



Buffalo Urban Development Corporation
Hon. Christopher P. Scanlon, Chairman

Request for Proposals

Buffalo Urban Development Corporation
Holiday Market Consultants
Queen City Pop-up



RFP Issue Date: **Wednesday, July 9, 2025**
RFP Submittal Deadline: **Monday, August 18, 2025**
at 1:00 P.M.

Background Information

Buffalo Urban Development Corporation (BUDC) is the City of Buffalo's not-for-profit local development corporation, reclaiming distressed land and buildings for future development. Mayor Christopher P. Scanlon is the Chairman of the Board which oversees BUDC. As a local development corporation, BUDC seeks to create an environment conducive to private investment, provide oversight and visioning for projects of regional significance, serve as a liaison among various public and private stakeholders, serve as a conduit for public funding of significant projects, and serve as a real estate holding company for certain public-sector projects.

The mission of BUDC is to support the urban economic development efforts of the region through the acquisition, remediation, and management of distressed properties, and to engage in related real estate development activities for the purpose of attracting and/or retaining new and existing businesses to the City. The mission of BUDC also includes supporting the revitalization of downtown Buffalo by serving as the lead management entity for Buffalo Building Reuse Project (BBRP) and Race For Place initiatives, working in collaboration with the City of Buffalo; including the coordination of financial assistance for downtown adaptive re-use projects, public right-of-way improvements, and the Ralph Wilson Park project.

Queen City Pop Shop Overview and Description

Buffalo Urban Development Corporation's (BUDC) Queen City Pop-Up (QCPU) is downtown Buffalo's first pop-up retail program designed to encourage retail activity in downtown Buffalo by filling vacant or underutilized commercial spaces with "pop-up" shops that give local entrepreneurs a chance to experience brick and mortar retail, on a free of charge basis. As a part of BUDC's goal to support small business expansion in Buffalo's Downtown area, and create a positive economic impact, BUDC is set to take a new approach to the Queen City Pop-Up program.

In this new iteration, BUDC plans to pilot a temporary pop-up installation for the holiday season up to Christmas. This concept will utilize temporary structures and design elements (such as market stalls or similar concepts) to create a human-scale retail environment that can accommodate 5-8 small pop-up shops. BUDC has partnered with Ciminelli Real Estate and Buffalo Place to hold the QCPU at **Fountain Plaza** to compliment and build off Buffalo Place's holiday activations of the space. BUDC and its partners have determined that the best area at Fountain Plaza would be **in front of the Bank of America building at 10-12 Fountain Plaza on Main Street in downtown Buffalo**. This temporary installation should complement the existing activations at Fountain Plaza and be designed with an emphasis on attracting foot traffic, and small business growth.

As in previous years, BUDC will issue a call for small-business owners/entrepreneurs to occupy the market spaces. The process of selecting participants will be facilitated by BUDC and will account for suitability with the finalized design, experience, and business capacity. BUDC will lead this component of the process but will coordinate relevant updates and information with the selected consultant/team.

Request for Proposals (RFP)

BUDC is requesting proposals from experienced firms for the Queen City Pop-Up, which is anticipated to run from November 13, 2025 through December 20, 2025. **This period represents the maximum term for market operation with exact length and opening days/hours to be finalized in coordination with project partners and the selected consultant team.**

BUDC is looking for a consultant to:

- (1) Plan and design a temporary pop-up installation that utilizes innovative placemaking, temporary elements, and adaptive reuse concepts. BUDC envisions a holiday theme to the design.
- (2) Manage procurement and deployment of the QCPU. Closely coordinating with QCPU partners, City of Buffalo, Ciminelli Real Estate and Buffalo Place.
- (3) Assist in developing marketing and programming strategies to attract visitors, residents and foot traffic to Fountain Plaza.
- (4) Assist in the operational management of the Pop-Up during its run. BUDC will work closely with the selected consultant team to ensure a successful operation.
- (5) Coordinate the breakdown of the market space once the Pop-Up is completed.
- (6) Report back on key data and lessons learned.

Note: BUDC is open to proposals from a variety of firms/teams. In the selection process BUDC will place particular emphasis on relevant experience in downtown and urban settings in terms of both design and operational experience.

Pre-Proposal Meeting

A pre-proposal meeting will be held via Zoom on Thursday, July 17 at 2:00pm for a brief project overview and to address any additional questions that potential respondents may have. Please contact James Bernard at jbernard@buffalourbandevelopment.com no later than Tuesday, July 15 at 4:00pm to obtain call-in information.

Any other questions regarding this RFP should be submitted in writing to James Bernard at jbernard@buffalourbandevelopment.com **no later than Monday, August 11 at 4:00pm**. No requests for oral interpretations via telephone will be accepted.

All proposals will be evaluated by the BUDC Selection Committee. The criteria for this evaluation will include project understanding, approach, price, performance, capability, and creativity (see pg. 10). Specific items will be detailed further in this RFP.

Scope

Primary work product: This contract will result in the design/planning, installation, and management of a temporary outdoor QCPU installation roughly spanning November 13, 2025 through December 20, 2025. This will encompass the design and planning of the physical layout and design elements, assistance in marketing and programming to activate the market, and management of operations during the pop-up period. BUDC also envisions the selected consultant team as possessing the capacity to collect data and report on outcomes and key lessons learned from this new QCPU pilot. Consultants/teams should possess the capacity to handle the full scope, and/or outline where there may be constraints.

Related Tasks

1. **Assistance in programing.** BUDC welcomes any assistance the consultant/team is able to offer with respect to identifying and enrolling prospective entrepreneurs, small businesses, or makers who may be well suited to participate in the market.
2. **Media Marketing.** The consultant/team will collaborate with BUDC and its partners on marketing efforts to inform the public about the market and activities.
3. **Assistance in coordinating and identifying synergies** with adjacent business, restaurants and retailers for cross promotional opportunities that drive additional foot traffic and potential customers to Downtown.
4. **Website.** The consultant/team will provide information for Buffalo Urban Development Corporation's website. As BUDC deems it appropriate, the Consultant will provide materials including text, photographs, maps, renderings, and other images for the website. This material will describe the Consultant's credentials and help explain the project's process.
5. **Analytics and Reporting.** The consultant/team will be expected to provide data and insights related to the project such as visitation numbers; businesses and partners collaborated; peak days/time; small business and visitor feedback, as well as overall accomplishments, challenges and opportunities.

Site Information:

The selected site, at the overhang in front of the Bank of America building at 10-12 Fountain Plaza on Main Street in downtown Buffalo, was selected with the help from BUDC's partners. This location will provide some protection from the elements and may have access to several key amenities including power, Wi-Fi, and overnight storage for Pop-Up vendors. Images of this site are included below. BUDC is looking to work with the selected Consultant/Team to transform this space into a Holiday themed Pop-Up experience. Please see below for images of the space.



Inspiration Imagery

The images below were gathered from similar installations that have informed BUDC's vision for this new pilot of QCPU.



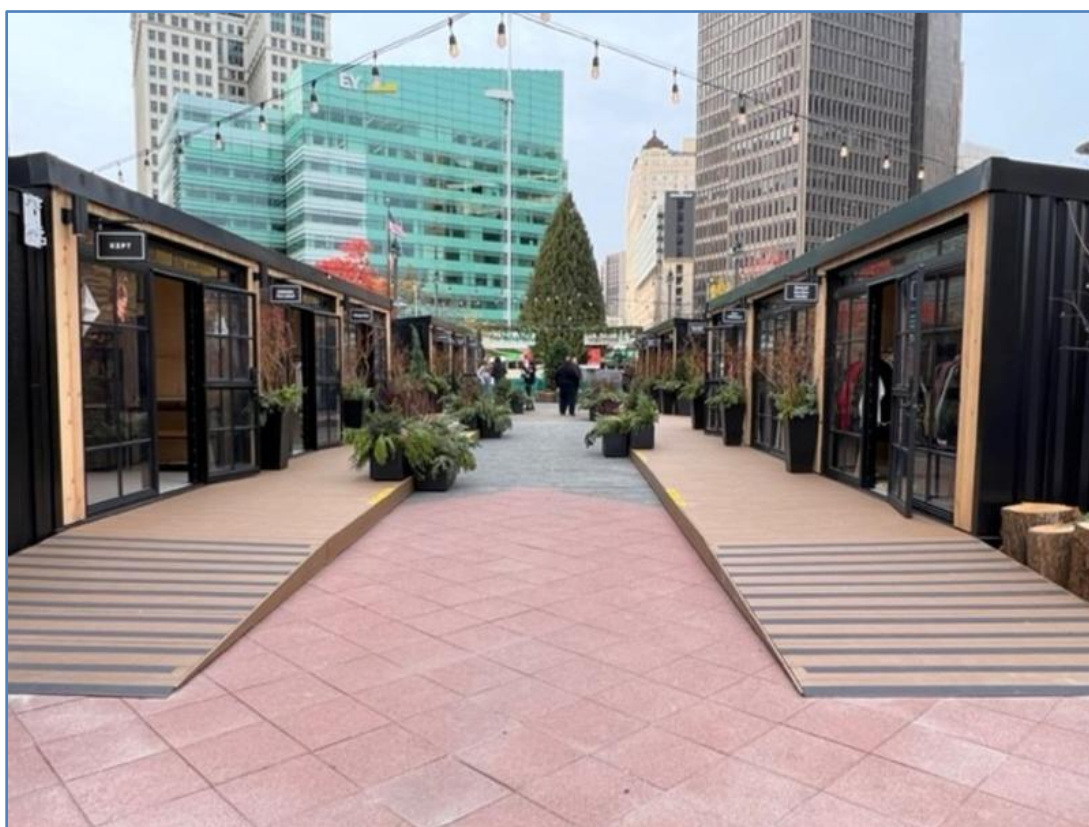
Camp North End, Charlotte, NC.



Stackt, Ottawa, CA



Decked Out Detroit Holiday Market, Detroit MI.



Decked Out Detroit Holiday Market, Detroit MI.

Submittal Summary

Submittals should be provided in **six (6)** copies (and/or electronic copies) and include the following items, along with other material to demonstrate the Consultant's expertise and capability:

1. A written description of the Consultant's approach to the project and understanding of the following core elements:
 - a. Procurement materials, pricing estimate, etc.
 - b. Understanding and approach of the overall vision of the QCPU.
 - c. Approach to capturing data and outcomes to inform future iterations of the QCPU pilot.
 - d. Understanding of elements necessary to successful operation of the market, such as utilities supply, permitting, security etc.
2. A description of a marketing strategy to be used to attract attention and activate the Pop-up market.
3. The expertise of the team assembled by the consultant to carry out the work.
4. A list of comparable projects undertaken by consultants and/or team members.

Proposal Format/Requirements

Submissions must include the following information in a brief and concise format. While there is no page limit for proposals, they should be concise. BUDC reserves the right to request additional information during the review of proposals and to reject any and all submissions.

Cover Letter

The cover letter should include the official name of the firm submitting the proposal, mailing address, e-mail address, telephone number, and primary contact name. The letter must be signed by an official authorized to bind the proposer contractually and contain a statement that the proposal is firm for ninety (90) days. An unsigned letter, or one signed by an individual not authorized to bind the consultant, may be disqualified.

Firm Profile, Experience of Firm/Project Team, and References

Firms or their principals responding to this RFP must be licensed to practice in New York State. Proposals should include a firm profile, an organizational chart identifying the Project Manager and team members with their titles, resumes from key personnel, and references from at least 3 clients for whom the consultant has performed services within the past 3 years.

The project team should have a full range of relevant planning, design, construction, and project management and cost management experience. Primary personnel in each of the noted disciplines must be identified by name and office location, with resumes included, and should demonstrate satisfactory experience and depth in each of the required disciplines. The role of your organization should be highlighted in any references to experience on prior projects and initiatives.

Approach and Methodology

Respondents to this RFP should include a narrative explaining their understanding and approach to this project and the requested scope of work. The understanding and approach should outline the proposed scope of work, specific phases and tasks, and the deliverables and products to be provided. The respondent should also include plans for a local point of contact.

Minority and Women Business Enterprise and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses Interest

BUDC is committed to promoting equality of economic opportunity for minority group members and women, and the facilitation of minority and women-owned business enterprise (“MWBE”) participation. Firms are encouraged to include Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBE) as subcontractors in their teams, or as joint venture teams, with a goal of 25% MBE and 5% WBE. BUDC also encourages the participation of Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses (SDVOB) with a goal of 5% participation. Firms interested in pursuing such an arrangement may contact the Empire State Development Division of Minority and Women’s Business Development (<http://esd.ny.gov/ContactUs.asp>) for further information and guidance.

Budget

The proposal should include a proposed budget for all services delineated by phase and task as outlined in the consultant's proposed scope of work.

Attachments

Please include completed copies of Attachments A–C as an addendum to your proposal.

Evaluation of Submittals

Consultants responding to this RFP must demonstrate the following:

- Experience in procuring and/or building shopping structures and managing them.
- Experience organizing events
- Experience in marketing events
- Strong skills in written and oral communication.

BUDC will evaluate all submittals to determine which Consultants have the experience and qualifications that are most suited for this project. BUDC will request personal interviews with the highest-ranked consultants in which they conduct a presentation demonstrating their qualifications and experiences and answer any questions by BUDC or partners.

Selection Criteria

A detailed evaluation of proposals will be conducted by a selection team comprised of BUDC, City of Buffalo and Buffalo Place staff. To select the most advantageous proposal for consulting services related to the scope of work contained in the RFP, comparative judgments of technical factors, in addition to price, will be necessary.

Evaluation will be based on the following criteria:

1. **Relevant Experience** (30 Points)
2. **Overall approach and methodology, as well as demonstrated understanding of project objectives** (30 Points)
3. **Budget** (20 Points)
4. **Local Presence** (10 Points)
5. **Equity practices** (10 Points)

Approval Process

1. Submissions will be reviewed by BUDC's selection committee.
2. Consultant Interview Presentations. BUDC will host interviews with the most qualified candidates based on the written submissions.
3. Selection. After the previous steps are complete the most qualified consultant will be selected for a contract.

BUDC will develop a short list of the most qualified candidates. Follow-up discussions and site visits/demonstrations may be scheduled. BUDC will then make a final recommendation and select a firm.

Please submit all written questions via email to jbernard@buffalourbandevelopment.com. Questions via phone call will not be accepted. Questions will be accepted until **4:00 P.M. on July 31, 2025**.

Please submit your proposal and completed forms by August 18, 2025 at 4:00 P.M. Completed proposals should be submitted to Brandye Merriweather, BUDC President at 95 Perry Street, Suite 404 Buffalo, NY 14203 and via email to bmerriweather@buffalourbandevelopment.com.

Form 1: Non-Collusive Proposal Certification

By submission of this proposal, each Bidder and each person signing on behalf of any Bidder certifies, and in the case of a joint proposal each party thereto certifies as to its organization, under penalty of perjury, that to the best of their knowledge and belief:

- a) The prices in this proposal have been arrived at independently, without collusion, consultation, communication, or agreement, for the purpose of restricting competition, as to any matter relating to such prices with any other Bidder or with any competitor;
- b) Unless otherwise required by law, the prices which have been quoted in this proposal have not been knowingly disclosed by the Bidder and will not knowingly be disclosed by the Bidder prior to opening, directly or indirectly, to any other Bidder or to any competitor, and
- c) No attempt has been made or will be made by the Bidder to induce any other person, partnership or corporation to submit or not to submit a proposal for the purpose of restricting competition.

SUBMITTAL OF PROPOSAL

The undersigned submits the following proposal, which is in conformity with the intent of the RFQ. The Bidder agrees that should it be awarded a contract on the proposal through the issuance of a contract from the Buffalo Urban Development Corporation, it will provide the services in strict compliance with the contract documents for the compensation stipulated herein. The Bidder agrees that its proposal shall remain effective for a period of 90 days from the formal proposal receipt date.

Bidder

Name

Signature

Title

Date

Designated Individuals - Procurement Lobbying Law

Brandye Merriweather, President

Phone: 716-362-8373

Email: bmerriweather@buffalourbandevelopment.com

Pursuant to State Finance Law §§139-j and 139-k, this Request for Proposals imposes certain restrictions on communications between Bidders and BUDC during the procurement process. Bidders are prohibited from making contacts (whether oral, written, or electronic) with any BUDC personnel or BUDC Board member other than the designated BUDC staff member (unless the contact is otherwise permitted under State Finance Law §139-j(3)(a)). In addition, Bidders are hereby notified that any contact with any BUDC personnel, BUDC Board member or the designated BUDC staff member which a reasonable person would infer is intended to influence the award of the contract under this Request for Proposals is prohibited. These prohibitions apply from the Bidder's earliest notice of BUDC's intent to solicit proposals through the final award and approval of the procurement contract ("Restricted Period"). For the purposes of this Request for Proposals.

Bidders are required to complete Form 1, Attachment A, Attachment B and Attachment C regarding their understanding and agreement to comply with procedures on procurement lobbying restrictions regarding permissible contacts in the restricted period in accordance with State Finance Law §§139-j and 139-k. **YOUR BID WILL BE CONSIDERED INCOMPLETE IF THE ATTACHMENTS ARE NOT INCLUDED.**

ATTACHMENT A

Affirmation of Understanding & Agreement pursuant to State Finance Law §139-j (3) and §139-j (6) (b)

I affirm that I understand and agree to comply with the procedures of the BUDC relative to permissible contacts as required by State Finance Law §139-j (3) and §139-j (6) (b).

By: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Contractor Name: _____

Contractor Address: _____

ATTACHMENT B

Offeror/Bidder Certification:

I certify that all information provided to the BUDC with respect to State Finance Law §139-k is complete, true and accurate.

By: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Contractor Name: _____

Contractor Address: _____

ATTACHMENT C

Offerer Disclosure of Prior Non-Responsibility Determinations

Name of Individual or Entity Seeking to Enter into the Procurement Contract:

Address:

Name and Title of Person Submitting this Form: _____ Date: _____

1. Has any Governmental Entity made a finding of non-responsibility regarding the individual or entity seeking to enter into the Procurement Contract in the previous four years? (Please circle):

No

Yes

If yes, please answer the next questions:

2. Was the basis for the finding of non-responsibility due to a violation of State Finance Law §139-j (Please circle):

No

Yes

3. Was the basis for the finding of non-responsibility due to the intentional provision of false or incomplete information to a Governmental Entity? (Please circle):

No

Yes

4. If you answered yes to any of the above questions, please provide details regarding the finding of non-responsibility below.

Governmental Entity:

Date of Finding of Non-responsibility:

Basis of Finding of Non-Responsibility:

(Add additional pages as necessary)

5. Has any Governmental Entity or other governmental agency terminated or withheld a Procurement Contract with the above-named individual or entity due to the intentional provision of false or incomplete information? (Please circle):

No

Yes

6. If yes, please provide details below.

Governmental Entity:

Date of Termination or Withholding of Contract:

Basis of Termination or Withholding:

(Add additional pages as necessary)

Offerer certifies that all information provided to the BUDC with respect to State Finance Law §139-k is complete, true and accurate.

By: _____ Date: _____
Signature

Name: _____ Title: _____

