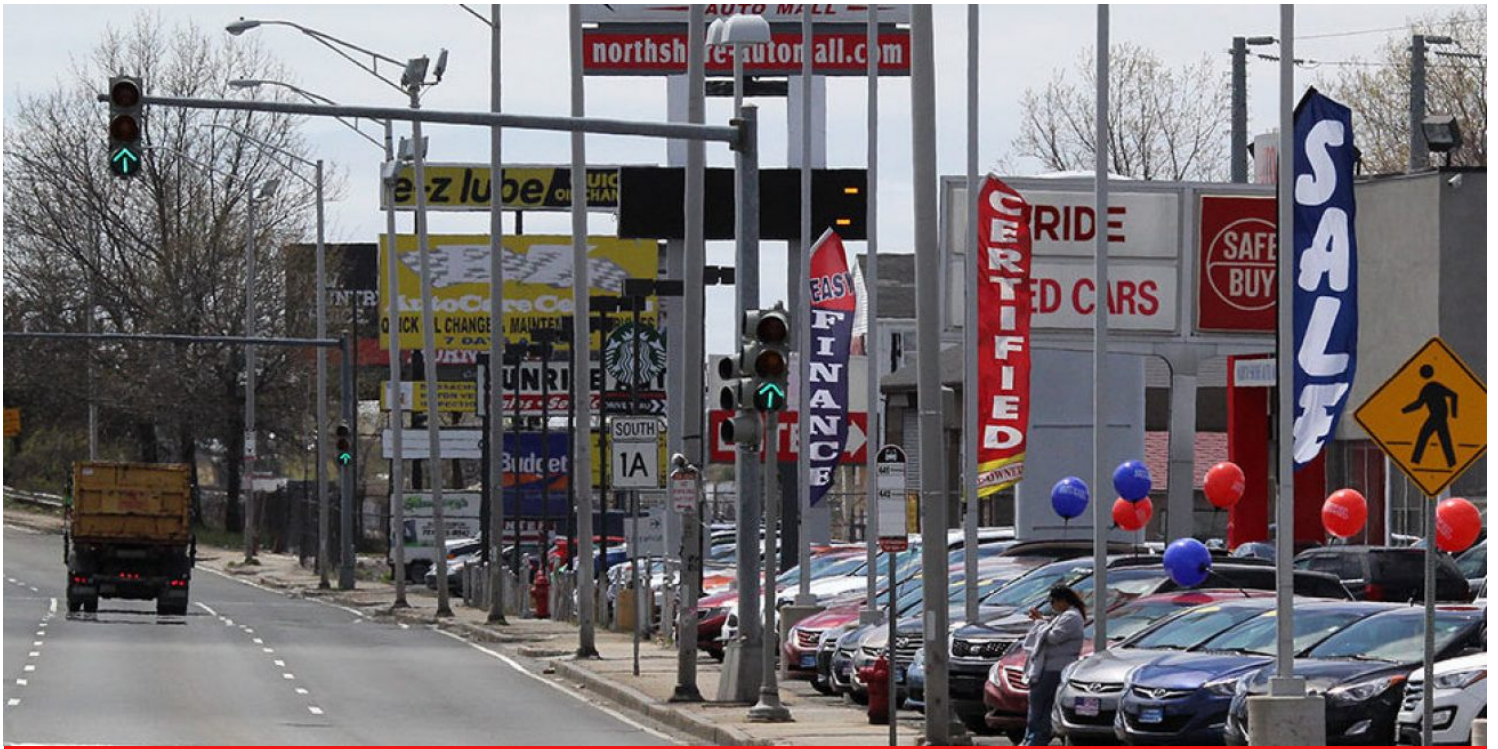


## BUSINESS, NEWS

# EDICTO PITCH AMAZON IN LYNN

BY GAYLA CAWLEY | October 3, 2017



*The Lynnway. (File photo)*

LYNN — City officials are planning to take their shot on landing North America's second Amazon headquarters, which is expected to create 50,000 high paying jobs.

Amazon, the world's largest e-commerce company, issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) last month to solicit the nation's cities to compete for the second headquarters, which they call HQ2. Several Massachusetts cities have responded to the RFP. With officials indicating that Lynn is entering the fray, the city will contend for the \$5 billion investment.

“We will be responding to the RFP,” said James M. Cowdell, executive director of Economic Development & Industrial Corp. (EDIC), the city’s development bank. “It’s a long shot but it’s a no brainer. It’s 50,000 jobs and the average salary is \$100,000 per job so we’re definitely interested.”

Cowdell said EDIC is the agency applying on behalf of the city and “we’re going to roll out the red carpet.” He said officials will be working with several landowners in the city for potential locations and have already spoken to several owners of very large pieces of land.

Amazon’s RFP does not require cities to own the land, but rather to work with private landlords on a proposal.

“We are really going to fight to land Amazon,” Cowdell said.

Ward 6 Councilor Peter Capano said the City Council meets next week and is expected to give the green light to EDIC to respond to the Amazon’s RFP, by council order or recommendation. He said it’s the City Council’s way of showing support for the effort.

“I think it’s a great idea,” Capano said of competing for Amazon. “I just want to make sure we get a shot at it.”

Capano said there’s property on the Lynnway right now that could be viable, and that the property owners are talking about coming together. He said with all of their property combined on the Lynnway, there’s plenty of room there for Amazon, which has cited a preference for a 100-acre site in a metropolitan area.

Capano said if Lynn were to land the Amazon headquarters, it would be the city’s second major corporation along with General Electric, and would cement Lynn as a place in the North Shore where people can come to work.

He said Lynn is the type of community where people need good paying jobs — there’s a living wage need and a company that provides living wages is a tremendous benefit. There would also be construction jobs created, Capano said.

Capano said he thinks Lynn can be competitive, as there’s definitely a willingness among the public, including officials in the city and people who have worked on development to bring in corporations. He said there’s also a lack of available space elsewhere.

“There’s only so many places where they can get 100 acres of land,” Capano said. “We think we can put together something that would be appealing to them. If (they) want to move to Boston, where do you get that much space? There’s not a lot of places.”

Charles Gaeta, executive director of Lynn Housing Authority & Neighborhood Development (LHAND) and chairman of the EDIC board of directors, said the board is in complete support of assisting the city or taking the lead on submitting a proposal for Amazon.

Gaeta said landing the headquarters “would be a total gamechanger” for the city, as far as job creation and increased tax revenue. He said there would also be a spinoff for additional housing and commercial businesses throughout the Lynnway.

“I think it’s certainly worth a shot and all of the property owners (who) have parcels (on the Lynnway) to put together to meet the requirements of the RFP seem to be on board,” Gaeta said. “There’s not many opportunities to attract someone such as Amazon. I’m convinced that the city can put together a very strong proposal. I definitely think we can be competitive.”

Mayor Judith Flanagan Kennedy told The Item last week that the city is in no position to compete with Boston, Revere, Lawrence and Worcester to bring the company’s second headquarters to Massachusetts.

“I would love to seize that opportunity,” Kennedy said last week. “But Amazon seeks more than 100 acres and that would mean it would have to go into Lynn Woods Reservation or take about half of the available buildable waterfront land. I don’t think it would be suitable for either.”

But Kennedy said on Tuesday that “we should try to invite them to come to Lynn despite not having the land area required per the RFP. Maybe other factors, such as our proximity to Logan Airport, will compensate for the relatively limited space. It can’t hurt to try.”

Amazon’s RFP said the company prefers a stable and business-friendly environment, an urban or suburban location with the ability to attract and keep strong technical talent, and communities that think big when considering real estate options.

The deadline to submit a proposal is Oct. 19. A decision is expected next year.



Gayla Cawley

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