

MEMORANDUM

SEPTEMBER 26, 2013

TO: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND
PETER MEADE, DIRECTOR

FROM: KAIROS SHEN, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING
RICHARD MCGUINNESS, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR WATERFRONT
PLANNING
TAD READ, SENIOR PLANNER III

SUBJECT: SOUTH STATION MASTER PLAN AND AMENDMENT TO FORT
POINT DOWNTOWN MUNICIPAL HARBOR PLAN

SUMMARY: This Memorandum requests authorization for the Secretary to advertize a Request for Proposals (“RFP”) for consultant planning and design services to prepare a South Station Master Plan and corresponding amendment to the Fort Point Downtown Municipal Harbor Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (“MassDOT”) recently began preparing a plan to expand the capacity of South Station (“South Station Expansion Plan”). This South Station Expansion Plan involves expanding the number of tracks at South Station and creating a new layover facility. The South Station Expansion Plan will also include relocating of the existing U.S. Postal Service General Mail Facility to create an adjacent site onto which to expand South Station.

Opportunities for joint public/private development over an expanded South Station will also be a critical part of the South Station Expansion Plan. Due to a stipulation made by the Commonwealth’s Executive Office of Environmental Affairs as part of its approvals of the Fort Point Downtown Municipal Harbor Plan Phase II in 2004, prior to any development in and around South Station, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”) must prepare a comprehensive plan for properties south of Summer Street, including the project area for MassDOT’s South Station Expansion Plan. Thus, staff is recommending preparation of a South Station Master Plan and a corresponding amendment to the Fort Point Downtown Municipal Harbor Plan.

As required under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 91 Waterways Regulations, the BRA has undertaken a series of municipal harbor plans over the years for the downtown, the Fort Point Channel, and the South Boston Waterfront. Among these is

the Fort Point Downtown Municipal Harbor Plan, which comprised two phases. Phase I, completed in 2002, comprised the site at 500 Atlantic Avenue. Phase II, completed in 2004, consisted of Hook Lobster; 470 Atlantic Avenue “Independence Wharf”; Russia Wharf; and the Federal Reserve Bank, 245 Summer Street (formerly Stone and Webster), and the United States Postal Services (“USPS”) parcel.

Upon approving the Phase II Plan in 2004, the Commonwealth’s Secretary of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs stipulated that their office would not be able review or approve further permits for the Phase II plan area south of Summer Street until the City completed a comprehensive master planning effort for the properties south of Summer Street--including the USPS site, 245 Summer Street and South Station area. Thus, a South Station Master Plan and a corresponding amendment to the Fort Point Downtown Municipal Harbor Plan are necessary in order to unlock future permitting for the area. Although MassDOT’s South Station Expansion Plan does not include 245 Summer Street, the proposed South Station Master Plan and amendment to the Fort Point Downtown Municipal Harbor Plan will.

The South Station Master Plan project area, shown in Attachment A, is generally bounded by Summer Street on the north, Atlantic Avenue and Interstate-93 on the west, the eastern edge of Fort Point Channel on the east, and West 4th Street on the south.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The scope of services for the Request for Proposals (“RFP”) will include an analysis of existing conditions, review of existing area plans, identification of issues and opportunities, multi-modal transportation systems analysis, public participation, development and review of massing options, market analyses, preparation of a master plan, and development of an amendment to the Phase II Fort Point Downtown Municipal Harbor Plan. Because certain similar analyses are required for MassDOT’s South Station Expansion Plan, some of the work performed by the BRA’s consultants may be collaborative with MassDOT’s South Station Expansion Plan consulting team. For instance, for the existing conditions analysis, review of existing area plans, and all transportation analyses, consultants may rely almost entirely on the work performed by the MassDOT consultants. Significant portions of the scenario and massing options and associated public meetings may be performed collaboratively between the MassDOT and BRA consultants. The remaining tasks will be performed almost entirely by the BRA’s consultants.

FUNDING

Funding for the South Station Master Plan will be provided through a reimbursable contract between the BRA and MassDOT.

RECOMMENDATION

The BRA staff recommends that the Secretary be authorized to advertize for consultant planning and design services to prepare a South Station Master Plan and corresponding amendment to the Fort Point Downtown Municipal Harbor Plan

An appropriate vote follows:

That the Secretary be, and hereby is, authorized to advertize a Request for Proposals for consultant planning and design services to prepare a South Station Master Plan and corresponding amendment to the Fort Point Downtown Municipal Harbor Plan.

VOTED: