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Consultants Vying for Downtown Planning Contract to be Reviewed

Representatives from four firms competing for a contract to update the downtown master plan and tax increment finance plan will present credentials and examples of their work at public meetings scheduled for May 4 and 6, and possibly a third date if necessary, at Village Hall, 123 Madison St.

Presentations are scheduled to begin at 6 p.m., Tuesday, May 4, and at 8 p.m., Thursday, May 6. However, the Village Board may add a third date if necessary to provide sufficient time for a comprehensive examination.

Companies scheduled to present are Crandall Arambula PC; Diane, Legge, Kemp (DLK); Far Associates; and Solomon Cordwell Buenz & Associates (SBC).

The four firms were selected from 17 companies that responded to a *request for qualifications* (RFQ) issued by the Village in February as part of increased efforts to focus on planning during the current budget year in response to the growing interest in the greater downtown area. Funds also have been earmarked to update the Village's award-winning Comprehensive Plan, which was last updated in 1990.

The RFQ was developed with extensive public input, including posting a draft on the Village's website and inviting residents to comment via email, letters and telephone calls.

Among the range of factors the firm selected to help craft the downtown plan will be required to examine are quality of life, economic viability, building height, building design, density, parking, traffic, housing types, public improvements, environmental impacts and land use. The consultant also will address the Downtown Tax Increment Finance District (TIF) plan, a necessary step should the TIF be extended beyond its 2006 expiration date.

Actual development of the plans will include extensive input from residents and business operators through tools such as public meetings, focus groups and a community survey.

For more information on the upcoming meetings or planning programs, call 358.5425 or email comsvcs@oak-park.us. To contact members of the Village board call 358.5784 or email board@oak-park.us.

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