



CELEBRATING
55 YEARS

nerej

City of Central Falls issues RFP for former Osram-Sylvania site

May 09, 2025 - Rhode Island

Central Falls, RI The city of Central Falls released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the redevelopment of two parcels on the former Osram-Sylvania manufacturing site. Located at 85 Hunt St. and 1154 Broad St., the parcels together represent an opportunity for investment on one of the city's two main corridors.

After reaching an agreement with Phoenix Investors, the city acquired portions of the 9.5-acre site — once slated exclusively for warehousing — thanks to a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development grant made possible by then-congressman Cicilline and the state's congressional delegation. Now, mayor Maria Rivera and her administration are inviting developers to help imagine a mixed-use project that includes affordable and market-rate housing, commercial business, parking options, and pathways for future economic activity.

The 1.8-acre property at 85 Hunt St. is at the corner of Broad and Hunt Sts., within a newly created overlay district that encourages a blend of residential and commercial uses. Prior to the city's purchase of the properties, all structures on 85 Hunt St. property were demolished, environmental remediation was performed to industrial standards, and the site was capped with asphalt. The smaller 0.4-acre parcel at 1154 Broad St. — which has historically been, and remains, an asphalt-covered parking lot — is zoned for general commercial use and also allows for housing.

“Since I took office, I’ve heard over and over from our community about the urgent need for more housing and jobs right here in Central Falls,” said mayor Rivera. “This exciting development opportunity is proof that we’re responding to that need. This is about reimagining what’s possible in our city, and taking big steps to build a more robust Central Falls — one that attracts and supports new businesses, residents in every life stage, and visitors from all over. This is one of the most exciting development opportunities in the region and we’re calling on any creative, committed partners to help bring our bold vision to life.”

The 1.8-acre property at 85 Hunt St. is at the corner of Broad and Hunt Sts., within a newly created overlay district that encourages a blend of residential and commercial uses. Prior to the city's purchase of the properties, all structures on 85 Hunt Street property were demolished, environmental remediation was performed to industrial standards, and the site was capped with asphalt. The smaller 0.4-acre parcel at 1154 Broad St. — which has historically been, and remains, an asphalt-covered parking lot — is zoned for general commercial use and also allows for housing.

Both sites are ideally positioned: on a major transit route served by public utilities, within 1.5 miles of the new Pawtucket-Central Falls Transit Center, and just minutes from I-95, Providence, Boston, and Rhode Island T.F. Green International Airport. Last year, through a partnership with Harvard Graduate School of Design, graduate students in the Urban Planning and Design program focused a semester's curriculum around reimagining the Osram site, sparking creativity around a multitude of design and development options. This RFP is an opportunity to make mixed-use creativity come to life.

"We've been working hard to get to this moment," said Central Falls Planning and Economic Development director Jim Vandermillen. "The groundwork has been laid with site cleanups and improvements, and zoning updates to support housing pathways. Now we're ready to welcome development partners who share our vision for smart, sustainable growth that's going to accelerate economic activity in Central Falls."

The Osram site parcels are also surrounded by foot and vehicle traffic, neighborhood retail, restaurants, bike lanes, and the nearby Blackstone River, making them primed for community-centered growth. Coupled with public safety advancements and housing development projects citywide, the community is ripe for a transformational mixed-use project.

"As a business owner located across the street from Osram, which has been stagnant for too long, I see this as a big opportunity for not only my restaurant, but for the success of our other local businesses and overall city economy," said Mario Barillas Méndez, owner of El Paso Restaurant. "I'm excited about the potential of this property."

The redevelopment aligns closely with mayor Rivera's second term priorities of accelerating economic and workforce development, while responding to city's pressing housing needs. The vision for the site was shaped in part by the voices of the Central Falls community who participated in mayor Rivera's first term Housing Summit. The city is open to proposals from one or more developers and is willing to consider both long-term ownership and land lease arrangements.

This RFP release is a clear sign that economic momentum is building, and Central Falls is ready to partner with those who want to be part of its future.

Developers interested in submitting a proposal can access the full RFP and submission instructions at www.centralfallsri.gov/purchasing or in person at the office of the city clerk (580 Broad St., Central Falls), Monday through Thursday from 8:30 AM–4:30 PM, and Fridays from 8:30 AM–1:30 PM.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540