

BBPA Request for Quotation Little Jamaica Retail Strategy

Posting Date:

11/09/2023

Submission Deadline: December 1, 2023

Organization:

Black Business and Professional Association, BBPA

Summary

The BBPA is seeking to retain a consulting team to undertake a retail strategy to inform the future (medium to long term) of the Little Jamaica Retail Area. The Little Jamaica retail community consists of businesses primarily along Eglinton Avenue West, between Marlee Avenue and Keele Street. Various challenges, including over 10 years of Light Rail Transit construction (LRT) has severely impacted area businesses, especially Black-owned and operated businesses (see challenges in appendix).

The nature of this strategy is timely and essential for this evolving neighbourhood. This strategy will also outline clear recommendations and implementation actions.

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Context

The future face of Little Jamaica Retail:

The genesis of the Eglinton West district in Toronto also known as “Little Jamaica” can be traced from the late 1950s, when a number of immigrants from the Caribbean, the largest percentage of them being Jamaicans, settled in Eglinton West. Over time the area became a retail hub, including music, services and reflected Caribbean culture in Toronto. Recently the area is under severe threat of displacement.

The area has undergone over 10 years of LRT construction, changing the face of retail in the neighborhood.

The focus of the study is to identify actions that can preserve and expand the area’s 89 existing Black businesses, as well as attract new Black businesses to the area.

Purpose

The BBPA is accepting proposals for consulting services to develop a Retail Strategy for BBPA that will include measurable goals to guide the direction, priorities, and outcomes of the Retail Strategy.

To retain a consulting team to undertake a retail strategy to inform the future (medium to long term) of the Little Jamaica Retail Area (Eglinton Ave W, Allen Rd to Keele) map attached.

The team will also leverage relevant data including data provided by the City of Toronto partnership ([urbanlogiq](#) and CoStar) to be deployed for this project.

The nature of this strategy is timely and essential for this evolving neighbourhood.

This will be key for existing retailers, developers, real estate professionals, investors, or other entities.

Such a strategy has not been undertaken for this area.

This Strategy will be unique to Little Jamaica, but it will be expected that it will be replicated in other ethno-cultural retail communities.

Innovative Solution:

Retail vision for the future of Little Jamaica

Consultant Requirements

It is expected that the successful proponent will include:

- A lead consultant representing a team with skills in data analysis, liaising with the Black Businesses.
- Demonstrate recent experience and understanding of the non-profit sector in general and the Black business sector specifically.
- Extensive experience coordinating and facilitating the planning process to produce a suitable and comprehensive Retail Strategy.

Scope of Services

The successful proponent will be responsible for providing expert advice and facilitation services in the delivery of the final strategy that will including the following, but not limited to:

Project will:

- Identify gaps in retail sectors and identify methods to attract retail.
- Identify retail and investment opportunities.
- Identify niches for independent businesses.
- Conduct focus groups - businesses and residents as appropriate.
- Understand retail trends.
- Leverage BBPA database including current vacancies, City of Toronto Retail Study, City planning Retail design manual and the forthcoming Little Jamaica Cultural District plan which includes extensive research and area consultation.
- Retain, expand and attract businesses.
- Deliverable will be a document that will identify the completed study and provide information for retail investment in Little Jamaica.
- A critical path with relevant timeframes for the development of the Retail Strategy.
- An analysis of relevant needs assessments and environmental scans from partner agencies.
- A process designed and delivered to gather input from BBPA, the Advisory Committee established for this Retail Strategy and stakeholders.
- A comprehensive Retail Strategy suitable for public review and presentation with measurable goals and a framework to report and evaluate the achievement of those goals.
- Project coordination through regular meetings with the project Advisory Group and Program Manager.

Proposal Submission

Interested proponents will be requested to submit their proposal in PDF file format of no longer than ten (10) pages, via email, containing:

- Name of company, name of all consultants/project partners, and contact information.
- A CV/resume/profile illustrating expertise and experience, including three to five examples of projects in similar size and scope to this project.
- Three relevant references, including client name, contact person, phone number, project description, and results.
- Full details describing the general approach or development strategy, work plan, critical path with timeframes, and explanation of how the RFP requirements will be achieved including suggested and needed human and support resources.
- A description of the deliverable that will be provided to BBPA at the end of the project
- A fee quote for services that includes a detailed budget with a breakdown of expected hours and other expected costs.
- Disclosure of any real or perceived conflict of interest that either presently exists or could reasonably be foreseen as arising in the future should the proposal be accepted.

You may supplement your proposal with any additional information you feel will strengthen your submission. Please keep total proposal to one PDF file of no more than 10 pages maximum.

Questions and Clarification

All interested proponents may seek clarification and ask questions by sending email to the BBPA, Little Jamaica, Program Manager at michele@bbpa.org by November 24th, 2023. Telephone inquiries will not be answered.

Selection criteria

Final determination and selection by the Advisory Committee will be based on the following criteria:

- Demonstrated understanding of the project.
- Clear description of elements of work including expected outcomes.
- Identification of team members and timelines.
- Relevance of completed projects, experience, and references.
- Education, training and subject expertise.
- Thoroughness of proposal and ability to meet specifications.
- Proposals are to be concise, one PDF file of no more than ten (10) pages.

Project Costing

It is anticipated that the fees for this Retail Strategy project will not exceed \$45,000 (inclusive of HST).

Payment schedule:

25% upon execution of the service agreement

30% at the first milestone (agreed upon halfway stage of the project)

40% submission of the final Strategy on final delivery.

Conditions

BBPA will not be liable for any costs incurred by a consultant in the preparation of their response to this proposal or attending to the presentation if required. BBPA reserves the right to ask for additional information and adjustments to any proposed response. BBPA will keep all information provided by the candidate as confidential. Information provided to the respondents is to be used for the sole purpose of responding to this RFQ.

How to Apply

Please submit your proposal by email no later than December 1 , 2023 at 12 noon to:

Michele-Ann Halsall, BBPA Program Manager michele@bbpa.org

The BBPA would like to thank all applicants for their interest; only those selected for interviews on December 10, 2023 will be contacted.

BBPA actively encourages applicants from all equity seeking groups – Indigenous Peoples, racialized and cultural minority groups, people with disabilities and LGBTQ and 2 spirit communities. Our Association embrace diversity and is committed to creating an inclusive workplace. Our goal is to attract, develop, and retain highly talented employees from diverse backgrounds allowing us to benefit from a wide variety of experiences and perspectives. We thank all applicants and advise that only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

In accordance with Ontario Human Rights Code and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, accommodation will be provided in all parts of the hiring process. Applicants need to make their needs known in advance.

Contact Us

Black Business and Professional Association (BBPA in the Community office)

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Tel: 416-504-4097

E-mail: michele@bbpa.org

Privacy Policy <https://bbpa.org/privacy-policy/>

Appendix:

About Little Jamaica

- Challenge
- Over 10 years of LRT Construction and disruption
- COVID Pandemic
- Businesses closing
- Area under investment of the area
- Filing vacancies
- Lack of awareness of the rich cultural district and market potential of this African Caribbean Cultural destination
- Ongoing new development displacing small businesses that reflect and compliment Little Jamaica

Despite Fed Dev, City of Toronto, BIAs and BBPA support there remains a gap in medium and long-term direction for Little Jamaica retail.

Although successful with the selected business recruitment and expansion support, the BBPA requires a coordinated and strategic growth direction.

An example of a growth area may be a gym, however, to be culturally appropriate for the area...Caribbean dance classes which would bring members from all over to the area generating business for other retailers.

Current Little Jamaica retail categories:



Feasibility

- Develop a retail strategy including business and investment opportunities.
- To execute the project – Establish advisory team, issue RFQ, retain consulting team, undertake scan of relevant studies, analysis of studies and data, develop scan of business opportunities including demographics and vacancies for potential new area businesses, develop recommendations for planning, real estate, developers and investors.
- BBPA will be the project lead to co-ordinate all consultant activities.
- The project is to be funded through a Main Street Innovation grant.
- Strategic partners: Toronto Metropolitan University - Ted Rogers school of management, City of Toronto, Economic Development BIA office and City Planning, Strategic Initiatives, Developer advisory team, Bank partner (TBD), Policy and Analysis/Community Planning.
- Benchmarks include identifying the Consultant team based on RFQ. Establish timelines
 - November 6 - Issue RFQ
 - December 1 – RFQ closes
 - December 10 - Consultant selected and agreement executed
 - December 15 - Project start with regular check-ins until project end
 - Ensure project direction, advisory team direction, budget check in
 - May 23 - the end of the project
 - June 1 – Project results submitted to City of Toronto

Impact

Phase 1 (this application submission)

- Funding for this research project has been secured through the Main Street Innovation Fund.
- Retail Strategy Research and Investment opportunities
Measurement – this application and funding for phase 1 is for strategy and the measurement of success of the strategy will be the report. Project deliverables include a final retail strategy and investment opportunities.
- Study findings will be shared on the BBPA website www.bbpa.org, Little Jamaica businesses and relevant City divisions.
- The template for the project will be shared and other regions/communities will be able to duplicate the areas and activities/metrics developed by the project consultants.
- Advisory findings by Toronto Metropolitan University will also be shared.
Other universities could replicate this type of advisory support.

Phase 2 (proposed 2024 initiative-not part of this submission)

Please note: the result of the Phase 1 study will be the rollout of Recommendations including Investment session, business attraction and recruitment, investment tours, etc. Including but not limited to implementation of Business Opportunity Actions (Business recruitment tour/media launch of the plan) and a proposed phase 2 for implementation after completion of this report. Funding for this phase will be considered by the Main Street Innovation grant.

Impact

Phase 1 (this application submission)

- Retail Strategy Research and Investment opportunities
Measurement – this application and funding for phase 1 is for strategy and the measurement of success of the strategy will be the report. Project deliverables include a final retail strategy and investment opportunities.
- Study findings will be shared on the BBPA website www.bbpa.org, Little Jamaica businesses and relevant City divisions
- The template for the project will be shared and other regions/communities will be able to duplicate the areas and activities/metrics developed by the project consultants.
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Phase 2 (proposed 2024 initiative-not part of this submission)

- Business opportunity Actions
will be shared widely and this will include a Business recruitment tour/media launch of the plan and subsequent events including real estate.
- A Proposed phase 2 for implementation after completion of this report will be executed as part of a robust investment road show involving potential businesses that want to expand with a second store, new businesses locating to the area, engaging the real estate community and others who can contribute to the success of retail and broader economic investment.

