

## GR officials reject lone bid for riverfront development

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The Grand Rapids Press  
2/26/2007

GRAND RAPIDS -- The city of Grand Rapids today officially rejected the proposal submitted by Grand Rapids Development Corp.'s Duane Faust to redevelop its riverfront public works yard.

Deputy City Manager Eric DeLong said the 43-page proposal submitted Friday did not comply with the requirements the city laid out with the help of a development consultant last year. Faust's was the only proposal.

"It was essentially devoid of any specifics," DeLong said.

Faust's group never submitted the \$15,000 non-refundable fee for proposals, nor did it send the \$50,000 in earnest money the city's request for proposals required. But even if the money had come in, the quarter-inch thick packet didn't provide most of the specific details required by the city, such as a financial plan and information about the developer's qualifications.

"The proposal submitted by GRDC was more in line with an RFQ (request for qualifications) proposal, and not the detailed technical proposal to be responsive to the Developer RFP (request for proposal) issued on Dec.

1, 2006," said a summary by the city's development consultants, Houston-based Stainback Public/Private Real Estate.

DeLong said the city will weigh its options about what comes next for the 16-acre parcel at 201 Market Ave. SW.

He said the process was not a failure.

"The process worked exactly as it should," he said. "The RFP will serve us well if we decide to move ahead in the future.

"We learned an awful lot through this process. We found a great consultant. We learned this is a great piece of property. The vision for redevelopment is still a good and valid vision."

First Ward Commissioner Roy Schmidt urged caution in starting another such process.

"I'm in no hurry to open this thing up again," Schmidt said.

Attempts to reach Faust were unsuccessful. As of Friday Grand Rapids Public Relations firm Lambert Edwards is no longer representing the company, said Don Hunt, who had served as Faust's spokesman.