



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

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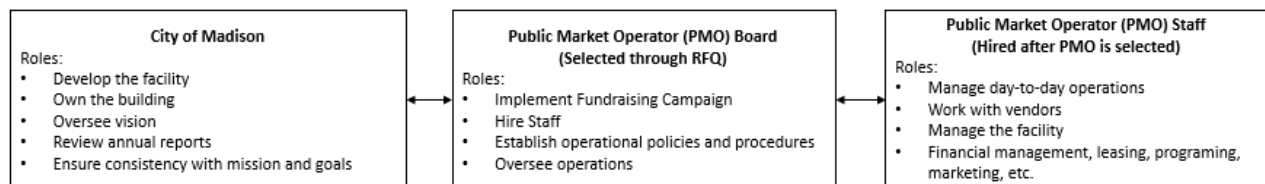
To: Common Council and Mayor Paul Soglin
From: Natalie Erdman
Date: March 6, 2018
Subject: Resolution Related to Public Market Operator RFQ—Res. File #50461

The purpose of this memo is to provide background on the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the Public Market Operator. This relates to Item #41 on the Common Council Agenda for March 6, 2018. (Resolution File #50461). A copy of the RFQ has been posted to the legistar file and is available at the link below:

https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/economicdevelopment/documents/Public%20Market%20Operator%20RFQ_due%20feb%2026%202018.pdf

Background on Operations and Governance Plan for the Public Market

Guided by the approved Business Plan, it is currently the City's intent to maintain ownership of the Public Market building and engage a non-profit organization to operate the facility. The terms of an agreement with any possible operator need to be fully negotiated and approved by the Council. The non-profit Public Market Operator (PMO) will most likely be an independent organization governed by its own board of directors. The PMO is expected to hire an experienced and qualified Executive Director and Public Market staff to run the market on a day-to-day basis. The City will maintain oversight of the Public Market through ownership of the building and an operating agreement with the PMO. These are the general parameters recommended by the Public Market Business Plan, approved in 2015.



Public Market Operator RFQ Process and Timeline

In December 2017, the Madison Common Council adopted Alternative Substitute Resolution 17-00962 (file #49283) authorizing staff to issue a request for qualifications (RFQ) to identify possible operators of the Madison Public Market. The resolution further requested that City Staff present the Common Council with a proposed choice of the Public Market Operator (PMO) by April 10, 2018.

The Timing for that process was as follows:

- **Dec 5** – Common Council adopted resolution 17-00962 directing staff to issue the RFQ to identify a possible operator and requesting a proposed choice by April 10, 2018
- **Jan 4** – The Public Market Development Committee met and created a subcommittee to provide input on the RFQ process
- **Jan 19** – Staff completed a draft of the RFQ and sent the draft to the PMDC Subcommittee

- **Jan 22** – The Subcommittee met, reviewed the draft, and provided some suggested changes.
- **Jan 24** – Staff posted the RFQ on the City’s Purchasing Services website and the Public Market project website. Staff emailed an announcement of the RFQ to the project list serve and directly emailed it to fifteen organizations with a potential interest. Staff also emailed it to Project for Public Spaces, as they are a leading national Public Markets organization.

RFQ Content

The RFQ identifies 14 specific responsibilities and 9 “preferred qualifications” of the future Public Market Operator (PMO). These criteria are based on the Public Market Business Plan, the Project’s Equity Impact Analysis, and direction from the PMDC and two Subcommittees focused on this topic.

14 Responsibilities

1. Project Development
2. Fundraising
3. Property Management
4. Vendor Selection and Leasing
5. Marketing/Promotion
6. Events Management
7. Website and Social Media Coordination
8. Financial Management
9. Reporting to the City
10. Community Affairs
11. Personnel Management
12. Business Incubation and Acceleration
13. Long Range Planning
14. Equity and Inclusiveness

9 Preferred Qualifications

1. Project Development and Organizational Leadership Experience
2. Financial and Personnel Management
3. Facility Management
4. Commercial Leasing Experience
5. Business Development and Vendor Issue Awareness
6. Food Industry Knowledge
7. Strong Community/Neighborhood Connections
8. Cultural Competency and Leadership Related to Racial Equity
9. Project Awareness and Background

Each of these responsibilities and qualifications are described in more detail in the RFQ. The RFQ also states that these are “ideal characteristics” of the PMO and organizations that do not meet all of these qualifications are encouraged to submit. The Submittal Requirements section of the RFQ then asks respondents to describe how their organization will address each of the responsibilities and how their organization aligns with the qualifications. In addition, the RFQ requests background materials like organizational history, resumes of key personnel, and references.

Inclusion of Language on Local Connections

The preferred qualifications includes language on cultural competency, community connections, and project awareness. These elements were included because the Public Market is a locally-focused project with a core mission of supporting opportunities for diverse local entrepreneurs. The Public Market will be part of a network of organizations and facilities in Madison focused on supporting business development and strengthening our food economy. As such, it will be an asset for the Public Market Operator to have experience working in the community and relationships with potential local partners. Again, these are noted in the RFQ as “preferred” qualifications not required qualifications.

Consistency with 2015 RESJI Equity Impact Analysis

In 2015, the City's Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative (RESJI) Team worked with Economic Development Division staff on a detailed Equity Impact Analysis of the Public Market. That Equity Impact Analysis includes ten recommendations. The recommendations include building partnerships with other related initiatives and connecting with other assets around the City. The RESJI analysis states, "The Public Market Should be a place that co-locates and weaves together various workforce training programs, business support services, and community programs." The Public Market operator will be more successful in implementing these recommendations if it is an organization with existing connections in the community and awareness of Madison's equity related issues and opportunities.

Consistency with City's Local Preference Purchasing Policy

The City of Madison has a Local Preference Purchasing policy and prioritizes engaging local businesses in all RFQ/RFP processes.

Next Steps

Responses to the RFQ were due on February 26. A staff team will review and score submittals, possibly conduct interviews, and make a recommendation to Council to meet the April 10 deadline from the Resolution. If the Council approves the selection of a PMO, City staff will begin working with that organization on the details of an operating agreement. That Operating Agreement will address the details of how the PMO will operate the facility and the terms of their partnership with the City. The terms of a negotiated Operating Agreement and Public Market Lease will be subject to the approval of the Common Council.