complete a development of this scale including, demonstrating the financial wherewithal and level of commitment to complete a project of this size.
  - Indicate intent to request public funds and experience applying for and using tax increment financing and other government funding mechanisms such as low-income housing tax credits, Housing Revenue Bonds and grants.
- Describe the phasing of the redevelopment, specifically addressing elements such as the general calendar of development and what significant decision points are anticipated.
- Description of the unique characteristics and design elements the development team feel are important for this site.
- Examples of past public engagement activities that might be applicable to this site and location.
- References

Respondents must submit copies of the qualifications as follows: one (1) unbound copy, ten (10) bound copies, and one electronic version (Microsoft Office compatible, on a USB drive). Materials and USB drives will not be returned.

## PROPOSAL SELECTION

MCWD will review proposals and select a master developer partner. It will do so in close consultation with the City and intends to consult as well with other public agencies with an interest in the development and its coordination with surrounding public and private investments.

The MCWD expects the selection process to include the following steps:

1. Evaluation of RFQ submissions by a committee of staff from both MCWD and the City. This review will focus on completeness and consistency with the criteria listed above. The staff committee will determine whether or not the team is qualified based on the criteria listed above with only those firms that have demonstrated qualifications being considered further;
2. Formal review by a joint working group comprising members of both entities' policy making bodies (MCWD Board of Managers and City Council). This group will receive input from the staff committee to assist in its review and deliberations;
3. The working group will recommend up to four (4) development teams to advance as finalists and will present the merits of said finalists to the Southwest Community Works Blake Road Subcommittee for advisory input. The Community Works subcommittee is an advisory committee comprised of Hennepin County Commissioners, local municipal officials (Edina, Hopkins, St. Louis Park), and local community and business representatives;
4. The working group will interview finalists, provide site tours, discuss the merits of each developer team, and provide an opinion of selection to the MCWD Board of Managers;
5. Final selection will be made by the MCWD Board of Managers, on advice and counsel of the joint working group. The MCWD may or may not select a developer with which to enter into a Master Development Agreement.

*(continued on next page)*



## **PROPOSAL SELECTION (continued)**

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the submissions and select development teams to be interviewed by the joint working group. This list of evaluation criteria is provided as an example of elements for deliberation and is not intended to be exhaustive:

### **PAST EXPERIENCE**

- Proven qualifications to accomplish a project of this size and scope, including experience in development of mixed-use projects featuring the type of housing, retail and office anticipated on the site.
- Proven organizational and project management experience and vision for integrating cohesive design elements into a community project such as this.
- Demonstrated ability to work in a dynamic partnership setting to achieve the vision for a particular project or initiative.
- Understanding of the nuances of creating an inviting development by incorporating a pedestrian focus, transit-oriented design, mixed use and mixed income, cohesive design elements, integrating design with creek corridor, related public green space and public movement within and through that space, structured parking, and sustainable development.
- Demonstrated ability to engage the community to achieve the intended development outcomes.

### **FINANCIAL ABILITY**

- Financial wherewithal and level of commitment to complete a project of this scale.
- Proven experience applying for and using tax increment financing and other government funding mechanisms such as low-income housing tax credits, Housing Revenue Bonds and grants.

### **VISION**

- Demonstrated a clear understanding of the vision for the community, as described by the MCWD and the City through this solicitation, and confirmed that the vision of the master developer aligns with that of partners.
- Demonstrated a vision that is creative, inspirational, comprehensive, and forward-thinking.
- Demonstrated flexibility and the willingness to work with the community to refine the vision for this site.

## **PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESS**

It is anticipated that the selected developer will work with the MCWD and City to engage in a master planning process throughout the second and third quarters of 2018. A community engagement component will be necessary, and the MCWD and City will seek input from the selected developer on how best to engage the public on this project. The City anticipates a Master PUD and Platting of the property will be complete in 2018.

# CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS

## PROPERTY ACQUISITION AND LETTER OF INTENT

The Property described as follows (**Attachment Z**) will be sold to the selected developer by limited warranty deed. The MCWD will retain land rights, by fee ownership of one or more outlots or by easement, in land riparian to Minnehaha Creek for two purposes: to preserve native vegetation, habitat and non-motorized trails, and to maintain a wetland/stormwater basin adjacent to the riparian zone to benefit the water quality condition of the creek.

Among other requirements of this RFQ, responses must state:

- The respondent's proposed framework (alternative frameworks) and timeline to structure the determination of land purchase price and the acquisition, subdivision and development of the Property;
- Contingencies that must be addressed before title transfer of the Property; and
- The developer's ability to close on purchase of the Property.

The MCWD is willing to consider alternative structures for title transfer on the land or subdivided parts thereof, as a means to coordinate with the developer's financing or orderly development. Any alternative structure may not, however, serve as a means to shift market risk or other developer's risk to the MCWD.

The MCWD will manage all responses in accordance with the Minnesota Data Practices Act (DPA) and, in particular, section 13.591, subdivision 3(b) of the DPA. If a respondent believes that any data in its response are subject to a not-public classification, it is responsible to identify those data and provide the justification for that classification. The MCWD will evaluate any such request in accordance with the DPA.

## MASTER DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

On the MCWD's selection of a preferred developer, the MCWD, the City of Hopkins and the developer will negotiate a Master Development Agreement ("MDA"). The purposes of the MDA are to:

- Set parameters within which the Property is to be subdivided and developed in order to meet City and MCWD requirements;
- Establish phasing of subdivision, property transfer and development;
- Identify development contingencies;
- Establish procedures and responsibilities to address those contingencies; and
- Coordinate closing with resolution of contingencies.

On its selection of the developer, the MCWD, in coordination with the City, would undertake to negotiate the terms of Property conveyance exclusively with the developer and would give the developer formal permission to access the Property to conduct its due diligence. The MDA or associated agreements would also include elements such as an outline for applying for land use and zoning changes and approvals as well as tax increment financing. Responses will outline how mutual commitments may be structured.

The MCWD and the City may separately negotiate a two-party agreement establishing roles, responsibilities and funding allocations for any public actions relating to the sale, subdivision and development of the Property.

Aside from terms governing the sale and transfer of the land and the MCWD's protection of its rights in that part of the land in which it will reserve an ownership or easement interest, the rights and responsibilities that the MCWD will reserve are those that allow it to achieve the public water resources interests within its statutory mandate. These include how the development is integrated within the Minnehaha Creek corridor, how it supports the MCWD's existing investments within the corridor and the impact of the development itself on water quality and regional stormwater management. Note that independently, the MCWD will retain its regulatory jurisdiction over the development as it may concern site disturbance during construction, permanent water quality and quantity impacts, floodplain impact and any other matters within the scope of the MCWD's adopted rules.



## **OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

Beyond the MDA process, respondents are responsible to identify additional requirements and contingencies to which its purchase and development of the Property may be subject. Other requirements may vary depending upon the type of development proposed and financing mechanisms used (i.e. public investment). An example of other requirements includes, but is not limited to, elements such as due diligence, environmental considerations, inclusionary housing, accessibility standards, utilities, construction standards, and so on. Respondents unfamiliar with standard requirements are urged to seek further clarification from the MCWD and City.

## **COST OF RESPONDING TO RFQ**

The MCWD reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses, in part or in whole, and to waive any minor informalities, as deemed in the MCWD's best interests. The MCWD reserves the right to enter into binding agreements with the developer proposing to develop the Property in the manner most responsive to the terms of this RFQ and the interests of the MCWD and the City, at the best purchase price. In determining the most advantageous proposal, the MCWD reserves the right to consider matters such as, but not limited to, consistency with the MCWD's watershed management plan goals and the City's comprehensive land use plan, the quality of the developer's completed projects similar to the proposed development, the developer's business reputation and financial abilities, the timing and risk allocation of the developer's proposed land conveyance and development framework, and the potential financial return to the MCWD.

This RFQ does not obligate the respondent to enter into a relationship with the MCWD, nor does it obligate the MCWD to enter into a relationship with any entity that responds or limit the MCWD's right to enter into a relationship with any entity that does not respond to this RFQ. In its sole discretion, prior to entering into a MDA, purchase agreement or other binding agreement, the MCWD may discontinue negotiation with the selected developer. The MCWD also reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to cancel this RFQ at any time for any reason.

Each respondent is solely responsible for all costs that it incurs to respond to this RFQ and, if selected, to engage in the process including, but not limited to, costs associated with preparing a response or participating in any presentations or negotiations related to this RFQ, negotiating the MDA, purchase agreement and any other terms of the contemplated transaction, and performing due diligence related to its acquisition of the Property.

## **RIGHT TO MODIFY, SUSPEND, AND WAIVE**

The MCWD reserves the right to:

- Modify and/or suspend any or all elements of this RFQ;
- Request additional information or clarification from any or all respondents and allow for
- Correction of errors or omissions;
- Waive any unintentional defects as to form or content of the RFQ or any response submitted.

Any substantial change in a requirement of the RFQ will be disseminated in writing to all parties that have expressed an interest in preparing a response. Any and all information requested in addenda must be returned with the developer's response to be considered responsive.

## **DISCLOSURE AND DISCLAIMER**

This RFQ is for informational purposes only. Any action taken by the MCWD in response to proposals made pursuant to this RFQ, or in making any selection or failing or refusing to make any selection, is without liability or obligation on the part of the MCWD or any of its officers, employees or advisors. This RFQ is being provided by the MCWD without any warranty or representation, expressed or implied, as to its content, accuracy or completeness. Any reliance on the information contained in this RFQ, or on any communications with MCWD officials, employees or advisors, is at the developer's own risk. Prospective developers must rely exclusively on their own investigations, interpretations and analysis in connection with this matter. This RFQ is made subject to correction of errors, omissions, or withdrawal without notice.