



## Request for Proposals (RFP) for Economic Development Consulting Services

City of Countryside, Illinois

### Countryside Commercial Corridor Marketing Assessment & Redevelopment Strategy

Date: November 29, 2007

Responses to the RFP are due before 5:00 PM on Thursday, January 3, 2008

#### Introduction:

The City of Countryside, Illinois is located in the heart of the western suburbs, minutes from Downtown Chicago, O'Hare and Midway Airports. The City is served by major roads Interstate 55 (the Stevenson), Interstate 294 (the Tri-state), US 45 (LaGrange Rd.) and Historic Route 66 (Joliet Rd.). The city is called "Chicago's Western Gateway" because it is in Countryside where motorists see the Chicago skyline emerging from the horizon while traveling east on Route 66.

Countryside is a major regional retail destination and a residential suburban Cook County city of more than 6,000 residents. It has:

- 475 businesses, 450 lodging rooms and approximately 50 dining establishments.
- 13 auto/cycle dealers selling some 17 brands and over one million square feet of retail shopping space.
- Access to more than a quarter million people residing within a 5 mile radius with a median annual household income of almost \$95,000.

This strong retail base allows the City to deliver a strong assortment of City services to residents who enjoy the support of high quality living without forcing the community to rely on municipal real estate tax from businesses or residential properties.

#### New economic development opportunities:

The Countryside geography has long been considered the center of auto related activities for southwest Cook County. Globally and nationally the auto industry has been changing for years and manufacturers have been forced to place more stringent requirements on dealers to build larger facilities, consolidate brands and reduce the number of overall outlets. The City's dealerships are now beginning to experience this change. As a result, the City is realizing new opportunities and requests for the city's premium real estate.



The strategic expansion of some auto dealers and effective new uses of premium economically well situated property will drive new sustainable sources of revenue including new retail, hospitality and entertainment opportunities for years to come in Countryside.

Although the City seeks positive changes for the future, the auto industry will continue to be an important part of the community that the City will remain committed to working with. However, in this new century, the City must embrace the present opportunity to strategically focus on a future that is more diverse and flexible to capture the available economic and global opportunities.

Other areas of interest for the City include plans to tap into new prospects made available with population and income growth in the City's hospitality industry. Most exciting is a renewed interest in historical tourism with ties to Historic Route 66 (Joliet Road).

#### Purpose of the Project

The City is committed to seizing these new opportunities with an aggressive effort to revitalize and expand its commercial corridors. We need to engage with a new "development" vision to help Countryside maintain and grow its sales/hotel tax revenues. Professionals with the resources and industry knowledge are needed to develop an economic assessment of our City's primary commercial corridors in addition to an action oriented economic development strategy for each.

#### Primary commercial corridors:

- All of Joliet Road within city limits
- All of LaGrange Road within city limits
- All of East Avenue within city limits
- All of Plainfield between East Ave. and Brainard

The City has already conducted an economic baseline study and market trade area analysis. The Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2004 and no major changes in land use are expected. The Comprehensive Plan provides general improvement recommendations for commercial land uses in the City.

The next step is a Market Assessment (MA) to guide a continued economic redevelopment strategy that reasonably reflects the local and regional market conditions. This document will address what ought to be done and how the City can do it. The MA will help decision-makers and private investors understand the City's position and potential in the market vis-à-vis other competing geographies.

Then, based on the MA, the City will issue a Request for Proposals to develop a visual representation of the redevelopment plan including strong streetscapes, plantings, gateways and



graphics to help brand and position the City. This future project component will help the City market itself to prospective developers.

#### Services Requested:

1. Conduct an economic Market Assessment (MA) of Countryside's four primary commercial corridors to determine their competitive position in the regional marketplace and prospects for future growth.
2. Create a realistic corridor specific redevelopment vision and implementation strategy to help the City and private investors make short- and long-term development, capital and zoning decisions that contribute to the well being of the City.

#### Specific considerations:

The City would like to explore the following specific considerations and opportunities:

1. Link the land use improvement recommendations in the 2005 Comprehensive Land Use Plan to specific redevelopment actions.
2. Discuss continued development options for the 400,000 sq. ft. Countryside Plaza.
3. Assess the potential redevelopment of industrial uses to retail.
4. Explore the redevelopment of idle and underdeveloped parcels.
5. Assess the impact of the proposed IDOT intersection improvements on LaGrange Road at Joliet Road and 55th Street.
6. Create and save Route 66 icons to build a visitor destination.
7. Development of a Route 66 visitor center and related tourism spin-offs.
8. Investigate opportunities for new sit-down dining and entertainment venues.
9. Maximize the impact of the Lagrange Road ITEP streetscape improvement grant
10. Encourage new moderate retail options.

#### Deliverables:

1. Market assessment of Countryside's commercial corridors
2. A realistic, corridor specific redevelopment strategy and implementation plan
3. Recommendations for public and private financing and capital improvements.

#### Available Resources:

1. 2004 Comprehensive Plan & Sub-area improvement maps (on internet)
2. Buxton trade area analysis and market segmentation study (2005)
3. Traffic Counts and Air Photographs (2005)
4. Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project, Inc. resource study



5. ITEP LaGrange Corridor enhancement project (underway)
6. City student intern support not to exceed 10 hours per week
7. Hiffman trade area and land value study (2007)

Timeline:

The City expects the MA to be completed within three (3) months of authorization to proceed.

Firm qualifications:

Please address the following statements of qualification

- Professional qualifications & disciplines involved
- Management qualifications & key personnel
- Relevant project experience
- Staff capabilities
- Financial stability
- References

Proposal evaluation:

The City will select the firm most responsive to the request for proposal. Evaluation will be by a committee of City staff and elected and or appointed officials selected by the Mayor. Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Technical approach
- Relevant corporate experience
- Qualifications of the project team assigned to the project
- Experience and resources of the firm
- Familiarity with similar issues
- References
- Cost of services

Project budget:

While a specific amount has not been budgeted for this project, it is anticipated that the cost will be in the \$25,000 to \$30,000 range. The City may reject any and all responses to the Request for Proposals and may negotiate the terms of any proposal.



Response Package:

The response package must contain Ten (10) hard copies and one (!) CD-ROM and / or one floppy disk

Due date:

Responses to the RFP are due before 5:00 PM on January 3, 2008

Please address envelope to:

Dudley Onderdonk, AICP Community Development Director  
City of Countryside  
5550 East Ave.  
Countryside, IL 60525

Attn. Economic Development Project Review Committee

Contact for more information:

Dudley Onderdonk, AICP  
Community Development Director  
City of Countryside  
5550 East Ave.  
Countryside, IL 60525  
(708) 485-2464  
E-mail: [donderdonk@countryside-il.org](mailto:donderdonk@countryside-il.org)

Also, see our web pages [www.countryside-il.org](http://www.countryside-il.org) and [www.gocountryside.net](http://www.gocountryside.net)

Attachment:

Zoning Map for the City of Countryside

