



**205 W. Aurora Street, Ironwood, MI Redevelopment Request for Proposals**

**Acreage 1.32 Acres**

**Zoning: C-2 Downtown Commercial**

**County: Gogebic**

**Date: Tuesday, October 14<sup>th</sup> 2025**

**Proposals Due: Friday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 11am**

**Contact:**

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**213 S. Marquette Street**

**Ironwood, MI 49938**

## **Property Features**

- Located in the Core Downtown of Ironwood, MI
- 1/2 block from the Downtown Ironwood City Square
- Close to Restaurants, Bars, retailers, coffee shops, and multiple grocers
- Local attractions-
  - Historic Ironwood Theater
  - Ironwood Carnegie Library
  - Downtown Ironwood Depot Park
  - Iron Belle Trail
  - Trail 2 Motorized Trail
  - Gogebic County Transportation Authority (Public Transit)

## **Property Overview**

The City of Ironwood is seeking proposals from qualified entities to design and construct new multi-family housing at 205 W. Aurora Street. Currently the property is a former Wells Fargo Bank Building built in 1976.

Earlier this year the City completed a Strategic Housing Action Plan. Here is the executive summary of the plan.

## A Housing Dilemma

The City of Ironwood has seen dramatic cost increases for housing over the last 5 years. At the same time the community lacks many of the housing options that residents and potential residents desire. Apartments, senior housing, affordable rentals, and move-up homes are all extremely limited in the City. New construction has been nearly non-existent for decades and the current housing stock is aging rapidly.

A lack of options has had negative impacts on existing residents who would like to adjust their living situation. This also limits turnover of homes to better match the community's needs. Prospective residents (and businesses recruiting them) struggle to find adequate housing, and it becomes more difficult to attract and keep people in Ironwood.

## Finding Housing Solutions

A healthy housing stock should include a variety of different housing types and price points. To encourage new housing development, simplify the process, reduce risk, improve the economics, and make sure people are aware of the opportunities that exist. Fixing the housing market in Ironwood will take time and a multi-faceted approach. The plan goes into further detail on how to move forward, but some of the highlights and steps the City should take are listed below:

*Simplifying Regulations*

Providing pre-approved housing plans that meet building code

Increase what housing is already a "permitted use" which simplifies and shortens the application and City review process

Address points where the zoning code makes it difficult to develop on certain lots

Urging the State to improve regulatory services in Ironwood and the western UP

### *Closing the Financial Gap*

Using public finance tools such as Housing TIF and waiving fees to develop housing

Connecting developers with outside funding sources like state and regional grants and loans

Offering City owned vacant land at a discounted price to those who would develop housing

Exploring options to address how the current tax system disincentivizes rehabbing existing housing and creating new housing

### *Identifying and Promoting Development Opportunities*

Piloting a infill program to turn vacant lots into occupied homes

Consider a similar program to incentivize rehabilitation of underutilized, existing homes

Promoting the findings of the market study that shows opportunities to develop successful projects in Ironwood

Identifying properties that could be developed and marketing them to the development community

Working with potential housing developers and builders to expand their capacity to build homes in Ironwood

Here is the link to the full Housing Action Plan, which includes a marketing analysis as well a Developer's Guidebook for the City of Ironwood.

<https://www.keepandshare.com/doc7/70377/ironwood-housing-action-plan-hires-06042025-pdf-37-1-meg?da=y>

For the selected developer the City will provide the following:

- Land sale at price to be made in the proposal from the developer, transferrable through a land covenant and deed restriction tied to the project remaining affordable for a minimum of 30 years.
- City will support developer's application for project funding through State and Federal programs which may include: MSHDA LIHTC, MI Neighborhood, USDA, CDBG, etc.
- City will consider requests for PILOT, Housing TIF, and other tax abatement programs.
- City will expedite site plan review and permitting process.
- Provide contact information for utility providers and other state and federal agencies.

### **Submission Requirements**

Developers are required to submit the following information with their proposal:

1. Preliminary Site Plan
2. Proposed Building Design
3. Proposed Floor Plans

4. Proposed Unit Mix-40-60 units
5. Proposed Retail Space
6. Proposed Rental Rates and Income Targets
7. Proposed Sources and Uses of Funds (including any incentives that will be requested of the City).
8. Proposed Populations Served including any preferences (the City supports preferences for veterans, emergency workers and others following the General Public Use Section SEC.42(g)(9)(c) of the IRS Code related to LIHTC).
9. Developer Qualifications include support documentation showing that the developer has the financial operational, and managerial capacity to take on a project of this scope, complexity, and type at this stage and has developed similar projects of size and scope.
  - Provide a list of prior projects completed
  - Provide references in the last five years
  - List of LIHTC credits received in the past
  - Contact information for all main points of contact and listing of all company principals and board of directors if applicable.
10. Development Team: Include background information on proposed architect and general contractor
11. Development Timeline including key funding application dates with MSHDA and other major funding deadlines.

The deadline for submission is November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 11am. Staff will review submissions over the following two weeks and make recommendations for two finalist interviews. Final selection will be determined by December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

**Developer selection will be based on the following criteria:**

1. Qualifications of the Applicant
2. Quality and scale/appropriateness of the design
3. Commitment to affordability
4. Commitment and alignment with City objectives
5. Readiness to proceed in a timely manner
6. Any innovative strategies in design, finance or construction to enhance the sustainability of the project.

**Right to Reject Proposals.** The City of Ironwood reserves the right without prejudice to reject any or all proposals, proposal interpretations and Addenda. Any change to or interpretation of the RFP by the City will be sent to each firm or individual to whom an RFP has been sent and any such changes or interpretations shall become a part of the RFP for incorporation into any agreement awarded pursuant to the RFP.