

# NYBG/125

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 19, 2016

## NYBG Requests Proposals for Mixed-Use Development Near Its Landmark Site

Project Could Include Residential, Retail, and Hotel Components As Part of Community-based Vision for Economic Redevelopment of Webster Avenue Corridor



**Bronx, NY**— Marking an important milestone in the growth and development of its Bronx neighborhood, The New York Botanical Garden announced today that it is seeking proposals from developers to build a major mixed-use project near its landmark site that could include residential units, retail, and a hotel.

The site of the proposed development is an acre-plus parcel on the southeast corner of Webster Avenue and Bedford Park Boulevard that is owned by the Botanical Garden. The property, which is across Bedford Park Boulevard from the Garden's parking garage, is one block from the Garden's 250-acre grounds.

The Garden's request for proposals (RFP) envisions a development that could include a hotel with a minimum of 125 rooms on the northerly portion of the site. The residential component, on the southerly portion of the site, could consist of approximately 300 apartments, with a mix of market-rate and affordable units. The development could also include 12,000 square feet or more of retail use.

The proposed development is less than a block from the Botanical Garden station on Metro-North's Harlem Line, which provides access to Grand Central Terminal and Midtown Manhattan in about 20 minutes. It is also a short walk from stops on the B, D, and 4 subway lines, and several New York City Transit bus lines serve the area.

This mixed-use proposal is a direct result of at least four years of work with community stakeholders, including the rezoning of an 80-block area initiated by Community Board 7 and passed unanimously by the New York City Council in 2011 after public review. The previous zoning had long restricted Webster Avenue to heavy commercial uses, but the 2011 rezoning set the stage for new types of development, including residential, retail, and hotel projects.

Following the rezoning, a second public-planning process was facilitated by the New York City Economic Development Corporation, which culminated in the community's Webster Avenue Vision Plan. One of the Plan's goals was "transforming Webster Avenue into a vibrant mixed-use district." Two recommendations in the Plan guided the Garden's RFP: employing mixed-use development opportunities as catalysts for further economic development and promoting mixed-income housing in the Webster Avenue corridor. The Plan is available at [www.nycedc.com/webstervision](http://www.nycedc.com/webstervision).

Because of this planning process, the Garden has received significant support from the Community Board and elected officials representing the Bronx.

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. said: "NYBG has been an anchor in the Bronx for 125 years, so it is no surprise to me that with this request for proposals, the Garden is taking the lead on attracting catalytic and transformative development at this strategic intersection in the Bronx. As one of the many stakeholders participating in the Vision Plan for Webster Avenue, I am particularly excited for the day when guests from across the globe and from around the corner have another hotel choice in the Bronx, across from our very own Garden of Eden."

New York City Councilmember Ritchie Torres, whose district includes the Garden, said: "I applaud and support NYBG as it takes this important next step forward to advance the Webster Avenue Vision Plan and develop this key corner in my Council District. The jobs, housing, and vibrancy that this mixed-use project will bring to the Webster Avenue corridor have been a long time in the planning, and I look forward to the day when the first shovel hits the ground."

The deadline for developers to submit proposals is 5 p.m. on March 1, 2016. The Garden expects to select a developer or team of developers by March 31, 2016.

Cushman & Wakefield, the global commercial real estate services company, is the Garden's consultant on the Webster Avenue project. Questions about the RFP should be directed to Cushman & Wakefield Executive Vice President Frank P. Liantonio at 212.841.7887 or [frank.liantonio@cushwake.com](mailto:frank.liantonio@cushwake.com).

###

**The New York Botanical Garden is a museum of plants located at Bronx River Parkway (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road. It is easy to reach by Metro-North Railroad or subway. The Garden is open year-round, Tuesday through Sunday and Monday federal holidays, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The best way to enjoy the Garden is with the *All-Garden Pass*, which includes admission to the grounds as well as to seasonal gardens, exhibitions, and attractions such as the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, Everett Children's Adventure Garden, and Tram Tour. For ticket pricing, please check our Web site. For more information, please call 718.817.8700 or visit [nybg.org](http://nybg.org).**

**The New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York 10458**

**Media Contact:** Stevenson Swanson at 718.817.8512 or [sswanson@nybg.org](mailto:sswanson@nybg.org)