

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Academy School Building
Redevelopment Opportunity



Proposal Submission Deadline: October 29, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.

Greetings!

August 2025

Every so often, a rare redevelopment opportunity presents itself, and as Madison's chief elected official, I'm delighted to introduce you to such an opportunity. Meet Academy School, a 53,000 square foot former elementary school built in 1921 with striking architectural features and an amazing history. Academy is a treasured Town asset set in a campus-like location near Madison's Town Green, adjacent to other historic municipal buildings and community ball fields, and a leisurely walk from Madison's vibrant downtown shopping district and beautiful Town beaches. The Board of Selectmen is launching this Request for Expression of Interest to solicit creative ideas from experienced developers to preserve in some way this historic asset for community benefit while also enhancing the vibrancy and functionality of our downtown.

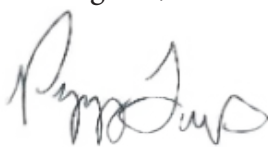
Although closed for many years and reflecting the usual things you'd expect to find in a long-vacant vintage building, Academy is well positioned for adaptive reuse. In pursuit of previous redevelopment plans, the Town has assembled and prepared a wide variety of information on Academy which we are ready to share with you, including architectural floor plans and elevations, site plans, and environmental assessments. Being in a key downtown location, Academy is part of a federally-designated historic district, opening the way for both federal and state historic tax credits.

But beyond Academy itself lies Madison and its bustling downtown, just a few minutes' walk away, and our Shoreline East train station, a 6-minute walk, and at 0.3 miles, well within the boundaries for Academy to qualify for a Transit-Oriented Development. Our downtown is vibrant and reflects all that Madison represents: spectacular natural beauty, an outstanding quality of life, educational excellence, and a strong New England community spirit. If you've ever visited Madison, you'll understand why we are so excited to include a redeveloped Academy as an integral part of our downtown fabric, with its arts and culture, entertainment, restaurants, and an amazing diversity of other shops.

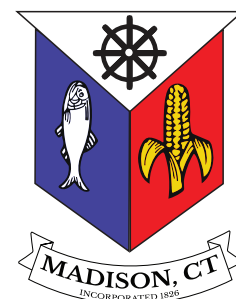
As part of our Strategic Plan, Madison's Town government is committed to improving the quality of life for people of all ages and cultures while promoting responsible economic development that preserves our small-town vibe. Strong financial stewardship coupled with a stable tax base has enabled us to embark on many capital improvement projects to invest in our future, encouraging Academy's potential to be a flagship property for our downtown. While the Town is committed to maintaining ownership of this important community parcel, we don't have any set development in mind and will be excited to see, through your Expression of Interest, how a re-envisioned Academy could become a cornerstone to the Madison of tomorrow.

I encourage you to consider this unique opportunity!

Kind Regards,



Peggy Lyons
First Selectwoman



Overview

The Town of Madison (“Town”) is seeking qualified parties (a “Respondent”) to submit an Expression of Interest (the “Proposal” or “EOI”) for the development of the Academy School building located at 4 School Street in Madison, CT (the “Academy” or “Building” or “Site”). The Academy Building is located in the center of downtown Madison, approximately 250 feet east of the historic Madison Green and one block west of Madison’s vibrant central business district along Boston Post Road/Route 1. The location offers excellent access to existing shopping, dining, recreation and entertainment options, many Town amenities, and is easy to reach by way of a downtown street and sidewalk network, the interstate highway (I-95), River Valley & CT Transit bus service, and Shoreline East rail service.

Proposals should be addressed as follows:

Town of Madison / Madison Public Schools, Facilities Department
Ben Whittaker, Construction Manager
284 Green Hill Road
Madison, CT 06443

Proposals must be plainly marked in the lower left-hand corner of the envelope as follows:

PROPOSAL NUMBER: 26-1125
PROPOSAL NAME: Academy School Building Redevelopment Opportunity
OPENING DATE: Wednesday, October 29, 2025
OPENING TIME: 12:00 Noon

Respondents are required to attend a mandatory pre-proposal building tour on **Tuesday, September 30 (at 10:00AM), or Thursday, October 2, 2025 (at 2:00PM)**, meeting at the main entrance of the Academy Building (4 School Street, Madison, CT). Please contact Ben Whittaker prior to September 30, 2025 at whittaker.ben@madisonps.org to notify the Town of your planned attendance and a list of attendees for this tour. *This will be the only opportunity to view interior existing conditions.*

Questions related to this EOI must be submitted via e-mail to whittaker.ben@madisonps.org no later than **4:00PM Friday, October 10, 2025.**

All questions and the responses thereto, as well as any other necessary addendums, will be published on the [Town of Madison’s website](#), under the “Resources and Forms” tab, then “[Bid/RFP Postings](#),” and State of CT/DAS site by **4:00PM Thursday, October 16, 2025.**

Proposals must be received in hard-copy format at the address listed above no later than **12:00 Noon, Wednesday, October 29, 2025.** Proposals will be opened in the Facilities Department Main Office, 284 Green Hill Road, Madison, CT 06443 and names of respondents will be publicly read aloud at that time. If attending, access to the building via the front door will only be granted from 11:50AM through 12:00 Noon sharp. Proposals will be subsequently reviewed by Town officials and discussed at a Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen to determine next steps.

Introduction

The Town of Madison (“Town”) is seeking qualified parties (a “Respondent”) to submit an Expression of Interest (the “Proposal” or “EOI”) for the development of the Academy School building located at 4 School Street in Madison, CT (the “Academy” or “Building” or “Site”). The Academy Building is an historic building in a prime location in the center of downtown Madison, approximately 250 feet east of the historic Madison Green and one block west of Madison’s vibrant central business district along the Boston Post Road/Route 1. The location offers excellent access to existing shopping, dining, recreation and entertainment options, and many Town amenities. It is also easy to reach by way of a downtown street and sidewalk network, the interstate highway (I-95), River Valley & CT Transit bus service, and Shoreline East rail service, and has the potential to be incorporated into a Transit-Oriented District (“TOD”).

This Expression of Interest is intended to encourage and allow each Respondent the flexibility to propose a use of the Building (the “Proposal”) that will be beneficial to both the Respondent and the Town. Potential transaction structures may include lease of the underlying land and adjacent parking facility, acquisition of the Building, partial demolition of the Building, or expansion of the existing footprint, but should NOT include the purchase of the underlying land or the balance of the 5.13 acre parcel. The portion of the parcel that is currently being used for Town athletic fields is not being considered for further development at this time. While the Town is seeking to minimize Town funding for the development and is looking to create opportunities for future tax revenue, it is open to exploring public/private partnerships that meet Town development objectives outlined in this EOI. Academy is a public asset and any proposed transaction recommended by the Board of Selectmen would be presented to the residents for a public vote through either a Town Meeting or referendum.

Respondents are invited to submit their qualifications and site-specific redevelopment project visions for consideration by an evaluation team that will include the Madison Board of Selectmen (“BOS”) and other Town officials. As more particularly described under the Proposal Requirements, the proposal should include information regarding the project vision, project economics and key personnel, the technical expertise of the Respondent’s current staff, and the Respondent’s experience in undertaking similar projects.

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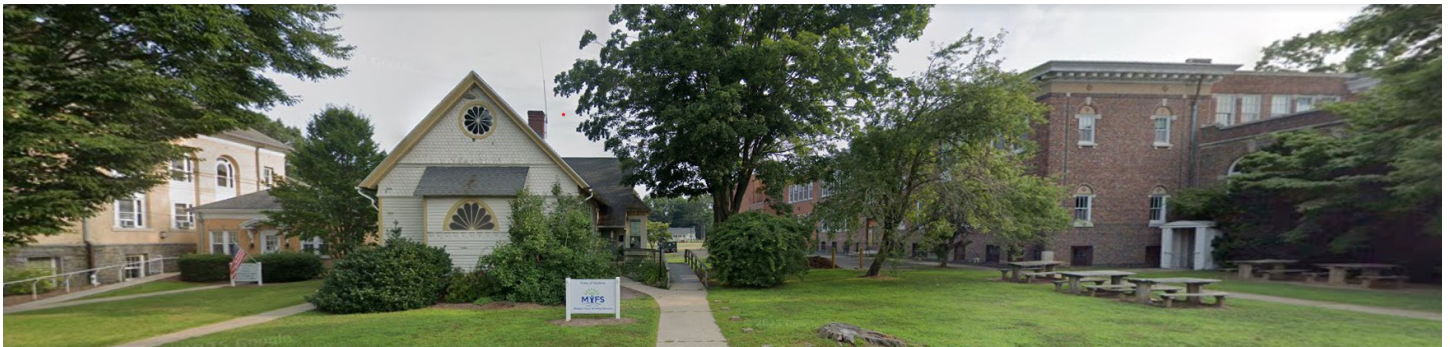
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Background

The Academy Building, a contributing part of a national historical register district, is listed on the state and federal historic registers and is considered to be an important asset in the Town's history. Originally known as the Hand Academy, the land was gifted from Daniel Hand in 1884 and became a free public high school in 1887. The original building was demolished and Academy School was constructed in 1921. A rear addition to the school was constructed in 1936 through a grant from the Works Progress Administration and operated as a public school in the Madison Public School District to educate various age cohorts over the years. The school was vacated by the Board of Education in 2004 and turned over to the Town in 2011 when it was determined it was no longer considered a viable facility for the public-school system.



Since 2011, the Town undertook multiple public outreach efforts to determine potential adaptive reuse of the Site which eventually led to a community driven proposal to convert the Building into a community center. In early 2022, the Town approved through referendum \$15.9 million in bonding to fund the community center project. The project was designed to include flexible, multi-use, and dedicated community spaces as well as offices for selected municipal departments with space needs. The flexible community space was intended to accommodate programming activities related to arts, education, recreation and culture for all age demographics and based on needs identified during an extensive public survey. To assist in project funding, the Town successfully secured a \$4 million Urban Act Grant from the State of Connecticut through DECD and a Federal Congressional Directed Spending Grant of \$3.625 million through the USDA. However, due to subsequent construction cost escalations and site-specific conditions, construction bids solicited by the Town in late 2024 indicated a significantly higher project cost of \$24 million. A new referendum was held in May 2025 to approve an increased project budget, but this failed to gain support by the voters.

A fresh look by the Town at future public use for the property offers an exciting opportunity for the private sector to partner with the Town. The BOS is now directing the Town to initiate this EOI process to determine alternate uses for the Site that meet Town strategic and financial objectives. Located in the heart of Madison, any proposed development could become an anchor to the downtown area and a flagship property. Upon receipt of proposals and a review by Town officials, the BOS will determine whether there is a realistic path with public support for Academy's future.

Property Information

The Site is located within the Town's Historic District and Downtown Village District and located in the center of downtown Madison, approximately 250 feet east of the historic Madison Green and one block west of Madison's vibrant central business district along the Boston Post Road/Route 1 (see image below). The Building lies adjacent to several historic municipal buildings as part of a campus-like environment. The location offers excellent access to existing shopping, dining, recreation and entertainment options, and many Town amenities. The Site is bookended by Madison's historic E.C. Scranton Memorial Library Building and is walking distance from the Town Green, main shopping district on Main street, the Madison Senior Center, many churches, and the Surf Club, Madison's premier beach facility. It is also easy to reach by way of interstate highway (I-95), River Valley & CT Transit bus service, and Shoreline East rail service, and has the potential to be incorporated into a Transit-Oriented District ("TOD").



The Site is zoned R-2. Any Proposal not conforming to existing zoning regulations may require possible regulation amendments by the Town's Planning & Zoning Commission and/or approval from other local land use regulatory bodies. The Town is open to working with Respondents in addressing any zoning changes in order to facilitate a successful redevelopment of the Building that aligns with Town objectives.

As part of the community center project, the Town undertook extensive building and site analysis (i.e. engineering, environmental, septic, and selected demolition assessment). These reports along with all other materials included in the public bid package published in 2024 can be found on the Town of Madison website under "Resources and Forms"/ "Bids/RFP Postings" / and clicking "Show Closed/Awarded/Canceled Bids" or clicking [HERE](#). This includes recommendations for the location of a new septic system that is based on community center building use requirements and site soil characteristics.

Key Criteria & Objectives

The Town will evaluate proposals for the redevelopment of the Academy Building based on the ability of proposed projects to meet the following criteria and objectives:

Key Criteria

- Retains public ownership of the underlying land, preserves adjacent athletic fields
- Preserves a meaningful portion of the historic façade of the 1921 building
- Minimizes costs to the Town for development and/or building maintenance and provides potential for future tax revenue



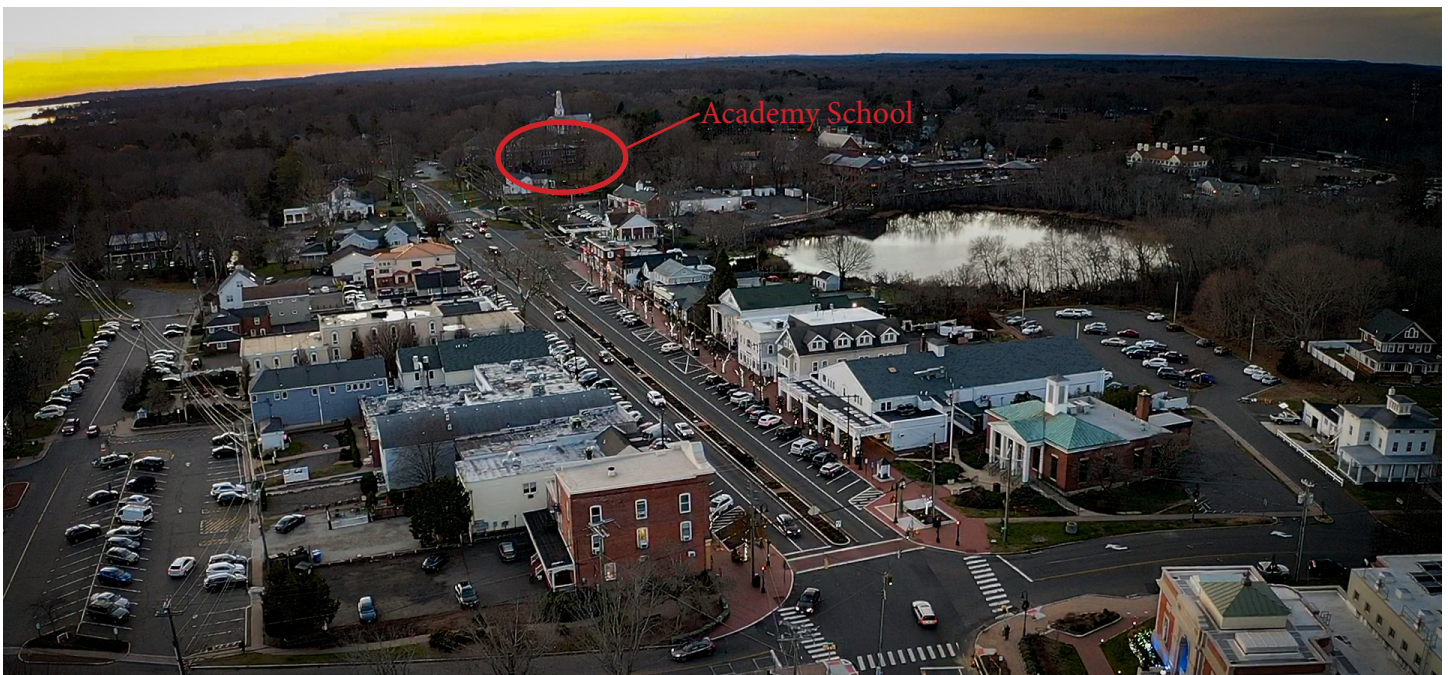
Objectives

- Reflects Madison's unique coastal history and capitalizes on its prime location near the main street shopping district, Town beaches, and position as a cornerstone in the historic district campus
- Reflects and encourages connectivity to existing neighborhoods, downtown, public transit, and other nearby Town amenities
- Contributes to the Town's [Plan of Conservation and Development](#) and aligns with other planning objectives:
 - Supports economic vibrancy and assists in achieving economic development objectives outlined in the Town's [Strategic Plan](#); and/or
 - Creates opportunities for potential community amenities identified in the [Academy Advisory Committee Outcome Report](#) from March 2023; and/or
 - Aligns with the Town's housing goals, as outlined in the Town's [Strategic Plan](#), [Plan of Conservation and Development](#), and/or the 2022 [Affordable Housing Plan](#)

Transaction Considerations

The Town is open to a variety of transaction structures that maximizes the use of this significant Town asset, preserves a portion of the historic façade, and benefits the taxpayer's long-term interests. Potential transaction structures may include lease of the underlying land and adjacent parking facility, acquisition of the Building, partial demolition of the Building, or expansion of the existing footprint, but should NOT include the purchase of the underlying land or the balance of the 5.13 acre parcel. The portion of the parcel that is currently being used for Town athletic fields is not being considered for further development at this time. Any lease proposal (including Building or Grounds) should highlight relevant terms and conditions relating to improvements, maintenance, and liability. Although not required, proposals will be welcomed that retain some community access and/or include community amenities.

While the Town is seeking to minimize Town funding for the development and is looking to create opportunities for future tax revenue, it is open to exploring public/private partnerships that meet Town development objectives outlined in this EOI. While the successful Respondent will be primarily responsible for designing, financing, constructing, marketing (if/as applicable), operating, and maintaining the Building, the Town may consider providing assistance to complete any regulatory approvals and/or required zoning changes for the Property. In addition, as a result of previous redevelopment plans of Academy for a community center, the Town secured various forms of funding which could, with further exploration, be made available to assist in realizing the Town's and Respondent's shared vision for preserving and re-purposing this facility. The Town also has an Economic Development Tax Incentive Program and may consider potential tax abatements for housing developments that assist in meeting our affordable housing goals. Such awarding of any funding, tax abatements, and other financial incentives would enable the Town to function as a *de facto* partner with the developer, ensuring a financially-viable outcome while satisfying community expectations for redevelopment of the site. **Any final transaction structure will require approval by the residents of Madison through either a Town Meeting or referendum.**



Proposal Requirements

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Project Overview
- 1.2. How will the Proposal meet the Development Key Criteria & Objectives outlined in the EOI?
- 1.3. Description of transaction economics
- 1.4. Why is your project team interested in this redevelopment initiative?
- 1.5 What is your experience in similar redevelopment projects?
- 1.6 What are the primary risks you see to complete the project as envisioned?

2. Project Description

- 2.1. Description of your team's understanding of the project
- 2.2. Proposal for Building including site plans and conceptual drawings
- 2.3. How will the property be used?
- 2.4. Describe any sensitivity to surroundings
- 2.5. What will be the parking requirements and how would these be addressed?
- 2.6. Does it include any sustainability measures?
- 2.7. Does it include any community amenities?
- 2.8. Does it require zoning variance(s) or utilizing alternative zoning districts?

3. Project Team

- 3.1. Team member Names, Roles and Responsibilities
- 3.2. Qualifications and Relevant Experience of the individual project team members
- 3.3. Organizational Chart
- 3.4. Unique features and benefits that your team provides
- 3.5. References

4. Project Financial Information

- 4.1. Proposed terms relating to any leases or building acquisition costs
- 4.2. Estimated soft costs including architectural, investigation, permitting
- 4.3. Estimated site development and remediation costs
- 4.4. Estimated construction costs
- 4.5. Proposed Developer's Fee
- 4.6. Expected long-term revenue for the Town

5. Sources of funding

- 5.1. Overview of potential funding sources including use of tax credits, abatements, grants along with other financing methods
- 5.2. Demonstrated ability to secure financing for projects of this scale and complexity

6. Past performance and /or Current works-in-progress

- 6.1. Relevant prior project experience
- 6.2. Experience with the adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of historic buildings
- 6.3. Demonstrated ability to navigate environmental, technical, political, and/or financial obstacles that may arise during the development process

Submittal, Selection Process & Timeline

The BOS intends to fully investigate and evaluate the economic and community benefits of each Proposal, solicit community input throughout the process, and potentially make a final recommendation to the public for a vote through either a referendum or Town Meeting, depending on the final proposal and transaction structure. The timeline presented below is tentative and the Town reserves the right to adjust the timeline to meet BOS objectives and community expectations, or may determine not to proceed with any submitted proposals.

Key Action	Due Date
Release Expression of Interest	Monday, August 25, 2025
Mandatory Site Tours	Tuesday, September 30, 2025, at 10:00AM and Thursday, October 2, 2025 at 2:00PM
Questions Due	Friday, October 10, 2025
Responses to Questions Posted	Thursday, October 16, 2025
Expression of Interest Due	Wednesday, October 29, 2025
Board of Selectmen Special Meeting to Review Proposals, Determine Next Steps	Week of November 10, 2025
Potential Interviews, Due Diligence Review, and/or Public Presentations of Selected Project Teams and Proposals	Weeks of November 17 - December 8, 2025
Possible BOS Action to Move Forward with Preferred Proposal	By January 2026



The Town of Madison is an Equal Opportunity Employer and will not transact business with firms that are not in compliance with all Federal and State Statutes and Executive Orders pertaining to non-discrimination.