



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Polaris Site Development 26-06

1. Purpose of RFI

The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to collect information from qualified development teams regarding concepts, experience, financial capacity, and community aligned strategies for the future redevelopment of the **Polaris site aka the Starter Block**. This RFI aims to inform next steps, refine project objectives, and identify potential partners for a subsequent competitive procurement process.

The City seeks redevelopment concepts that reflect community priorities including equitable access, year-round vibrancy, culturally grounded design, small business opportunities, housing affordability, winter-city resilience, and Indigenous partnership. Information gathered will help refine goals so that future procurement aligns with long-term public benefit and responsible stewardship of downtown Fairbanks.

2. Requested Information

A. Team & Qualifications

Please provide:

- Overview of your organization, development team structure, and key personnel.
- Relevant experience with mixed-use, infill, downtown, and/or community impact projects.
- Examples of similar projects, including role, scale, timeline, and outcomes.
- Demonstrated capacity to implement complex, phased, or public-private development.
- Experience with equitable development practices, community wealth-building models, partnerships with Indigenous communities, or community-led design processes.

B. Concept & Programming

The City is particularly interested in concepts that:

- Include mixed-income or affordable housing options
- Support locally owned businesses and entrepreneurship
- Provide active public spaces that function in extreme winter conditions
- Strengthen cultural identity and visibility, including Alaska Native cultural presence
- Enhance safety, accessibility, and year-round public life
- Maintain public access and transparency in long-term stewardship

Minimum Design Standards to Suggest (non-binding at RFI stage):

- Teams are encouraged to consider minimum design principles such as universal access, winter microclimate design, warm and well-lit pedestrian corridors, community-serving ground floor activation, and integration of public restrooms or warming amenities where feasible.

C. Development Budget & Financial Stacking Needs/Ideas

Provide high-level information regarding:

- Estimated project cost ranges and key budget drivers.
- Financing approach, capital sources, and potential financial stacking strategies.
- Assumptions regarding market feasibility, operating income, subsidies, or gap financing.
- Conditions or factors that would influence project viability.
- Describe how your financial strategy could support long-term affordability, local business retention, and community benefit programs while maintaining project feasibility.

D. Incentive Strategy – Partnership Plans, Opportunities, and Needs

The City is interested in partnership strategies that:

- Advance equitable outcomes, including mixed-income housing, small business support, and community-serving uses
- Include partnerships with Alaska Native organizations or Alaska Native–owned firms
- Explore models such as community land trusts, cooperatives, shared-equity structures, or public realm stewardship agreements
- Support inclusive workforce development including apprenticeships and local hire

While not required at this stage, teams may propose incentive structures that align with public benefit outcomes.

E. Risk Identification & Mitigation

Provide your assessment of:

- Key project risks (financial, environmental, regulatory, site conditions, market, etc.).
- Mitigation strategies your team typically uses or would propose for the Starter Block.
- Any information needs or contingencies required to reduce uncertainty.
- Considerations of cold-climate construction, winter maintenance implications, energy efficiency, flood and river-related risks, and permafrost-related geotechnical constraints.

F. Community Benefits & Alignment with Local Plans

Please outline:

- Expected community benefits may include:

- Mixed-income or affordable housing
- Local business opportunities, micro-retail, or incubator spaces
- Community-serving facilities or cultural anchors
- Improved public space, safety, and all-season activation
- Winter city design excellence and accessible public realm improvements
- Climate-resilient and energy-efficient buildings
- Strong partnership with Alaska Native communities and organizations
- Local workforce and apprenticeship opportunities

Alignment with local plans:

Describe how your concept advances principles of equity, access, community ownership, and inclusive public life, consistent with long-term community visions.

Community Engagement:

Approaches should emphasize inclusive, and culturally respectful engagement, and consider partnerships with Indigenous communities, youth, elders, residents with lived experience, and small businesses.

3. RFI Process and Next Steps

Responses to this RFI will be used solely for planning and informational purposes. The city may use the information gathered to:

- Evaluate potential uses for the property
- Refine goals and requirements for a future lease or solicitation
- Clarify Request for Proposals (RFP).

Submission of a response does not guarantee selection, preference, or future contracting opportunity.

4. Disclaimer

This RFI does not constitute a solicitation, offer, or commitment by the City of Fairbanks. The City reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses, request additional information, or discontinue this process at any time without obligation.

5. Procurement Office contact information:

Interested parties must submit a written response by **April 6, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. AKST.**

Responses may be sent via E-mail to: purchasing@fairbanks.gov



All questions must be directed to:
Christina Rowlett, Purchasing Agent
crowlett@fairbanks.gov
(907) 459-6779