



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Rochester Community Schools to issue Request for Proposal to purchase developed property at 501 W. University Drive, Rochester, Michigan**

ROCHESTER, Mich. – Rochester Community Schools (RCS) will release a Request for Proposal (RFP) Tuesday, Jan. 18, 2022, for parties interested in purchasing 4.43 acres of property located at 501 W. University Drive in the City of Rochester, Michigan. The property includes an existing three-story structure, currently known as the RCS Administration Building, which contains a total of 89,716 square feet of gross building area.

“We invite all qualified purchasers to consider submitting a proposal,” said RCS Superintendent Dr. Robert Shaner. “We are particularly interested in learning about creative or unique proposals for alternative use or redevelopment that respect the heritage of the property.”

A proposal package that contains the terms and conditions to purchase the parcel may be obtained by written request to: Collins & Blaha, PC, RE: Rochester Community Schools Administration Building, 31700 Middlebelt Road Suite 125, Farmington Hills, MI 48334. The RFP will also be posted on the district [website](https://www.rochester.k12.mi.us/about-us/departments/purchasing) at <https://www.rochester.k12.mi.us/about-us/departments/purchasing>.



To be considered, all proposals to purchase this site must be submitted in writing **by March 28, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.** using the required form in the proposal package.

**Committee work.** RCS recognizes the significance of the current administration building, which has served the greater Rochester area for many years. In May 2021, the district reached out to the community and invited volunteers to serve on an advisory committee that would respectfully study options for the future of the property and artifacts within the structure.

“When forming the committee, we were mindful of the need to have members represent a sample population of the greater Rochester community,” said Executive Director of Strategic Communications and Community Relations Lori Grein. “The committee is comprised of family members, business and city representatives, community members, local historical planners, alumni, and employees.”

Committee discussions focused on the process that a prospective purchaser may have to undergo for adaptive reuse and/or development; the process for issuing an RFP to identify interest in purchasing the site; identifying artifacts for preservation; and committee roles and responsibilities. Subject matter experts in the areas of historic preservation were also invited to address the group.

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**Rochester Community Schools Mission**

To provide a quality education in a caring atmosphere for students to attain the necessary skills and knowledge to become lifelong learners and contribute to a diverse, interdependent and changing world.

The RCS Legacy Committee voted by majority to proceed with the RFP process. “We are truly grateful for the volunteers who serve on this advisory committee,” said Grein. “The release of the RFP is one step in the process. Committee work will continue as we identify artifacts for preservation that represent the heritage of our school community.”

The process of reviewing the proposals by school administrators will begin following the deadline for submissions. Any recommendations for the sale of the property will be presented by the superintendent to the school board for approval.



**Building background information.** Through the years, the structure on the subject property was renovated multiple times to accommodate needs of the school community.

The original building was constructed in 1889. At that time, it was known as Avon School District #5 Schoolhouse (or Rochester School) and then renamed the William S. Harrison School.

Rochester High School was built on the same site in 1916. An addition in 1928 connected the Harrison School building to the high

school. The expanded complex housed classrooms until approximately 1973. The building was then repurposed to accommodate administration offices.

**The need to relocate.** The RCS Administration Building was last renovated in 1988, approximately 34 years ago. In Dec. 2018, the district contracted Kingscott & Associates, an architectural firm, to conduct a building assessment that would determine the condition of the structure. The assessment included detailed onsite inspections to evaluate the functional aspects of the building and the condition of the architectural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. Upon completion of the building assessment, the district contracted with an independent construction management firm to provide cost estimates for the findings in the assessment. The construction management firm estimated that it would cost the district approximately \$20 million to renovate the building; cost estimates for constructing a new building on the same site were more than \$25 million.

On April 12, 2021, the RCS Board of Education met to discuss an additional option that included acquiring an existing structure within the City of Rochester. During that meeting, the board approved a resolution that authorized the purchase of a building of interest, located on 52585 Dequindre Road, for \$7 million.

“We are honored to have a Board of Education that is able to make courageous decisions and act in the best interest of our students,” said Matt McDaniel, executive director of business operations. “As fiduciaries of the taxpayer dollar, it was determined that purchasing an existing building, versus renovating or constructing a new building, would provide the least amount of financial impact to the district. This ensures that funding is available to support high-quality educational programs and services for our students.”

The district anticipates relocating to the Dequindre Road building by the summer of 2022. Built in 1995, this 93,660 sq. ft. facility will accommodate district administrative offices and provide a permanent, secure location for the data center, headend room, and technology operations.

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