



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

**Introduction:** NewBo City Market, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, is seeking proposals from qualified and experienced individuals or organizations to operate a local foods grocery store. NewBo City Market (NBCM) is undergoing a physical renovation inside our public market space at 1100 3<sup>rd</sup> St SE in Cedar Rapids, IA. The grocery store is a key component of the larger physical expansion. NBCM will provide the selected operator subsidized rent and financial support for the grocery space's fit-out.

The selected operator will be responsible for autonomously managing all aspects of the store, including but not limited to: hours of operation, staffing, inventory, partners and suppliers with a focus on providing a diverse range of both conventionally grown and culturally relevant foods to meet the needs and preferences of our diverse community. Products should range from artisanal to staple. Additionally, the operator should prioritize sourcing from local farmers and producers to support regional agriculture and promote sustainability. Please see the attached "Exhibit A" for design reference.

1. **Background:** As part of the Next Level Local Capital Campaign, NBCM seeks to bring a grocery store to life in the heart of the historic New Bohemia District. The approximately 2000 square foot space will serve tens of thousands of residents within the walkable neighborhoods of New Bohemia, Czech Village, Downtown, Oakhill Jackson, Kingston Village and the Med Quarter as well as the community at large. NBCM is positioned on the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> St SE and 12<sup>th</sup> Ave SE where over 22,500 daily vehicles pass by. NBCM has over 400,000 visitors annually and over 300 public events and programs bringing people to our facility. NBCM is geographically situated in an area federally classified as a "food desert" and the grocery store is a way to remedy this community-recognized problem.
2. **Scope of Work:** The selected operator will be responsible for the following:
  - a. **Store Management:**
    1. Day-to-day operations including staffing, inventory management, merchandising, and customer service.
    2. Ensuring a welcoming and inclusive environment.
  - b. **Product Sourcing:**
    1. Establishing relationships with local farmers, producers, and distributors to source a diverse range of staples including fresh foods, shelf stable value-added foods, and both conventionally grown and culturally significant foods.
    2. Prioritizing products that reflect the cultural preferences and dietary needs of our community.
  - c. **Marketing and Outreach:**

1. Developing marketing strategies to reach adjacent community residents and promote the store's offerings.
  2. Collaborating with community organizations and cultural groups to enhance outreach efforts.
- d. Sustainability:
1. Implementing environmentally sustainable practices, such as reducing food waste and utilizing eco-friendly packaging.
  2. Supporting local agriculture and promoting sustainable farming practices.
3. **Proposal Requirements:** Interested parties should submit proposals structured in a “business plan” format addressing the following:
- a. Organizational Background:
    1. Overview of the person or organization's experience in operating grocery stores or related enterprises.
    2. Description of the organization's commitment to promoting and supporting local farmers.
    3. Provide a description of accessible start-up capital or your ability to raise funds, for example, via commercial loan or grants.
  - b. Operational Plan:
    1. Detailed plan for managing store operations, including staffing, procurement, and customer engagement strategies.
    2. Approach to creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for customers of all cultural backgrounds.
  - c. Product Sourcing Strategy:
    1. Plan for sourcing products from local farmers and producers.
    2. List of anticipated vendors and wholesale suppliers that demonstrate the ways in which inventory levels will stay consistent.
    3. Strategies for ensuring a consistent supply of fresh and high-quality foods.
  - d. Marketing and Outreach Plan:
    1. Strategies for marketing the store to diverse communities, including advertising, promotions, and community partnerships.
    2. Plans for engaging local cultural organizations and community leaders to enhance outreach efforts. (Cursorory plans at this level are acceptable. NBCM may be able to expand these plans, if needed, by leveraging existing relationships.)

4. **Evaluation Criteria:** Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
  - a. Experience and Qualifications of the Operator.
  - b. Strength of Operational Plan.
  - c. Effectiveness of Product Sourcing Strategy.
  - d. Creativity and Impact of Marketing and Outreach Plan.
  - e. Commitment to Sustainability.
5. **Submission Details:** Proposals must be submitted electronically to [julie@newbocitymarket.org](mailto:julie@newbocitymarket.org) no later than **July 15, 2024**. Late submissions will not be considered.
6. **Selection Process:** NBCM will review all submitted proposals and may conduct interviews or request additional information from shortlisted candidates. The selected operator will be notified by July 30, 2024.
7. **Terms and Conditions:** The selected operator will be expected to enter into a lease agreement with NewBo City Market and will be expected to open for business in conjunction with our grand reopening post-construction on or around June 1, 2025.

NewBo City Market reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP and to negotiate modifications to any proposal before finalizing a contract.

For inquiries or clarifications regarding this RFP or the related document title Exhibit A, please contact Julie Parisi at [julie@newbocitymarket.org](mailto:julie@newbocitymarket.org) or 319-200-4050.

We look forward to receiving your proposals and partnering with a qualified operator to establish a vibrant local foods grocery store that celebrates diversity, eliminates a food desert, and supports our local farmers.