



Request for Proposals: Strategic Retail/Entertainment Market Study for Downtown Durham

I. Background:

Downtown Durham Incorporated (DDI) is a 501(c)(6) established in 1994 to be an advocate and catalytic force for downtown revitalization. Our mission is very specific; to create an environment for private investment in Downtown Durham by focusing our efforts in five main program areas: Economic Development, Parking, Appearance, Safety, and Marketing/Promotion.

Over the past several years, downtown Durham has seen the completion of several landmark projects, major public infrastructure and amenity improvements, and over 1 billion dollars in private and public investment. Looking forward to the next stage of redevelopment, DDI recognizes that downtown is reaching a critical mass of residents, employees, and attractions to sustain significant new retail opportunities. Furthermore, forthcoming development projects are bringing substantial new street-level retail space on-line over the next several years.

The time seems right to take a more detailed look at how to build downtown's retail market. To accomplish this goal, DDI is seeking proposals from qualified consultants to assist the Durham community in developing a strategic retail market study for Downtown Durham. However, instead of a traditional formulaic market study that analyzes factors such as competitive markets, trade area demand, capture rates, etc; DDI is looking for a more fine-grain analysis that will help downtown stakeholders:

- Build on emerging trends of current successful retail/entertainment tenants by identifying complimentary secondary uses and the best locations for these uses
- Better understand the consumer needs and preferences of current downtown user-groups and how to fulfill these unmet demands
- Improve street-level retail spaces to activate the pedestrian environment and be 'retail-ready' (merchandising, signage, etc.)
- Understand the tools necessary for effective retail recruitment

- Identify most appropriate role for DDI in relation to commercial brokers/realtors and major property owners for retail recruitment

Study Area Overview:

The City of Durham has approximately 218,000 residents and is located in the Triangle Region in central North Carolina. Downtown Durham is the historic, cultural, and commercial core of this metropolitan area and has experienced considerable revitalization activity over the past 15 years.

The Downtown study area is .751 sq miles, or 14 x 12 blocks. This area is divided into 6 main districts: American Tobacco, Warehouse, Government Services, Central Park, Brightleaf, and City Center. Key entertainment draws include Durham Bulls Athletic Park, American Tobacco Historic Campus, Durham Farmers Market, Durham Athletic Park (of “Bull Durham” movie fame), Carolina Theatre, Durham Arts Council, and the newly completed Durham Performing Arts Center. Downtown also hosts several festivals and events each year such as the American Dance Festival, Blues Festival, World Beer Fest, Center Fest, Art Walk, Full Frame Film Festival, and Bimbe Festival.

In terms of accessibility, the study area is 3 minutes driving time from NC-147, 5 minutes from I-85, and 10 minutes from I-40. In relation to the other major population centers in the ‘Triangle’ region, Downtown Durham is approximately 30 minutes from Raleigh, 25 minutes from Chapel Hill, and 25 minutes from Cary.

The Downtown Master Plan was completed in 2000, and updated in early 2008. It was adopted by both city and county governments in the spring of 2008. The purpose of the Downtown Master Plan is to provide direction for our community on those specific public policy issues and development projects that should guide downtown’s revitalization efforts over the next 2-7 years. It is available online at www.downtowndurham.com

Downtown Durham Inc. keeps up-to-date records pertaining to downtown demographics, retail and commercial space inventories and occupancy rates, visitor stats, projected growth, public and private investment dollars, etc.

Scope of Services:

DDI seeks a firm with extensive experience analyzing downtown retail markets. The consultant selected for this contract will be asked to perform any or all of the following services:

- **Kick off Meeting:** Conduct a meeting with DDI and other downtown stakeholders to discuss engagement logistics, objectives, and review materials/input on the study area
- **Site Assessment:** Visit the study area and assess its retail market potential based on amenities, location, access, visibility, surrounding land-uses, infrastructure, etc.
- **Competitive Market Analysis:** Define current and future entertainment/retail cores in Durham that compete with downtown. Determine downtown’s competitive advantages and disadvantages relative to these areas.

- Demographic/Psychographic Analysis: Create a detailed consumer profile of three main downtown user groups: employees, event goers, and downtown/ central neighborhood residents (approx. 1 mile radius around downtown). Identify what kinds of retail/ entertainment opportunities will best serve the needs and preferences of these user-groups
- Entertainment Profile: look at key event-drivers and attractions (DPAC, Farmers Market, Ballpark, etc.). Identify what secondary retail and entertainment would support these events and where venues would be best located.
- Qualitative Assessment of street-level retailers
 - Assess current Downtown property and retail space ‘readiness’ to attract retailers
 - Recommendations to downtown stakeholders on changes necessary in retail spaces to maximize retail opportunities and rents
- Present and overview of best-practices for attracting and retaining street-level businesses, including incentive programs, policies, etc.
- Data Management: Assist DDI with updating retail inventory records and format
- Strategic Market Analysis: present recommendations on how to grow the retail base in Downtown Durham, based upon the above analyses
- Wrap-up Meeting: Conduct a meeting with DDI and other downtown stakeholders to present findings. Allow opportunity for comments and input for final report.
- Deliverables: Preparation of an Executive Report, summarizing findings and recommendations- with supporting data and analysis provided.

Proposal Submittal/ Requirements:

The consultant interested in responding to this RFP must provide the information on the firm’s qualifications and experience, qualifications of the project team, previous similar projects and references, and approach to services. These and other requirements are presented below. Submittals that do not respond completely to all requirements herein may be considered un-responsive and eliminated from the process.

- Provide the name, address, phone, fax, and email addresses of the principal client contact(s) at your firm, as well as a brief resume of the contact(s) including years of service with your firm.
- Provide a brief summary of your firm’s experience in downtown retail market analysis and any other information that would assist DDI in evaluating the expertise of your organization and its ability to deliver the services requested herein.
- Provide a list of recently completed assignments, your current downtown clients, and related contact information.
- Provide a draft of the agreement between DDI and your firm, including the proposed term of the agreement.
- Identify your firm’s preferred methodology for conducting its retail market research.
- Estimate the timeframe and costs to complete the retail market study, including:
 - Estimated cost for professional services
 - Estimated reimbursable expenses

- Include any additional information that you believe would be of value in the assessment of your firm's capabilities.

Proposal Submission:

Downtown Durham Inc. invites interested parties to submit proposals for the provision of services outlined in the RFP. Proposals should be delivered to Bill Kalkhof, President of Downtown Durham Inc. at the below address. Proposals will be accepted until 5 p.m. on May 22nd 2009. Proposals received will then be evaluated by the DDI Executive Committee based on criteria listed in the specifications of RFP.

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