



OAKLAND  
BUSINESS  
IMPROVEMENT  
DISTRICT



PITTSBURGH  
INNOVATION  
DISTRICT

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**OAKLAND RETAIL PLANNING PROJECT  
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL  
For  
RETAIL BUSINESS PLANNING  
& OPERATIONAL CONSULTANT SERVICES**

**ISSUED BY:**

**Oakland Business Improvement District**

in partnership with

**Pittsburgh Innovation District**

**DEADLINE:**

**Friday September 25, 2020  
5:00 P.M. EST**

**SUBMIT PROPOSALS TO:**

Mike Madden  
Pittsburgh Innovation District Director  
InnovatePGH  
MM@pittsburgh.id

## I. Purpose

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals for professional retail business planning and operational consultant services to manage a Retail Pop-Up space in the Central Oakland district of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Professional services will include:

- Manage and activate the Pop-Up space located at 3608 Forbes Avenue.
- Recruit and showcase local entrepreneurs that specialize in retail (soft and hard goods), unique services and packaged non-perishable foods. On-going rotation of new entrepreneurs anticipated.
- Develop and implement a robust marketing and outreach campaign to include development of a Pop-Up storefront brand and events.

The project is expected to last for the duration of twelve (12) months. The project budget is not to exceed \$123,500 and is funded by a grant from the Allegheny County Community Infrastructure and Tourism Fund (CITF). The selected firm will contract directly with the Oakland Business Improvement District (OBID) on behalf of a joint venture comprised of the OBID and InnovatePGH (IP).

## II. Organization Descriptions

**Oakland Business Improvement District:** Formed in 1999, the Oakland Business Improvement District (OBID) is the region's second largest place management organization in Pittsburgh, representing a diverse group of decision makers including property and business owners, universities, hospitals, city government, community and cultural non-profits. As a Business Improvement District, we are primarily funded by real estate property assessments supporting the delivery of key programs and services designed to maintain a vibrant, competitive and attractive district and providing amenities critical to accelerating Pittsburgh's standing as a global innovation hub. OBID is supported, in part, by over 250 business and property owners including Carlow University, UPMC, Magee-Women's Hospital of UPMC and the University of Pittsburgh. For more information, visit: <https://onlyinoakland.org/obid/overview-2/>.

**InnovatePGH:** InnovatePGH is a next generation public-private partnership built to accelerate Pittsburgh's status as a global innovation city. The partnership is powered by a coalition of civic leaders representing the Allegheny County, the City of Pittsburgh, the University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon University, UPMC, the Allegheny Conference on Community Development and regional philanthropic institutions. The Pittsburgh Innovation District is centered in Oakland, home to \$1.7 billion of research and development, and bridges innovation assets in the city's central core of neighborhoods. Pittsburgh's innovation strength is defined by the unparalleled resources of Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh (two of the nation's topflight research institutions) and UPMC's substantial intellectual capital. The direct proximity and historic collaboration of these world-class institutions creates one of the best naturally occurring innovation districts in the world. For more information, visit <https://www.pittsburgh-id.com/>.

## II. Community Context

Touted as the region's economic engine, Oakland is Pennsylvania's 3rd largest area of economic activity and is home to the driving forces of Pittsburgh's 21st century economy. Both a college town and a global medical center, Oakland attracts over 790,000 individuals annually including 570,000 annual visitors, 110,000 hotel guests, 44,000 students and 28,000 employees. Fueled by the growth of Oakland's education and medical sector, the City of Pittsburgh is building an Innovation District to be centered in Oakland as recommended by a ground-breaking report prepared by the Brookings Institute and unveiled in September 2017: *Capturing The Next Economy: Pittsburgh's Rise As A Global Innovation City*. According to this report, using the strength of Oakland's universities and hospitals, the City is poised to create a new industry that rivals the might of Pittsburgh's former steel industry- attracting global private companies to Pittsburgh

resulting in the creation of thousands of new jobs in the research and tech industry that will also support the growth of a thriving small business community. With \$3.8 billion of new real estate projects underway in and around Oakland, a remaking of the business district skyline is underway particularly in the BID geographic area: since 2016 nearly 2 million square feet of private development was completed.

OBID and PID are committed towards building an equitable Pittsburgh by investing in economic models focused on eliminating the growing economic gap and returning wealth to individuals and families. And the need is especially great given the devastating impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on our communities, especially our communities of color. *Our retail and restaurant establishments were practically shattered: over 60% of storefronts in the Central Oakland business district have temporarily shut down and for those that remained open, revenue losses ranged from 50% - 80% forcing business owners to cut staff and reduce hours of operation.* Through this Pop Up pilot, we seek to plant the seed towards the long-term community impact of building wealth through improving ownership opportunities for disenfranchised entrepreneurs through increased connection and exposure to the economic might of Oakland –Pittsburgh’s 21st century economic engine- ensuring that everyone participates in and benefits from the region’s economic transformation underway. Prosperous regional employment centers – like Oakland – attract the large customer base pivotal for such wealth building strategies.

The City of Pittsburgh undertook the [Pittsburgh Equity Indicators](#) project in 2017 to assess annual progress toward equitable opportunities and outcomes for Pittsburghers of all races, genders, and incomes, and to inform the City’s investment decisions moving forward. The research team developed a framework and associated indicators to measure equality in both outcomes and opportunities in Pittsburgh. Released in April 2019, the report compared two years of data to measure change across a wide range of domains, topics, and indicators. In the area of Education, Workforce Development, Economic, outcomes like median household income and poverty rates improved for white residents while they continued to decline for black residents. There are also disparities in business ownership between racial groups: Black Pittsburghers were less likely to be business owners (0.4 % of respondents) than white Pittsburghers (2.3 % of respondents) in 2017 (the most recent year for available data). Business ownership is an important indicator of entrepreneurial activity. Increasing the share of businesses owned by people of color and women allows them to build wealth, increase value, and help to close the racial and gender gap in economic wellbeing.

### **III. Scope of Work**

The selected firm will assist the OBID and InnovatePGH reposition a ground level storefront located at 3608 Forbes Avenue in Oakland. The storefront is located on the first floor of The Iroquois Building owned by UPMC. Located along the highly visible and heavily trafficked Forbes Avenue commercial corridor, this storefront provides an opportunity to create an exciting and innovative retail experience within Oakland. We envision 3608 Forbes Avenue as an innovative and highly curated retail environment that allows local craft businesses to sell their goods, market, and assist in reestablishing Oakland as a retail destination. Conceptual retail market ideas are focused on established makers within product categories include, but are not wholly limited to:

- Soft goods (clothing, home goods, linens, etc.)
- Hard goods (jewelry, handbags, etc.)
- Packaged non-perishable foods

OBID and InnovatePGH wish to partner with one or multiple organizations for the operations and curation of the retail space at 3608 Forbes Avenue. As such, we seek responses from qualified and experienced professional service firms to define and articulate an appropriate business plan and operational strategy for the space. Efforts will be focused on the following areas:

- Define ways to support retailers’ growth strategy and operating models

- Define strategy to recruit minority entrepreneurs and minority entrepreneurs from disenfranchised Pittsburgh neighborhoods
  - ✓ Minimum goal is to showcase 20-25 retailers annually with up to 50% minority/women owned;
- Identifying established retailers and makers to support; understanding current operations, gaps, opportunities, and aspirations to grow, particularly retail scaling
- Key partners to support retailers and makers with vision for operations
- Market and customer analysis and value proposition
- Consumer needs and perceptions of maker products and alternatives
- Infrastructure needs including interior design and layout to meet user demands
- Market analysis including ideal mix of tenants, services, and inventory
- Identify relevant brands to reach and activate target customers
- Financial modeling for years one and two of startup retailers and makers
- Track and distribute the following indicators to measure project success:
  - ✓ analyze sales metrics, sales by date, customer and products/ services
  - ✓ track foot traffic
  - ✓ track brand awareness
  - ✓ measure new email leads, social media mentions and engagement, hashtag impressions or conversations
  - ✓ for contest and giveaway promotions, track entrants and emails
  - ✓ qualitative analysis provided from tracked in-store customer interaction/ feedback

We seek a final product that incorporates best practices from similar facilities and ventures around the country. The chosen consultant will be asked to think through partnership opportunities with locally based retailers, as well as locally based national companies to engage their expertise in retailing and merchandising. The selected firm will be expected to present recommendations to the OBID and InnovatePGH leadership and/or a project advisory committee. The final scope of work will be negotiated and modified as necessary with the firm deemed most qualified.

#### **IV. Project Schedule**

(Due to the Covid – 19 Pandemic, the schedule below is subject to change)

RFP issue date:	<b>August 31, 2020</b>
Deadline for submission of written questions:	<b>September 23, 2020 5:00 p.m. EST</b>
<b>Submission due date and time:</b>	<b>Friday September 25, 2020 5:00 p.m. EST</b>
Response review timeline:	<b>One Week</b>
Anticipated interview dates:	<b>Week of October 5, 2020</b>
Anticipated contract award date:	<b>November 1, 2020</b>

#### **Social Distancing Guidelines**

*All respondents must adhere to the Governor of the State of Pennsylvania and Secretary of Health guidelines (<https://www.pa.gov/guides/responding-to-covid-19/>) while conducting all pre-construction meetings, site visits, public bid openings, construction meetings and contractor walk-throughs.*

## V. Submittal Requirements

Proposals should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward and concise description of the respondent's capabilities for satisfying the requirements of the RFP. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content. The proposal is to be submitted in a PDF format, minimum font size of 11 points and maximum 10 pages to include the following:

1. Letter of interest signed by signatory official of company including:
  - ✓ Legal name and address
  - ✓ Contact person (phone and email)
  - ✓ A statement indicating your understanding of the work to be performed
2. A brief history of the business/organization
3. Resumes and relevant qualifications to perform the work described in the Scope of Work (single page)
4. Demonstration of familiarity with subject area through prior relevant experience
  - ✓ Work products for similar scope
5. References (minimum two) that OBID and InnovatePGH may contact
  - ✓ Company
  - ✓ Contact person
  - ✓ Project(s) and date(s)
6. A detailed budget, work plan and schedule for completion of the project (project duration is 12 months). The Budget should show the full cost information for the following:
  - ✓ Detail of deliverables and methodology for project
  - ✓ Expectations of services or assistance to be provided by OBID and InnovatePGH
  - ✓ Organization and staffing overview including project lead/s and services provided by each staff
  - ✓ Details for carrying out project including a not-to-exceed total for our consideration
  - ✓ Additional relevant information and documents
  - ✓ MBE, WBE and DBE participation shall be clearly indicated
  - ✓ Your method of billing must be indicated. The preferred practice is regular monthly invoicing
  - ✓ If awarded, contractor will need to provide a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) and a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code
8. Explanation of why OBID and InnovatePGH should select firm
9. An indication of whether the firm's activities or representation of other clients could potentially pose a conflict of interest in its representation of the Oakland Business Improvement District or the Pittsburgh Innovation District.

### **Submit Proposals to:**

Mike Madden

Pittsburgh Innovation District Director

InnovatePGH

MM@pittsburgh.id

*We will accept electronic proposals in PDF format only.*

*No late submissions will be accepted. No fax submissions will be accepted. All submissions will become the property of OBID and InnovatePGH and will not be returned.*

## VI. Evaluation Criteria

- ✓ *Expertise, experience, and qualifications of the respondent for providing the services described in the Scope of Work*
- ✓ *Demonstration of familiarity with subject area through prior relevant experience*
- ✓ *History of innovative and responsive approaches to retail trends*
- ✓ *Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively with clients, public agencies and diverse stakeholders*
- ✓ *Completeness of the submittal and compliance with the requirements of the RFP*
- ✓ *Project budget by line item*
- ✓ *Client references*

## **VII. General Notices**

It is the intent of the OBID and InnovatePGH to select from all respondents the firm that best meets its needs as described in this RFP. OBID and InnovatePGH assumes no liability for any costs incurred by those who respond to this RFP or further requests for additional information.

Final price will be negotiated with the selected firm who will service in the capacity of an independent contractor for this project. The selected firm must be able to provide proof of general liability insurance for the entire duration of this project.

## **VIII. Reservation of Rights**

The OBID and InnovatePGH reserve the right to reject any or all proposals at its sole discretion. And in its sole discretion the OBID and IP may, but shall not be required to, exercise the following rights and options with respect to the proposal submission, evaluation and selection process under this RFP:

- To reject any proposals if, in the OBID and IP's sole discretion, the proposal is incomplete, the proposal is not responsive to the requirements of this RFP, the respondent does not meet the qualifications set forth in the RFP, or it is otherwise in the OBID and IP's best interest to do so;
- To supplement, amend, substitute or otherwise modify this RFP at any time prior to selection of one or more respondents for negotiation and to cancel this RFP with or without issuing another RFP;
- To accept or reject any or all the items in any proposal and award the contract(s) in whole or in part if it is deemed in the OBID and IP's best interest to do so;
- To reject the proposal of any respondent that, in the OBID and IP's sole judgment, has been delinquent or unfaithful in the performance of any contract with the OBID and IP or with others, is financially or technically incapable or is otherwise not a responsible respondent;
- To reject as informal, non-responsive, or otherwise non-compliant with the requirements of this RFP any proposal which, in the OBID and IP's sole judgment, is incomplete, is not in conformity with applicable law, is conditioned in any way that is unacceptable to OBID and IP, deviates from this RFP and its requirements, contains erasures, ambiguities, or alterations, or proposes or requires items of work not called for by this RFP;
- To waive any informality, defect, non-responsiveness and/or deviation from this RFP and its requirements that is not, in the OBID and IP's sole judgment, material to the proposal;
- To permit or reject at the OBID and IP's sole discretion, amendments (including information inadvertently omitted), modifications, alterations and/or corrections of proposals by some or all the respondents following proposal submission;
- To request that some or all the respondents modify proposals based upon the OBID and IP's review and evaluation;
- To request additional or clarifying information or more detailed information from any respondent at any time, before or after proposal submission, including information inadvertently omitted by the respondent;
- To inspect and otherwise investigate projects performed by the respondent, whether referenced in the proposal, with or without the consent of or notice to the respondent;
- To conduct such investigations with respect to the financial, technical, and other qualifications of each respondent as the OBID and IP, in its sole discretion, deems necessary or appropriate; and
- To waive and/or amend any of the factors identified in the RFP as pertaining to the respondent's qualifications.