



City of Grand Forks
Staff Report
Committee of the Whole – March 9, 2020
City Council – March 16, 2020

Agenda Item: Demers Light Pillars and Downtown Update

Submitted By: Meredith Richards, Community Development Director

Staff Recommended Action - Revised: ~~Table indefinitely Award Demers Light Pillar Project to Badman Design for \$440,000 and authorize executing an appropriate contractual agreement subject to City Attorney review and approval~~

Committee Recommended Action March 9: Refer to City Council with the recommendation to approve

Council Action March 16: Table until April 6, 2020

Council Action April 6: Table indefinitely. Approved unanimously

BACKGROUND:

A signature piece of the streetscape element of the Downtown Action Plan is a series of internally lit pillars approximately 14' tall (see attached RFP). NDDOT incorporated this concept into the Demers Reconstruction project, and 10 concrete bases have been installed. The pillars themselves were not eligible, however, so this portion of the project was included in the City's 2020 Street/Infrastructure budget (Fund 4815) at \$500,000.

An RFP/Call for Artists was issued last fall to select a qualified artist/architect/artisan/contractor team to design, fabricate and install the pillars. The original RFP drew nine responses. A selection committee (below) reviewed those submissions and selected four finalists: Badman Design, Indigo Signs, RDG/Dahlquist Art Studio, and Graybar Electric. Those finalists then submitted detailed proposals, including to-scale models, and were asked to make presentations that addressed the following elements of their proposals. The committee heard those presentations on February 20 and recommended awarding the project to Badman Design.

1. **Design:** Why is it memorable? What does it say about Grand Forks? Why did you choose the concept(s) you did?
2. **Material choices and fabrication techniques:** What factors went into your decisions? What are the specifics of your material and fabrication choices that add durability? Discuss how previous projects influenced your selections.
3. **Maintenance:** What routine maintenance needs to you anticipate? Describe how potential/expected repairs would be made: graffiti, collision, light failure, etc. Are replacement parts and labor readily available? Are you able to offer a two-year warranty?
4. **Discuss the line items of your cost estimate.**
5. **Timeline:** Assuming contract award by the end of March, what are key milestones in your schedule and when will they occur? What are the biggest uncertainties?

Staff will also provide a brief update on related downtown issues at the March 9 meeting.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS:

- Due to the unique nature of this project, a two-stage selection process was used. Nine initial submissions were received, from which four finalists were selected. Finalists were then invited to develop to-scale models and detailed costs estimates, which were then evaluated by the selection committee. Score sheets were provided to assist the committee in the decision-making process, with Badman Design scoring highest with an average score of 97 out of 110 points possible. The committee agreed that Badman's proposal best met the RFP criteria and recommended award of the project to Badman. The selection committee consisted of:

Dr. Ann Brown, Public Arts Commission
Chuck Flemmer, Historic Preservation Commission
Emily Montgomery, DAP Steering Committee
Jason Peterson, NDDOT
Ken Vein, City Council
Mark Walker, Asst. City Engineer
Blue Weber, Downtown Development Association

SUPPORT MATERIALS:

- Call for Artists/Request for Proposals

Call for Artists

Request for Proposals

DOWNTOWN LIGHT PILLARS

GRAND FORKS, ND

The North Dakota Dept. of Transportation (NDDOT) scheduled the reconstruction of Demers Avenue through downtown Grand Forks for the 2019 construction season. Concurrently, the City of Grand Forks developed a Downtown Action Plan, including streetscape concepts. Those concepts were incorporated into the NDDOT project, which is now underway; however, a major component will be only partially completed by NDDOT. A signature element of the streetscape plan is a series of internally lit pillars, each approximately 14' tall (see attached concepts). Ten of these are to be located along Demers between 5th Street and the Sorlie Bridge, primarily at intersections. The NDDOT project includes installation of ten pre-cast concrete bases/seat walls that contain an electrical circuit to power future light columns. The City of Grand Forks is seeking a qualified artist/architect/artisan/contractor team to design, fabricate and install the light pillars along Demers Avenue in 2020.



Over time, more light pillars may be added throughout downtown. The reconstruction of N. Third Street (Demers to University Avenue) is planned for 2021, and the selected team may be asked to assist with that project also.

BACKGROUND

Grand Forks is home to the University of North Dakota, the seat of Grand Forks County, and the namesake of Grand Forks Air Force Base 16 miles to the west. The Grand Forks, ND – East Grand Forks, MN MSA population tops 102,000. Downtown Grand Forks contains a growing mix of office, residential, retail, social service and governmental uses. Demers Avenue is a major east-west roadway and part of the state highway system. It runs through the center of downtown Grand Forks, where it has an average daily traffic count of 15,580 vehicles per day.

In 2016, the Mayor's Vibrancy Initiative (MVI) outlined a long-term vision for Grand Forks, one that recognized the value of a unique and vibrant downtown, and its importance in attracting and retaining businesses, workforce and visitors to the community. To implement the MVI vision, the City hired RDG Planning & Design to develop a Downtown Action Plan (DAP). To meet NDDOT's timeline, the first DAP product was a downtown streetscape plan to guide the design of the Demers reconstruction project.

RDG's scope of work also included a parks and open space plan; wayfinding; design standards; and redevelopment strategies. The Demers reconstruction project is the first physical expression of the DAP and it will lay the foundation for a number of future projects. The light pillars are a very high-profile element of a high-visibility corridor, so expectations are high.

PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS & CONSIDERATIONS

This project will require collaboration and coordination across several fields -- art, design, engineering, construction -- and style and function are equally important. Stylistically, light is an important theme running throughout the DAP's streetscape and park concepts, as is the history of Grand Forks, especially its relationship to the Red River. RDG's preliminary sketches for the light pillars referenced the flood monument in the Greenway as well as Prohibition-era neon signs. In the attached concept renderings, inspiration was drawn from the river, clay, UND art pottery (Margaret Cable) and the School of Mines. Artists are expected to create a theme for the light pillars that is meaningful, evocative and memorable.

Functionally, the light pillars must be durable and fit the pre-cast bases shown on the attached drawing. They will be installed in high-traffic locations that are exposed to extremes of weather and other stresses, and are expected to function over a 20-year lifespan. The light emitted must be white; color or animation is not an option. Installation of the light pillars should be planned for the 2020 construction season, or as soon as practicable upon completion of the current NDDOT project. The team selected will manage the project from design through fabrication through installation, working collaboratively with City and/or NDDOT staff to ensure the final product complies with local, state and federal requirements.

Characteristics should include:

- A unique, appealing, and memorable identity for Downtown Grand Forks
- A design(s) that complements existing streetscape themes and palettes, and has local relevance
- Distinctive and attractive in daylight and at night
- Materials that are durable and resistant to vandalism
- Fabrication method that minimizes maintenance and allows repair/replacement of components as required

SELECTION PROCESS

Given the multiple disciplines involved in this project and the magnitude of the final product, a two-part selection process has been developed. The submission materials listed below will be reviewed by a committee that may include representation from the City, NDDOT, Downtown Development Assoc., the Community Foundation, Public Arts Commission, MVI, DAP steering committee, and ND Museum of Art. Based on that review, up to three finalists will be offered a \$1500 stipend to create an in-depth proposal. That proposal, to include a detailed to-scale physical or digital model and comprehensive cost estimate, will be presented to the review committee (more information will be provided to finalists upon selection). The committee's recommendations will be forwarded to City Council for final action.

SUBMISSION MATERIALS

1. *Letter of intent* from the project leader, including contact information, that describes your interest in the project, how it relates to your body of work, the approach you envision, and the team you will form to support it.
2. *A brief concept proposal* that describes your ideas for the light pillars in no more than two pages; sketches are encouraged but not required.

3. *Resumes* of the lead artist/designer and core team members; include narrative describing the role(s) of team members.
4. *Portfolio* showcasing three past projects. Include relevant information as to how they relate to the proposed project: similarities in material, scale, site, etc. Please limit any videos to 2 minutes and still images to 5 per project. Include references for each (contact name, email, phone number).

BUDGET

Up to \$45,000 per light pillar, complete and installed, has been budgeted for this project. Depending on the per unit cost, additional work for the N. 3rd St. project may also be commissioned as part of this project. The successful artist/team is responsible for all costs associated with design, research, engineering, materials, fabrication, shipping/transportation, installation, taxes, insurance, and any other costs necessary to complete the project. City permit and code requirements will apply; however, the City will waive permit fees associated with this project.

TIMELINE

Week of 10/28/19	Call for artists/RFP issued
12/16/19	Deadline for concept proposals (5 p.m.)
Mid-January 2020	Finalists notified
Mid-February 2020	Finalist presentations
3/2/20	City Council approves selected proposal (tentative)
Fall 2020	Installation complete

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

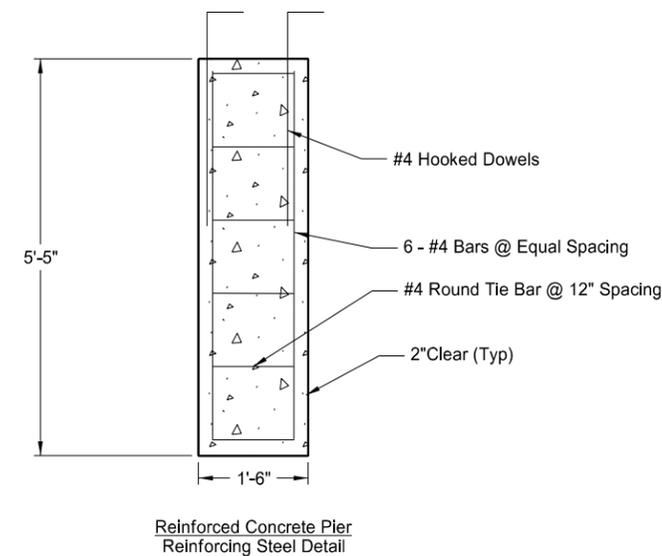
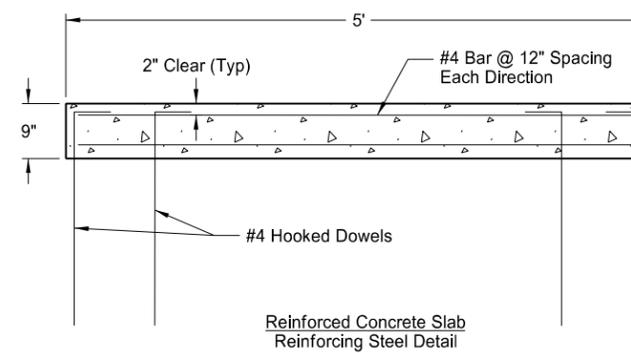
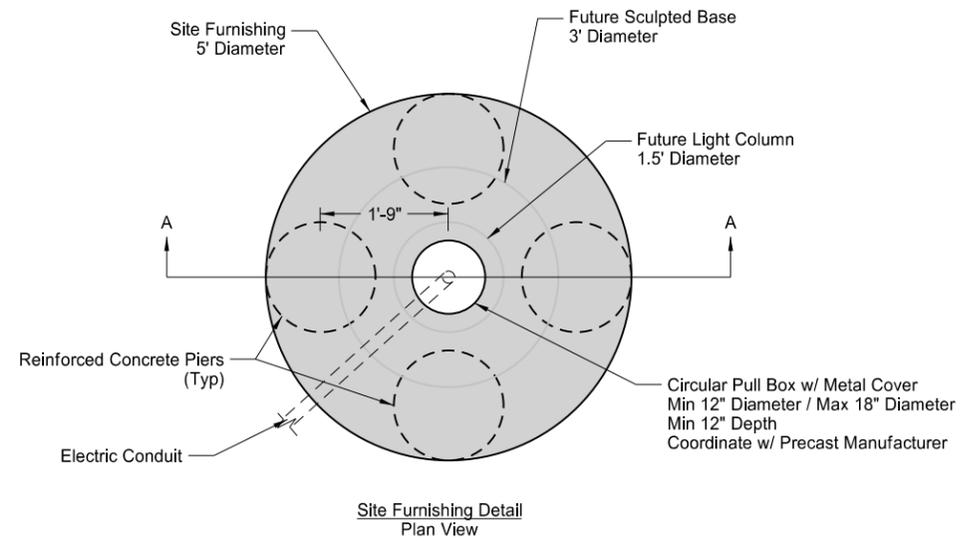
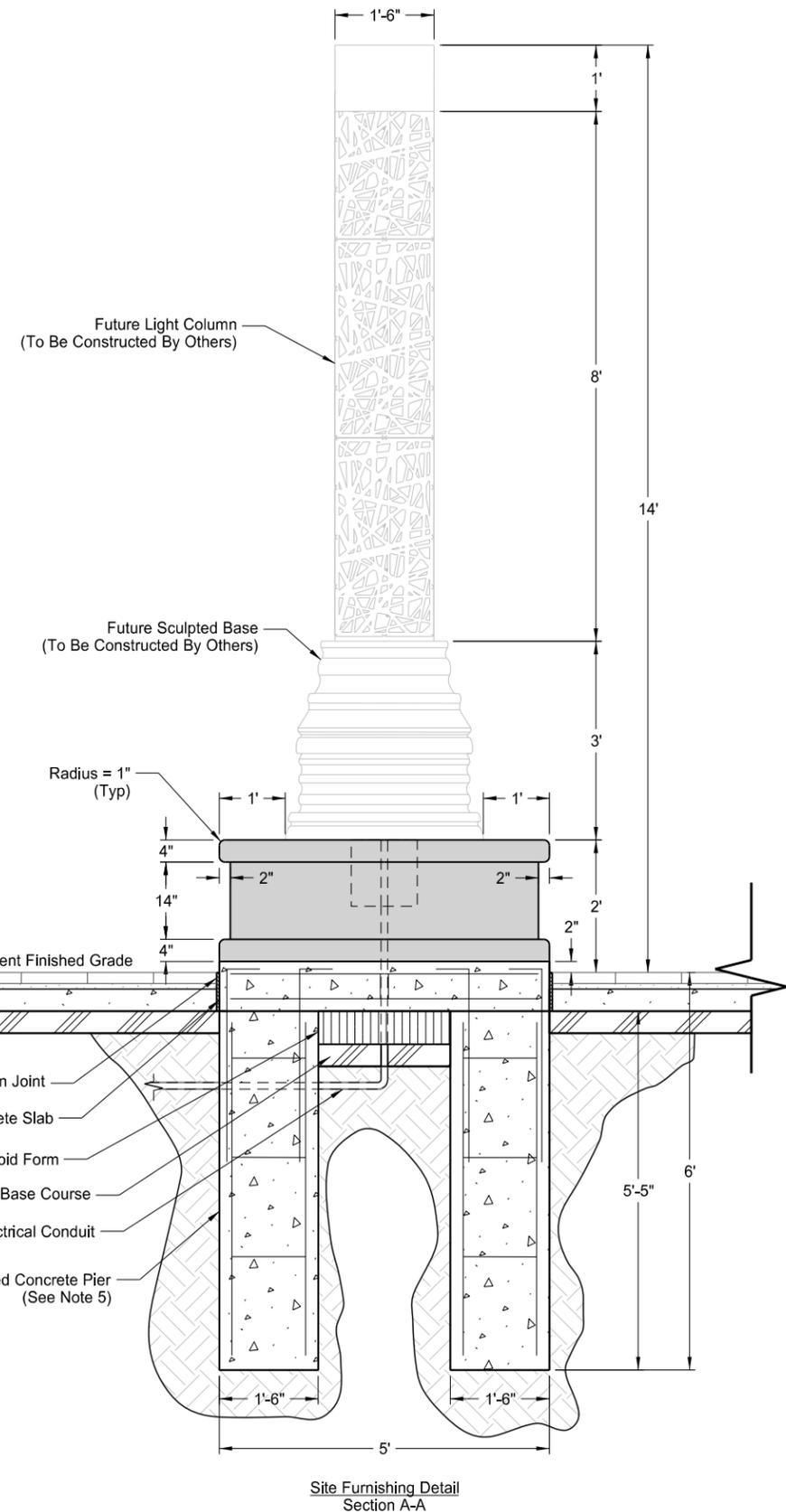
1. The deadline for submission of concept proposals is 5 p.m. on Monday, December 16, 2019. Please direct inquiries and submissions (pdf plus 1 hard copy) to:

Meredith Richards, Director
Community Development
255 N. 4th Street
Grand Forks, ND 58203
mrichards@grandforksgov.com, (701) 792-2864
2. The City of Grand Forks reserves the right to waive irregularities, to reject any or all submissions, to re-solicit submissions, and to negotiate with selected respondents if such action is deemed to be in the City's best interests.
3. The City of Grand Forks retains the right to negotiate modifications to all submissions.
4. All products developed pursuant to this request will be owned by the City of Grand Forks.
5. No member, officer, or employee of the City of Grand Forks, its governing body or of any local public body having jurisdiction within the City of Grand Forks' service area, shall have any interest, direct or indirect, in any resultant contract or the proceeds thereof.

STATE	PROJECT NO.	SECTION NO.	SHEET NO.
ND	NHU-6-002(125)911	85	9

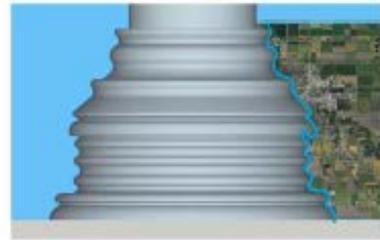
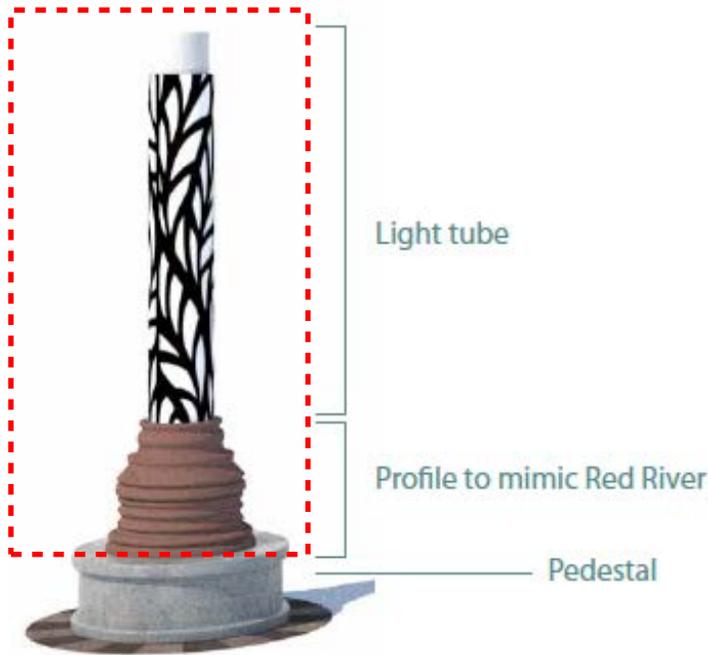
Notes:

1. Refer to Section 6 for specifications on concrete pigments and surface finish.
3. Use Class AE concrete.
4. Use Grade 60 reinforcing steel. Precast structure will have minimum reinforcing required by AASHTO specifications.
5. Utilize tube forms for piers. Double wrap the inside of each tube form with 6 mill poly plasting sheeting. Tape the poly to the top of the tube form prior to insertion into hole.
6. Refer to Section 6 for specifications of "SITE FURNISHINGS" bid item.
7. Future elements shown (light column and sculpted base) are not to be installed with this project. They are shown for future build-out purposes only.
8. Install void form under full extents of reinforced concrete slab except at proposed pier locations.



This document was originally issued and sealed by Matthew L. Isley, Registration Number PE-10095, on 02/15/19 and the original document is stored at the North Dakota Department of Transportation

DeMers Ave - 5th St to Red River
Site Furnishings Detail



This profile is then literally "turned" into the profile of the column base.
 Clay base mimics the Red River's course through Grand Forks.

Concepts > Red River, Clay, School of Mines and UND Art Pottery



THESE IMAGES ILLUSTRATE CONSULTANT CONCEPTS ONLY.

The portion within the red dotted box is to be designed and fabricated by respondents to this RFP. Respondents are expected to explore relevant themes and unique designs that are compatible with the pedestal bases/seat walls and the scale shown on the previous page.

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