

**DRAFT 1-9-18**

City of Madison  
Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

# MADISON PUBLIC MARKET OPERATOR



**DUE DATE: FEBRUARY 26, 2018**

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## Part 1: Project Background

Additional background information about the Madison Public Market may be found online at the City of Madison Economic Development Division's ["Madison Public Market" website](#).

### Vision

The Madison Public Market will be a year-round destination featuring a mix of private vendors offering fresh produce from local farmers, culturally diverse prepared food, locally made food products, handcrafted arts and crafts, and other products. The project's core focus is economic development and it will emphasize creating opportunities for new startup businesses to gain exposure for their products. The space will include not only retail vending, but also space for food processing and workforce training to strengthen our food system. The Public Market will be design to celebrate and display southern Wisconsin's unique food assets, diverse cultures, and new and old traditions. It will become a cherished and inclusive community gathering space with art, music, and events that bring people together.

### Background

Madison has been exploring the concept of a Public Market for over a decade. In 2011, the City's Local Food Committee (renamed the Public Market Development Committee in 2016) was created to study the City's food economy and make recommendations for the location and vision for Public Market. The Committee spent two years conducting research, talking with stakeholders, and forming the vision. In summer of 2013, the Committee engaged Project for Public Spaces (PPS) to assist in developing a business plan. The Business Plan for the Public Market was approved by the Madison Common Council on October 6, 2015 ([Resolution #38885](#)).

The City Staff and Public Market Development Committee then developed a detailed [Implementation Strategy](#) identifying key tasks that need to be completed to implement the Public Market project. This Strategy lays out five "Work Elements" necessary for the project to move forward: 1) Governance/operations, 2) Funding, 3) Design, 4) Vendor development, and 5) Outreach and momentum building. This Implementation Strategy was approved by the Common Council on March 15, 2016 ([Resolution #41819](#)).

In 2015, the City also completed a detailed [Racial Equity and Social Justice Analysis](#) of the Public Market project using the City's Equity Tool. This analysis led to ten specific recommendations for how the Public Market can have a positive impact on communities of color in Madison and these recommendations are continuing to guide the implementation of the project.

The Public Market Business Plan, the Implementation Strategy, and the Equity Analysis can be reviewed online at [www.cityofmadison.com/publicmarket](http://www.cityofmadison.com/publicmarket).

Since the approval of the Business Plan and Implementation Strategy, the City staff and the Public Market Development Committee have been working on tasks identified in those

planning documents. This includes working to finalize the design of the Public Market building, negotiating an agreement with the private developer, conducting a feasibility study of a capital fundraising campaign, positioning the project for New Markets Tax Credits, and cultivating potential public market vendors (including launching the “MarketReady” training program for potential public market entrepreneurs).

### **Summary of Progress to Date:**

- **Pre-2011:** City looks at opportunities for a Public Market
- **2011-2013:** Local Food Committee formed (now called the Public Market Development Committee) and spends two years doing research and outreach to create a vision for a Public Market that will benefit Madison
- **2013:** Project For Public Spaces (PPS) engaged to develop a business plan
- **2014:** City selects 1<sup>st</sup> Street and East Washington Avenue as the location for the Public Market
- **2015:** City and PPS finalize business plan (adopted by Common Council 10/6/2015)
- **2016:** The Common Council adopts the Public Market Implantation Strategy (3/15/16) and directs next steps on design, vendor development, and funding. The City engages Graham Baba Architects to prepare a schematic design for the project begins discussions with the Washington Plaza shopping center owners on building the public market as part of a
- **2017:** The Public Market Foundation is formed and kicks-off fundraising effort, MarketReady Program is launched, site plan finalized, and negotiations with developers underway

### **Summary of Facility**

The City is continuing to work on the details of the building plan for the Public Market. The project will be built as part of a mixed-use public/private development project that will include additional retail, office, and residential space. The City staff, the Public Market Development Committee, and the private developer are continuing to work through the details of the project’s design, building program, budget, and development agreement.

#### **Location**

The Madison Public Market will be located at the corner of First Street and East Washington Avenue. The Market will be built as part of a public/private partnership that creates a mixed-use project which will replace the aging Washington Plaza strip retail mall (formerly called the Fiore Center). The selection of this location for the Public Market was made in 2015, after an extensive analysis and public outreach effort. The City’s Public Market consultants recommended this location to the Public Market Development Committee, the Committee affirmed this recommendation, and the Common Council subsequently adopted a resolution identifying this as the Public Market location.

The Public Market will be a City-owned facility, operated by an independent non-profit operating organization, and built as part of a public/private redevelopment. The Public Market itself will be an approximately 45,000 square foot facility. The Public Market will consist of 1) The Market Hall and 2) The Food Innovation Center.

### **Market Hall**

The Market Hall will be the signature space in the Public Market facility. It will include:

- **Permanent Vending Stalls** –A variety of sizes of stalls for permanent vending by Public Market merchants.
- **Anchor Retail/Restaurant Spaces** - Larger spaces for more established businesses interested in a larger footprint space at the market.
- **Flex Space** – Flexible, open area that can be used for temporary vending, special events, indoor farmers' markets, craft fairs, banquets, weddings, and other community uses etc.
- **Arts, History, and Interpretive Elements** – Small gallery space for local artists and for civic story telling.

**The Food Innovation Center** - Working with local partners, the Food Innovation Center will provide food-based economic development infrastructure. The FIC will include kitchen and food processing space serving vendors internal to the market, as well as potentially other businesses and programs.

**Privately-Developed Site and Buildings** - The Public Market (Market Hall and Food Innovation Center described above) is a City project that will be designed and built through the City's contracting and bidding processes. The Public Market will be the anchor within a larger master-planned multi-use public/private redevelopment project that will include commercial and residential space.

**Outdoor Plazas and Parking** - There will be several outdoor plaza areas at the Public Market providing outdoor markets and experiences. Parking will be provided in surface lots and under the buildings.

## Part 2: Public Market Operator

### Public Market Operations

One of the key next steps for the Public Market project is establishing a governance structure and operating plan. Addressing this issue of long term operations and governance is the first “Work Element” of the Public Market Implementation Strategy that was approved by the Madison Common Council in Spring of 2016 and this topic has been a focus of the Public Market Development Committee.

As a major public investment by the City of Madison, the City will maintain oversight of the Public Market to ensure that the operations of the facility meet the City’s expectations and fulfill the public mission of the project. At the same time, for the Public Market to be successful, it needs some degree of independence and flexibility in its operations. To accomplish this balance of flexible operations with public oversight, the Business Plan recommends that the Public Market remains in City ownership but is operated by an independent non-profit organization. The plan recommends that this non-profit Public Market Operator (PMO) is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the facility including things such as maintenance, marketing, vendor recruitment, leases, programing, and events. This organization will be responsible for hiring the Public Market management and staff, and overseeing all aspects of the operations of the facility. The City will establish an operating agreement with this organization establishing the terms of the partnership and the mechanisms that provide for the City’s continued oversight.

The end goal is that the Market is managed by a non-profit PMO that is an independent organization governed by its own board of directors, run by a professional staff, and overseen by the city through an operating agreement. Again, balancing independence and flexibility for the operator while maintaining City oversight will be one of the key aspects of the operating agreement that will be negotiated during the next several months with review and final approval by the Common Council.

### Purpose of RFQ

The City of Madison is seeking qualifications from organizations interested in becoming the Public Market Operator (PMO). The selected organization would manage all day-to-day operations of the Market and will work in conjunction with the City to implement the project. The PMO will be responsible for hiring an Executive Director and staff for the Public Market, following the personnel plans described in the Public Market Business Plan. The selected PMO will lead the Public Market team, and serve as the key point of accountability for the project. This PMO (its Board and Staff) will become the public face of the Madison Public Market, and will be the key organizational leader that bridges all the stakeholders involved in the project including the City of Madison, the public, potential public market merchants, visitors, and donors.

The selected PMO will work alongside the City of Madison, Public Market Development Committee, and the Public Market Foundation over the next two years on finalizing plans for the project, raising private donations, recruiting vendors, finalizing an operating plan, negotiating an operating agreement with the City, and laying the groundwork for a successful

launch of the Public Market project. Once the Public Market is built, the PMO will be responsible for all day-to-day management, operations, leasing, marketing, etc. In addition to the day-to-day duties of the PMO, the organization will be responsible for keeping the City of Madison Common Council, other stakeholders, and the community at large aware of the Public Market and informed about what it is doing. Further, the PMO will provide the vision and ability to look ahead, anticipate future needs of the Market, and implement changes to keep the Public Market relevant and successful.

## **Intended Outcome of RFQ Process**

The Madison Common Council directed City staff to develop a Request for Qualifications to identify an organization that will become the Public Market Operator (PMO). The City's intent is that this RFQ Process will result in the identification and selection of an organization with the interest and ability to become the Public Market Operator (PMO). Once selected, the City and the PMO will begin the process of creating the terms of an operating agreement describing the details of how the PMO will manage the facility and articulating the PMO's long term relationship with the City of Madison. At this point, there is no funding associated with this RFQ process and no funding will be provided to the selected organization. The Business Plan recommends that the City provide seed funding to the PMO to assist the organization in taking on this role. The terms of this provision of seed funding for the PMO would be worked out between the City and the PMO in the development of the operating agreement. Further, selection of a PMO through this RFQ process will not lead to an immediate contract with the City. Rather, the City's goal is that this RFQ results in the identification of a PMO and begins the process of creating the terms of an operating agreement between the City and the PMO.

## **Public Market Operator (PMO) Responsibilities**

The following is a list of some of the responsibilities of the PMO. The details of the PMO's scope of work will be fully developed in the negotiation of the Operating Agreement with the City. The ideal organization selected by the PMO would have the ability to build the capacity necessary to address each of these. Responsibilities of the PMO may include the following:

- 1) **Project Development** – The PMO will work closely with the City of Madison, the Public Market Development Committee, the Public Market Foundation, and other entities to finalize plans for the project.
- 2) **Fundraising** – The Madison Public Market Foundation is leading the capital campaign for the Public Market. Any potential donor to the project will need assurance that their investment will be well managed by the entity that will operate the facility. As such, the identified PMO will need to participate in the capital campaign process and work alongside the Public Market Foundation on donor relationship building and on implementation of the capital campaign plan.

- 3) **Property Management** - Once the Public Market is built, the PMO will direct all the property management functions of the facility. This will include leasing, maintenance, long term capital improvements, and tenant services.
- 4) **Vendor Selection and Leasing** – There are currently over 160 entrepreneurs and businesses that have expressed a desire to locate within the Public Market. In addition, there are 30 vendors participating in the city’s “MarketReady” training program to prepare their business concepts for the Public Market. One core responsibility of the PMO will be to develop and manage a vendor selection process to identify the mix of merchants who will be selected to have space in the Madison Public Market. From there, the PMO will be responsible for creating and executing lease agreements with the selected merchants. Over time, as space within the market turns over, the PMO will manage all ongoing leasing arrangements.
- 5) **Marketing/Promotion** – The PMO will establish a robust marketing program for the Madison Public Market. This includes early-stage, pre-construction marketing of the project and building momentum and excitement in the community - as discussed in Work Element #5 of the Public Market Implementation Strategy. As opening day gets closer, the PMO will plan and execute a rollout and grand opening strategy to build awareness and to kick-off the Public Market with a good start. Long term, the PMO will manage a detailed strategy to continue to do marketing for the project through a variety of avenues.
- 6) **Events** – A strong events program will be critical to the Public Market’s success – both as a revenue stream and as a way to continually encourage foot traffic and build awareness. The PMO will handle all events planning and programming.
- 7) **Website and Social Media** – The PMO will be responsible for developing a robust website and multi-platform web presence for the Public Market. This includes the base website, as well as a multi-channel social media presence and possibly a custom app for the project. The web presence for the project should be continually updated with information about things happening at the market. It should include detailed profiles of all vendors, information about product availability on any given day, information on hours of operations for the facility as a whole as well as individual vendors, and a calendar with any special events or activities happening in the market.
- 8) **Financial Management** – The PMO will oversee the preparation of the annual operating budget for the Madison Public Market. Following the direction of the business plan, this budget will include personnel, advertising, events, professional services, insurance, fees/permits, legal, utilities, waste management, maintenance contracts, and supplies. The PMO’s budget should also build in a capital reserve line item for long terms maintenance and renovation needs for the facility. The PMO will also oversee the preparation of a long term capital budget.
- 9) **Reporting** – the PMO will be responsible for creating and delivering an annual report and quarterly updates to the City of Madison. The annual report will include information on current finances and budget, total sales, foot traffic, implementation of the racial equity strategies, business turnover, vacancy, staffing, etc. The PMO



- will provide written reports as well as periodic presentations to the Madison Common Council.
- 10) **Community Affairs:** The PMO will represent the Madison Public Market in a positive and professional manner to the Market community at large, surrounding businesses, government bodies, foundations, and news media. The PMO will ensure continuing and open communications with individuals, businesses, and organizations within the community and will encourage and enhance opportunities for public participation in the Public Market plans and operations.
  - 11) **Personnel Management:** The PMO will oversee administration of Public Market personnel policies, including equal employment opportunity, hiring and recruitment, labor relations, and an employee benefits program. The PMO will develop a employee handbook, onboarding, and training programs for staff. The PMO Board will hire and employee the Executive Director and market staff.
  - 12) **Business Incubation and Acceleration** – One of the goals of the Madison Public Market is to cultivate new businesses and support their growth. One of the roles of the PMO will be to work with community partners to fulfill this aspect of the Public Market mission. This includes managing the long term continuation of the newly-launched “MarketReady Program” and working with local partner organizations on other coordinated business development, incubation, and acceleration programing as part of the operations of the Public Market. Local connections and partnerships with other Madison-based organizations that have programs and expertise in this area will be important.
  - 13) **Long Range Planning:** The PMO will be responsible for long range planning for the Madison Public Market to ensure its long term viability and success. This includes making sure the Public Market is responsive to changing dynamics in consumer preferences and changing cultures in the City. This also includes being aware of how new technologies may influence the market, and adopting new programs, services, and operational strategies to keep the Public Market viable in a changing consumer environment.
  - 14) **Equity and Inclusiveness** – The Madison Public Market Racial Equity Analysis identifies ten recommendations for ways that the Public Market can be welcoming and inclusive, and a platform for diverse entrepreneurship. The PMO will be responsible for implementation of these recommendations.

### **Preferred Qualifications of PMO Leadership Team**

The Public Market Operator (PMO) will be an organization with the ability to execute the list of responsibilities described above. The “PMO Leadership Team” (Board of Directors and/or Organization Staff) will include the requisite experience or expertise necessary to fulfill these responsibilities. The following is a list of “Preferred Qualifications” of the PMO Leadership Team. If a potential PMO does not currently meet all of these qualifications, the

submittal in response to the RFQ should describe a strategy for how these qualifications will be in place by the time the Public Market opens.

- 1) **Project Development and Organizational Leadership Experience** – The PMO leadership will include individuals with experience leading or participating in the development of new major projects. This would include expertise in fundraising for a large capital projects, real estate development experience, knowledge of city approval processes, and experience with public/private partnerships.
- 2) **Financial and Personnel Management** – The PMO leadership will include expertise in managing the finances of a complex facility and experience hiring and managing a staff.
- 3) **Facility Management** – The PMO will have experience managing large, multi-use facilities and have an understanding of building systems operations, including familiarity with sustainable and energy efficiency practices.
- 4) **Leasing** – The PMO Leadership will experience with creating and executing commercial leases with small business tenants, and managing incomes and expenses in the operations of a leasable commercial building.
- 5) **Business Development and Vendor Issue Awareness** – PMO Leadership will include experience developing and supporting small businesses and have a deep understanding of the issues and challenges facing prospective public market vendors. The PMO will have experience with business incubation and acceleration.
- 6) **Food Industry Knowledge** – The PMO Leadership will know the Southern Wisconsin food economy and have experience working with small businesses in the food sector, particularly retail-based food businesses. Emphasis will be placed on experience working with diverse entrepreneurs and experience supporting small business development as part of addressing poverty, creating jobs, and addressing economic injustice.
- 7) **Strong Community/Neighborhood Connections** – The PMO Leadership will have strong ties to the community and nearby neighborhoods. The PMO will have experience working with neighborhood associations and building consensus for long term projects. Though this would emphasize connections to the immediate neighborhoods, the PMO leadership will also have wide networks and connections across the City and region.
- 8) **Cultural Competency and Leadership Related to Racial Equity** – The PMO leadership will have deep ties to communities of color in Madison and ability to play a leadership role in implementing the equity recommendations for the project. The PMO will have the connections and credibility needed to recruit a diverse array of vendors and help ensure that the Public Market is design to be truly welcoming to all residents. The PMO will have experience with community engagement and strong networks across Madison.

- 9) **Project Awareness and Background** – The ideal PMO Leadership will be fully up-to-speed on the Madison Public Market project through past and ongoing participation in the project. The ideal PMO Leadership will be aware of the mission and background of the project and have existing relationships with key stakeholders including the City Staff, the Public Market Foundation, the Public Market Development Community, and the prospective vendors. The Public Market project is a locally-focused initiative with an emphasis on supporting the growth and success of local entrepreneurs and on strengthening the local food system. As such, it will be important for the PMO to be an organization with local ties to Madison and connections with partners in the local business community and food system.

### **PMO Relationship with the City of Madison**

After selecting the Public Market Operator through the RFP process, the City of Madison then expects to work with the PMO to structure an operating agreement. As the Public Market is a major City of Madison capital investment, the City's goal is to maintain ownership of the Public Market facility and to maintain oversight of the Public Market's operations. At the same time, the City recognizes that to be successful, day to day operations of the Public Market need to be independent of the City. The Operating Agreement between the City and the PMO will describe the terms of this partnership.

As part of the Operating Agreement, the Public Market Operator will need to work in partnership with the City. Some of the City's expectations of this partnership may include:

- The City will have authority to make appointments to the PMO Board of Directors, with appointments made by the Madison Mayor and approved by the Madison Common Council
- The City will approve the hiring of the Public Market Executive Direction, Manager, and Staff
- The PMO will submit quarterly and/or annual reports to the City with detailed information on the financial performance of the Public Market
- The PMO will provide the City with a detailed plan for the vendor selection and leasing process
- The PMO will agree to work with the City on the implementation of the 10 Recommendations that resulted from the Public Market Equity Analysis, and will provide updates on the results of these efforts.

Once the PMO has been selected, the details of the Operating Agreement will be developed in partnership with the City.

### **Stakeholders and Involved Parties**

The Public Market Project is a team effort that the selected PMO will be joining. Many stakeholders are already involved in the planning and implementation of the project. The key organizations involved in the project include:

- **Madison Mayor and Common Council** – The Public Market is a city initiative and a potential major commitment of City funds. The Madison Mayor and Common Council will review and approve all key next steps with the project, including the selection of the PMO and the execution of an operating agreement. Once operational, the PMO will be asked to submit regular reports to the Mayor and Common Council.
- **City’s Public Market Development Committee** – The Public Market Development Committee (PMDC) is an official City of Madison body that is charged with overseeing the implementation of the Public Market. The PMO will be expected to attend all PMDC meetings and provide regular updates to the Committee on progress.
- **Madison Public Market Foundation** – The Madison Public Market Foundation is an independent organization that was formed in 2017 and has been identified by the City of Madison as the responsible for the private fundraising campaign for the project. The selected PMO will work closely with the Public Market Foundation.
- **Vendor Community** – Over 160 individual businesses have expressed an interest in being part of the Madison Public Market. Further, the project’s “MarketReady” Program has selected 30 entrepreneurs for a training program focused on preparing them to launch their business in the market. The PMO will be
- **Madison Citizenry** – Over 2,000 Madison residents have engaged with the Public Market process by completed surveys, attending workshops, attending events, etc. The PMO will need to be well-versed in Madison public processes and be prepared to work with neighbors and citizens.

## Part 3: Submittal Requirements

### Requested Information

Organizations interested in being selected as the PMO should submit the following information:

- 1) **Overview of your Organization** – Submittals will include an overview of the organization. This will include the history and mission of the organization, financial status, and organizational structure.
- 2) **Experience and Background** – Submittals should include information demonstrating the organization's ability to build the capability necessary to operate the Madison Public Market by late 2019. This includes past or ongoing relevant experience with similar projects, or any experience related to the responsibilities listed above.
- 3) **Team Composition, Experience, and Qualifications of Key Personnel** – Submittal should include the resumes and/or bios of key leadership including executive committee members, board members, and/or staff. Submittals should include information about how the experience and qualifications of these key personnel aligns with each of the eight ***“Preferred Qualifications”*** described above. If an organization's leadership and staff does not currently meet all of the Preferred Qualifications, the submittal should include a plan for how the organization intends to build the necessary capacity to do so.
- 4) **Management Approach** – Submittals will include a description of how the organization will undertake the management of the Madison Public Market. This description should include information about how the organization will address the each of the ***“PMO Responsibilities”*** described previously. Again, if an organization does not have the capacity to meet all of the responsibilities listed, the submittal should include information about how the organization intends to work towards that capacity.
- 5) **Local Connections** – The Public Market is a locally-focused project with a mission to help support local businesses, strengthen the local food system, and create a great public gathering space for residents. It will be essential for the Public Market Operator to have connections to other related initiatives and relationships in the Madison community that relate to the Public Market mission. Submittals should include a statement about the organization's links to the Madison community, the local business community, and other food business and infrastructure projects.
- 6) **Equity Recommendations Implementation** – As noted, one of the preferred qualifications of the PMO is cultural competence and leadership related to racial equity. Submittals should specifically include information on the organization's experience and ability in this area. Further, organizations should review the City's

equity analysis for the Public Market and discuss the organization's approach to the ten equity recommendations.

- 7) **References** – Provide up to 5 references from partners the organization or its key leaders have worked with on community-based projects in Madison

### **Selection Process**

A City staff evaluation team will review and score submittals. Short-listed organizations may be invited for interviews and/or be asked to submit additional information. The City staff team will then make a recommendation for the Organization that will be selected to be the Public Market Operator. This selection will then be presented to the Public Market Development Committee and the Madison Common Council. The City reserves the right to reject any and all submissions.

### **Note on Qualifications and Capacity**

The current timeline for the project anticipates that the Public Market will begin construction in late 2018 and open in late 2019 or early 2020. The City recognizes that the Madison Public Market is a new project that is still in the planning stages. Therefore, it is unlikely that there is an organization with the existing personnel and overall capacity necessary to operate the Madison Public Market. The City's goal with the RFQ is to identify and select an organization with the potential to build the capacity needed to undertake Public Market operations in the project's timeframe. The City's intent is to select an organization and then work in partnership with that organization to structure an operating agreement and build the capacity necessary to successfully operate the Public Market when it opens. Accordingly, the review of the RFQ responses will place emphasis on identifying an organization with a strong leadership team, connections to project stakeholders, and commitment to the mission of the Public Market. The City then anticipates working with the organization in the months ahead to build the necessary staff team, technical expertise, and capacity to operate the facility when it opens.

## Part 4: Submittal Instructions

### Response Format

Responses to this RFQ shall be complete but succinct and shall address the submittal requirements identified above. Organizations should submit 5 hard copies of their qualifications package and one electronic version. Responses should be submitted to:

Responses can be submitted by mail to this address:

Dan Kennelly  
City of Madison Office of Business Resources  
Economic Development Division  
P.O. Box 2983  
Madison, WI 53704-2983

Responses can also be hand delivered to this address:

Dan Kennelly  
City of Madison Office of Business Resources  
Economic Development Division  
30 West Mifflin Street  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor Room 507  
Madison, WI 53701

### Deadline

Responses to this RFQ are due by **February 26, 2018 at 4pm CST.**

### Estimated RFQ Timeline

- 1/26/18 - RFQ released
- **2/26/18 - Responses Due by 4pm CST**
- 3/5/18 – Staff Review Team Completes Evaluations
- Week of 3/12/18 – Interviews and/or requests for follow up information
- 3/16/18 - Staff Evaluation Team Recommendation of Selected Organization
- 3/20/18 - Introduction of Common Council Resolution to Approve Recommendation
- 4/5/18 - Resolution Referred to Public Market Development Committee
- 4/10/18 - Council Action on Resolution to Select PMO
- April - July 2018 – City and selected PMO develop terms of Public Market Operating Agreement

### Contact

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