



London
C A N A D A

**THE CORPORATION OF
THE CITY OF LONDON**

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
PROPSALS FOR THE ADAPTIVE RE-USE OF THE LONDON NORMAL SCHOOL**



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF LONDON

2.0 London Normal School Background Information:

2.1 Introduction:

This RFP invites proposals for the adaptive re-use of the London Normal School. The London Normal School (165 Elmwood Avenue East) is a designated property under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and is currently vacant. The Ontario Heritage Trust also holds a heritage easement on the property. Looking to ensure the long-term historic, architectural, and contextual value of the building and site, the City is seeking community partners to occupy and maintain the London Normal School.

2.2 Financial Assistance:

Currently the London Normal School and associated land holdings are owned by the Province of Ontario, Ministry of Infrastructure, and managed by Infrastructure Ontario. Should a viable community partner be found, it is the City's intention to acquire the property and undertake the necessary Ontario Building Code and accessibility upgrades. It is important to note that no funds have yet been identified to undertake these works.

All costs associated with further improvements above and beyond those noted above are to be borne by the proponent. There are no municipal subsidies to support the on-going maintenance and operation of the facility. All costs associated with tenant improvements and the maintenance and operation of the building are to be borne by the tenant.

2.3 Who Should Apply:

Non-profit and/or community based organizations with strong management and financial capabilities are particularly encouraged to respond to this RFP. The City also encourages proposals based on partnerships or other business relationships that might involve non-profit and/or private sector uses structured to meet the overall objectives of the RFP.

Proponents wishing to establish a high profile presence in the community, and a desire to preserve a landmark heritage property are encouraged to submit proposals.

Respondents to this RFP must demonstrate that they have the financial capabilities to partner with the City of London in the long-term preservation of this important community asset.

2.4 What's in this RFP?

This RFP provides background information on the London Normal School. The RFP also includes eligibility requirements for proposals and proposal evaluation criteria. The RFP further provides detailed instructions on the required form and content of proposals. Please read the entire RFP carefully. Proposals received after the closing date will not be considered.

2.5 City of London Objectives:

The objective of this RFP is to identify, select, and enter into arrangements with a community partner who is capable of maintaining and operating the London Normal School. Key objectives are:

- To retain the identified heritage features of the existing structure;
- To identify an adaptive re-use of the existing building that will be accessible, barrier-free and serve a long-term community benefit;
- To minimize the City's capital investment and business risk in the purchase and upgrading of the London Normal School;
- To identify community partners with the demonstrated capacity and financial capability to operate and maintain the London Normal School;
- To enter into a long-term leasing agreement for the use of the London Normal School building; and,
- To encourage innovative partnerships between the private and/or non-profit sectors that will be a long-term success.

2.6 Background:

Infrastructure Ontario (IO) is responsible for the strategic management of the Province of Ontario's real estate assets. On April 19th, 2012 Infrastructure Ontario declared surplus the London Normal School property located at 165 Elmwood Avenue East in the City of London.

On April 10th and 11th, 2012 Municipal Council for the Corporation of the City of London resolved that:

“Infrastructure Ontario BE REQUESTED to provide a minimum of six months for the City to undertake a process to determine possible municipal needs and potential community partners for the appropriate re-use of the Normal School building, and to undertake the due diligence required should the City wish to acquire the Normal School to ascertain the requirements and costs associated with ensuring that the building meets current Building Code and accessibility requirements for possible future public use”.

Concurrent with a building needs assessment, the City of London is presently inviting proposals for potential community partners for the appropriate re-use of the London Normal School. All proposals will be required to meet the criteria described within this Request for Proposals (RFP).

2.7 Site and Building Overview:

The former London Normal School was built in 1898/1899 in the London neighbourhood commonly referred to as Old South.

The School is located at 165 Elmwood Avenue East. The property constitutes a full city block and contains a single 2.5 storey cut stone and brick school building. The building faces north towards a formal landscape of pathways, shrubs and mature trees.

An elevator is currently located at the south-east corner of the building (see Appendix 3) in an area that is not centrally located or visible from the ground floor lobby. The elevator is located adjacent to the exterior barrier-free entrance.

On-site parking for 62 vehicles is available to the rear of the building. To the south, the rear of the building faces an open green space with a perimeter of mature trees.

The site is fully serviced by municipal sewer and water.

The use of the open space is not part of this EOI.

2.8 Current Use and Condition:

The London Normal School operated as a provincial Normal School until 1958 after which it was converted to a junior high school. The School was readapted in 1963 to serve as office space for both the Public and Separate School Boards until 2004 when it was vacated and turned back to the Province of Ontario. The building is currently vacant. The London Normal School has long been recognized as an important landmark in the community of Old South. It is physically prominent and its tower is easily seen throughout the community.

The London Normal School property is currently owned by the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal (MEI) and managed by the Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC). The ORC has identified the London Normal School property as surplus to provincial requirements.

A 2009 ORC commissioned study described the building as being of “good” condition. The first phase of a major conservation project was completed in 2009 and included masonry repair and window restoration to the east, south and west gables. Since 2009, additional improvements have been completed to the entrance hall, main staircase, cupolas and roof.

The entire property (165 Elmwood Avenue East) was designated by the City in 1985 under Section 29 (Part IV) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The property is also subject to a Heritage Conservation Easement held by the Ontario Heritage Trust. The City's designation applies to the entire property, and relates to the exterior and the interior entrance hall and grand staircase. The Heritage Conservation Easement relates to the same building elements, as well as the green space associated with the building.

The total gross floor area of the Normal School is approximately 4,030 square metres (43,370 square feet). Approximately 700 square metres (7,534 square feet) of the total ground and second floor area (the grand entranceway, staircases and office spaces) is subject to a heritage easement. The gross floor area for each floor is:

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Basement | 1007 square metres (10,846 square feet); |
| First Floor | 1029 square metres (11,084 square feet); |
| Second Floor | 1000 square metres (10,771 square feet); and, |
| Attic | 991 square metres (10,671 square feet). |

A 1.2 hectare (3 acre) open space area is located on the south half of the site. While zoned for office uses, the open space area provides a quiet park like amenity for the neighbourhood. The Village Green, as the area is typically referred to, is currently being used informally by local soccer leagues and the community for neighbourhood gatherings. An annual festival (Gathering on the Green) is popular with the community.

There are a number of mature trees on the site, many of which are located in the area between the parking lot, the Normal School building and Elmwood Avenue East. Mature trees also flank the perimeter of the site along the Wortley, Duchess and Marley road and street frontages.

2.9 Site Access and Transportation Network

The site has frontage on Elmwood Avenue East (a secondary collector road), Wortley Road (an arterial road), Marley Place (a local street) and Duchess Avenue (a local street). Both Elmwood Avenue East and Wortley are developed to a two lane cross-section. Parking for the site is accessed off Marley Place. There is no direct road access to the parking lot from Wortley Road.

The site is presently served by London Transit. The City's main train station is located approximately 1.8 kilometres to the north east of the site.

2.10 The Surrounding Neighbourhood:

The London Normal School site is located within an established residential area known as Wortley Village. The traditional focal point of the Old South community, Wortley Village is known for its heritage houses, tree-lined streets and unique core of local businesses. To the north of the site is a thriving commercial area that contains a grocery store, cafes and restaurants, and a mixture of specialty retail stores.

A number of designated and heritage listed properties can be found in the immediate vicinity of the site. Areas to the east and south of the site are characterized low-rise single detached residential dwellings. Areas to the north and west are characterized by mid-rise, multi-unit residential and commercial land uses.

2.11 The Existing Official Plan

The site is designated "Office Area" in the City of London Official Plan. The Office Area designation is intended to accommodate general office uses which would not normally locate in the Downtown core, or which have specific location requirements for desirable areas outside of the Downtown. The main permitted uses within the Office Area designation are offices within purpose designed buildings as well as buildings converted for office use. Secondary permitted uses contemplated in the Office Area designation include eat-in restaurants, financial institutions, personal services, day care centres, pharmacies, laboratories and clinics.

Extracts of the Office Area designation of the Official Plan are included as Appendix ____.

2.12 The Existing Z.-1 Zoning By-law:

The City of London Z.-1 Zoning By-law zones the subject site HER(OF) Zone permitting professional office uses. For buildings and/or structures designated as historically significant by the City of London under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the office use is permitted a 25% increase in the gross floor area for the existing building and/or a 25% decrease in the required minimum parking standard. The HER zone permits all uses identified in the OF office zone. Additions are not permitted to be constructed in the front or exterior side yards of the site.

Extracts of the Z.-1 Zoning By-law are included as Appendix ____.

2.13 Statement of Heritage Value and Description of Heritage Attributes:

The London Normal School has been identified by both the City of London and Province of Ontario as having architectural and historical significance. The full statement of Heritage Value has been attached as Appendix ____ to the RFP.

The following is a list of character defining features that embody the property's provincial heritage value as defined in the August 2006 Built Heritage Assessment:

- The comprehensive and completeness of the London Normal School as a distinctly defined, official entity;
- The long-term consistency of its four public faces, as defined by the site boundaries and built forms;
- The T – shaped footprint of the building;
- Its massing as a 2.5 storey structure with peaked gables, two chimneys, three octagonal cupolas and a high vertical tower;
- Its towering scale and variable but balanced proportions;
- The eclectic High Victorian Gothic origins of the design including, but not limited exclusive to the dramatic combination of contrasting colours and textures, forms and details employed in its composition;

- Its use of Gothic, Tudor and Romanesque Revival detail, including but not exclusive to a rusticated stone plinth, arches, decorated capitals, stone carving, stepped gables, dormers, corner blocks, pinnacles, carved brackets, cupolas, tower and variable window forms;
- Its original exterior materials and finishes, particularly but not exclusive to the various types of stone;
- The high quality of craftsmanship evident in its stone, metal and woodwork;
- Its transitional solid bearing-wall and steel frame construction technology;
- The original organization and defining volumes of the interior, particularly the central entrance hall, corridors, and the presence of normal and special purpose classrooms and administrative space;
- Legibility of the original functional roles of these interior spaces;
- Legibility of the long-term use of these interior spaces, and in particular the manner in which they reflect late Victorian educational priorities and practices in Ontario;
- The material integrity and high quality of craftsmanship displayed in all original interior materials, fittings and furnishings, in particular but not exclusive to those of the main staircase, main corridor/stair hall, the former reception area, secretary's room, principal's room and apparatus room, assembly hall, typical first-floor classroom and ground floor reading room;
- The presence of plentiful light and air on the interior, including but not exclusive to such features as skylights and movable windows;
- The presence of fireproofing features, both historic and modern;
- Continuing use of long-term patterns of access and egress (interior and interior/exterior);
- The school's setting in a full block of well-landscaped, park-like grounds and in particular the lawns, trees, sports fields and pathways on those grounds;
- The integrity and completeness of long-term viewscales between the school and the surrounding residential area;
- Continued use of the complex for educational purposes; and,
- The cohesiveness and contained definition of the school and its grounds as a landmark in the community.

2.14 Heritage Easement Agreement:

In 1986 the London and Middlesex County Roman Catholic School Board and the Ontario Heritage Foundation entered into a heritage easement agreement for the London Normal School property. The purpose of the agreement, which is registered on title, is to conserve the aesthetic and scenic character and condition of the property and the historical, architectural, aesthetic and scenic character and condition of the exterior of the building together with the interiors of the ground and second floor central halls and stairways. The full text of the Heritage Easement Agreement has been attached to this RFP as Appendix ____.

The Agreement prescribes the duties of the owner to ensure the conservation of the property. The Agreement requires written approval by the Foundation of any demolition, construction, alteration, remodelling, or any other act that would materially alter the appearance or construction of the heritage elements. This agreement also requires, but is not limited to, the following terms:

- The owner shall maintain the building in as good and sound state of repair as a prudent owner would;
- Not erect or permit the erection on the building of any signs,, permanent storms, screens or awnings, television aerials or other similar type objects without prior written approval of the Foundation;
- [on the surrounding lands the owner shall] not, except with the prior written approval of the Foundation....grant any lease, license, easement or right-of-way;...erect or remove or permit the erection or removal of any building, sign, fence, or other permanent structures;...allow any changes in the use or general appearance of topography of the lands;...allow removal, destruction or cutting of trees, shrubs or other vegetation;...restrict public access.

The full text of the Heritage Easement Agreement has been attached to this RFP as Appendix ____.

2.15 Conservation Principles:

The following principles have been developed by the ORC to balance the protection of the property's heritage value and its continued and relevant use. These principles are to serve as a baseline for evaluating any future development and/or redevelopment of the site or structure.

Site Principles:

- The formal landscape of the Normal School's forecourt and side yards should be maintained and enhanced;
- The mature tree canopy of the property should be maintained and protected;
- A portion of the property's backfield should remain as publically accessible open space;
- Views of the building's tower from the immediate neighbourhood should be conserved ; and,
- New development on the property should be sympathetic to the current footprint, scale and massing of the original school building.

Building Principles:

- The most appropriate use of the building will have the least amount of impact on the buildings existing floor plan; identified interior heritage elements and the building's exterior envelop;
- Reasonable effort should be made to repair rather than replace significant architectural elements of the heritage building;
- Additions and alterations to the heritage building should maintain or enhance rather than detract from the existing architectural style and character of the building; and,
- New development on the block should complement the original building.

Depictions of the existing floor plan have been attached to this RFP as Appendix ____.

2.16 Adaptive Re-use:

The London Normal School is a local institutional landmark as well as the centerpiece of valued public park space. Its heritage characteristics and surrounding open space require careful consideration when contemplating the adaptive re-use of the building and site. Proposals for the adaptive re-use of the site should have consideration for:

- The conservation of the buildings existing heritage value and context;
- Maintaining the buildings relationship to the community;
- Minimal intervention to the building and site relative to identified heritage features, parking, accessibility and elevator location;
- Have consideration for the existing building typology;
- Provide for public accessibility;
- On-site parking limitations; and,
- No development of the surrounding green space.

3. Information to be submitted in support of the RFP:

3.1 General Information:

In support of the proposal, the following information should be submitted:

- A profile of the proponent or proponents (if the proponent is to be a consortium for the purpose of providing a proposal) as well as a detailed management, business and financial plan. In the case of a consortium, the legal structure of the partnership must also be included;
- The proposal shall identify the name of the legal entity representing the proponent with whom the City of London might negotiate a contract in the event the proponent is selected. The City of London requires full disclosure of the direct and indirect ownership of any legal entity which is established in respect of this RFP and all organizations or entities which are part of the proponent or consortium;

- An opinion of the proponents' Counsel and addressed to the Manager of Purchasing that the proponent:
 - is a corporate body, duly incorporated and properly organized and validly existing as a corporation under the laws of the jurisdiction in which it was incorporated;
 - is qualified to do business in the Province of Ontario;
 - has all the necessary corporate power and authority to enter into and perform its obligations under any agreement with the City of London;
 - that, to the best of such counsel's knowledge, there are no actions or proceedings pending or threatened against the proponent before any court or administrative agency;
 - that no instrument containing a charge on any of the undertaking, property or assets of the proponent, or notice thereof, has been registered in the Province of Ontario other than Permitted Encumbrances.

3.2 Financial Capacity to Operate and Maintain:

The proponent will require the financial capacity to operate and maintain the London Normal School. Only proposals from a consortia or individual proponents that demonstrate the financial capacity (in the absence of any future municipal subsidy) to operate and maintain the London Normal School will be considered. In support of the proposal, the following information is to be submitted by the proponent, or all partners to a consortium:

- A statement of financial stability (including detailed audited financial statements) for the previous five years;
- A statement of financial capability including access to capital (debt and equity);
- A statement of performance capability that includes an overview of overall experience, experience in similar projects, management and operational expertise;
- A proposed capital budget detailing estimates of all anticipated costs related to property renovation costs. The capital budget must also identify all anticipated sources of funding and financing;
- A proposed operating budget for the adaptive re-use of the London Normal School detailing estimates of all operating costs including administration and maintenance, utilities, property taxes, and reserves. Any external source of ongoing funding should be identified.
- A statement of qualification providing sufficient information to allow a thorough evaluation of the proponent's relevant experience, expertise and ability to operate and maintain the London Normal School.

3.3 Summary of Intended Uses:

The proponent should identify how the building is to be used, including the use by any other community partners who are intended to share and/or use the building with the proponent. The description of use shall also include any opportunities for community/public access and/or use of the building or portions thereof.

3.4 Projected Timelines:

Proponents are required to prepare a detailed timeline of their occupancy proposal having consideration for anticipated tenant improvements. The following is a tentative schedule to assist Proponents:

| DESCRIPTION | DATE |
|---|---|
| EOI Release Date | Wednesday, August 1, 2012 |
| Community Presentation | Week of August 27 th , 2012 |
| Site Visit/Building Tour | Week of August 13 th , 2012 |
| Site Visit/Building Tour (if required) | Week of September 10 th , 2012 |
| EOI Closing Date | Friday, October 5 th , 2012 |
| Evaluation Committee Meeting | Week of October 8 th , 2012 |
| Interviews with Proponents (if necessary) | Week of October 15 th , 2012 |
| FASC Committee | November 5 th , 2012 |
| Council Approval | Tuesday, November 20 th , 2012 |

4.1 Documentation/Studies Available (to be confirmed by the Province of Ontario):

The following documents have been made available by the Province of Ontario to assist proponents in the preparation of their proposal:

- Building Condition Assessment, December 13th, 2006;
- Designated Substances Surveys, February 2009;
- Asbestos Building Material Report, May 26th, 2008;
- Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment, July 2006;
- Most Appropriate Land Use Study, December 2009;
- Conservation Plan, June 2009;
- Heritage Designation by the City of London, 1985;
- Ontario Heritage Trust – Statement of Significance, 2006; and,
- Ontario Heritage Trust Easement Agreement, 1986.

9. Evaluation Criteria:

9.1 Evaluation Team

Proposals will be evaluated by an evaluation team with representation from all key functional areas including Planning, Realty Services, Community Services, and Finance with the assistance of Purchasing and Supply.

There will be a concurrent community evaluation of all submissions. The community evaluation criteria will be provided before the EOI closing date noted in Section 3 of this EOI. The community will evaluate all proposals separately and submit this evaluation to the City evaluation team for their consideration and will be included in the City evaluation.

Proponents are reminded that there is a Mandatory Community Presentation also noted in Section 3.

9.2 Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria will be based on the following:

| Criteria | Weight |
|--|---------------|
| Financial Capacity to Operate and Maintain the Property The viability of the business plan (15 pts.), including length of tenure. The viability of the management plan (15 pts.). The viability of the financial plan (15 pts.). | 45 |
| Proponent Qualifications & Community Partnerships Experience and qualifications of the Proponent to manage and operate the London Normal School (20 pts.). Abilities of the Proponent's partners to participate in the management and operation the London Normal School (10 pts.). The proposed use will encourage and foster public access and/or use of the London Normal School (10 pts.) | 40 |
| Project Timelines The proposed use does not require amendments to the existing policies of the Official Plan or the Z.-1 Zoning By-law (3 pts.). The proposed use is not reliant on the associated land holdings that currently constitute the existing green space (4 pts.). Proponent's timelines are consistent with the City's timelines for acquisition and upgrades (4 pts.). Minimal structural alterations in regards to the exterior and interior identified heritage features of the London Normal School (4 pts.). | 15 |
| Community Factors Results of Community evaluation (10 pts.). Appropriateness of use/compatibility with neighbourhood (10 pts.). | 20 |
| Total | 120 |

In the event of a tied score, the following categories will be used in the specified order to break the tie:

- 1. Financial Capacity to operate and maintain the property**
- 2. Community Factors**

In order to qualify, a minimum score of 60 must be achieved.