



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

1515 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102
Department of Commerce

Request for Expressions of Interest *ReStore Corridors Through Art*

I. Opportunity Summary

This Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) provides information to community-based organizations, arts organizations, business associations and other non-profit organizations to enable them to prepare and submit expressions of interest to participate in a new initiative to use art installations to reactivate commercial corridors. The City of Philadelphia will partner with the selected organizations to strategize around planning, resource allocation, and implementing the proposed projects.

This initiative will espouse collaboration between artists, property owners, and community and arts organizations to utilize the arts in imaginative and innovative ways to attract people to the city's commercial corridors.

The City, including the Philadelphia Department of Commerce and Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy, is seeking to facilitate the development of a partnership through this solicitation process. Once identified, these qualified partner organizations, with some assistance by city partners, will work together to plan and implement programs for new creative activities along the city's commercial corridors by the Spring or Summer of 2011.

II. Background Information

ReStore Corridors Through Art is a new initiative to be developed by the City of Philadelphia and partner organizations to activate temporarily vacant properties and/or the public realm along pedestrian and transit-oriented commercial corridors throughout the City by making these spaces available to organizations for arts, culture, and creative uses. The reactivation of these spaces will maximize visibility for the property and will generate increased economic and social activity in the city's neighborhoods by bringing more people to these areas. Additionally, the *ReStore* initiative aims to create visibility for the arts community as well as to develop new opportunities for Philadelphia's residents and visitors to experience and contribute to the energy and diversity along these corridors.

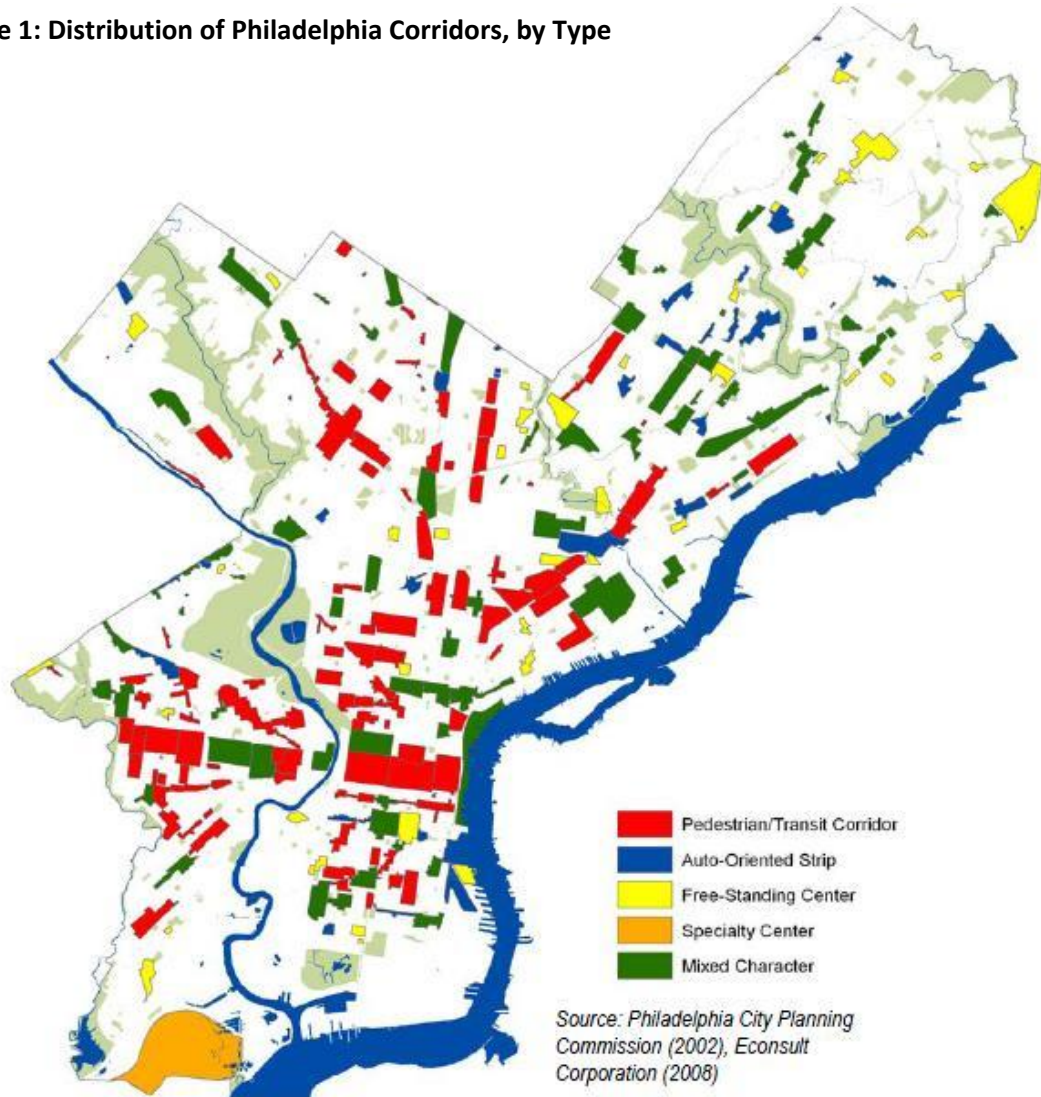
Philadelphia: Public Art as an Economic Development Strategy

Philadelphia is the largest city in Pennsylvania, with approximately 170 pedestrian and transit-oriented commercial corridors across the city (See *Figure 1* below). A commercial corridor, also known as a retail center, represents a concentration of retail stores, which

serve a common trade area and surround and/or lie along a single street or set of streets. This initiative focuses on pedestrian and transit-oriented commercial corridors, which are characterized as sidewalk-oriented with continuous streetwalls, as consisting of separate property ownership, and by predominantly on-street parking.

These corridors serve as the building blocks of Philadelphia's retail industry as well as anchors for the residential neighborhoods that surround them, bringing additional importance to how they are performing.

Figure 1: Distribution of Philadelphia Corridors, by Type



The Nutter administration has embraced the arts as a central component of its campaign to revitalize Philadelphia. Through this initiative, the administration will focus on using the arts as a strategic opportunity to bring reinvestment to the city's commercial corridors. This initiative recognizes that the arts have the potential to play a major role in the city's cultural

and economic development policy, contributing to the creation of jobs, increasing the tax base, and improving quality of life for the citizens of Philadelphia.

National Trends & the Benefits of Using Empty Commercial Spaces for Art

The current economic recession has resulted in an increase in the number of empty storefronts in every city. Innovative communities are turning the recession’s threat into creative opportunities, and Philadelphia is taking note. Across the nation, empty storefronts are being transformed for new uses. From San Francisco’s Art in Storefronts program to New York’s well-established Swing Space Program to St. Louis’s Art Space at Crestwood Court, artists, arts organizations and entrepreneurs are temporarily transforming empty spaces into incubators for innovative retail, exhibition, education and countless entrepreneurial outlets. Many of these projects are spurring economic growth through new start-up businesses while fostering new creative communities. Programs like this can also expose available rental properties to potential long term tenants.

Some examples of temporary uses that are already taking place in urban spaces include:

- Art installations/galleries
- Classes/educational uses
- Creative retail
- Fairs and festivals
- Live performances
- Micro-enterprise development
- New technology demonstrations
- Filmmaking and screenings

III. Initiative Goals

The City of Philadelphia’s goals for the project include the following:

- Reinvigorate Philadelphia’s commercial corridors by bringing people to these areas, transforming them into visitor destinations
- Increase exposure for Philadelphia’s arts community and support creative industry/entrepreneurship
- Highlight Philadelphia’s diverse neighborhoods by expanding activity on these corridors
- Spur economic development and spending along these corridors by driving new consumers into currently underutilized areas and promoting vacant units to potential long-term tenants

IV. Eligibility

Eligible Respondents

Eligible respondents include, but are not limited to, community-based organizations, business associations, and other non-profit neighborhood or arts organizations. Any organization not actively engaged in the development of commercial corridors is

encouraged to apply if they partner with a community development corporation (CDC) or business improvement district (BID).

- Participant organizations must have a local presence in Philadelphia and be directly serving people that live and work in Philadelphia.
- Participant organizations must have Philadelphia citizen involvement in the organization as volunteers, members or board members.
- Participant organizations must have the ability to allocate staff and/or board member time for monthly meetings during the planning and implementation process, or as needed.

Eligible Areas

Selected projects must be carried out in a concentrated pedestrian and transit-oriented commercial area, generally considered to consist of four contiguous blocks.

V. Reservation of Rights.

The City reserves the right to cancel this REI, accept or reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, received in response to this REI, to waive or permit cure of minor irregularities, and to conduct discussions with any or all qualified or potentially qualified providers in any manner necessary to serve the best interests of the City. The City also reserves the right to award a contract based upon the written proposals received without discussions or negotiations. In the event negotiations with any respondent(s) are not satisfactory to the City, the City reserves the right to discontinue such negotiations at any time; to enter into or continue negotiations with other respondents; and/or to solicit new responses from providers that did not respond to this REI. The City reserves the right not to enter into any contract with any respondent, with or without the re-issuance of this REI, if the City determines that such is in the City's best interest. The City reserves the right to change the details at any time. Nothing in this REI shall bind the City to enter into any agreements pursuant to this solicitation.

VI. Selection Criteria

Selection shall be made to the responsive and responsible providers whose proposals are deemed to be the most advantageous to the City, along with any relevant performance data and other information available to the City. The Department of Commerce and the Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy will use the following criteria to select participating organizations. These criteria are not necessarily listed in order of importance:

- Overall concept plan and quality and scope of proposal (innovative ideas, new concepts, potential for creating excitement, driving traffic, and stimulating interest)
- Compatibility of the proposed concept with the previously stated program goals

- Existing or preliminary stakeholder commitment and partnerships (property owners, artists, neighborhood and/or arts organizations; and other stakeholders)
- Organizational capacity to manage and market such a project as the initiative will entail (dedication of staff and/or board member time and demonstrated previous experience in managing similar projects)
- Potential to link concept to other programming in the neighborhood or along the corridor

VII. City Resources

Upon selection, the City, the Department of Commerce, and the Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy will assist these organizations through the provision of staff support and technical assistance.

Moreover, technical and managerial assistance will be provided during four months of this initiative by a team of 2nd year MBA students participating in the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School's Field Application Project (FAP). This student team, under the supervision of Wharton faculty and City staff, will be available to support the selected organizations during the planning phase. This support will include a range of activities to prepare for the implementation phase of the initiative, depending on the need of the selected partner organizations. FAP planning support may include, but is not limited to, research, data analysis, and organizational assistance.

Additionally, the City will work with the selected organizations to strategize around the use of existing resources and appropriate Fiscal Year 2012 budget requests for implementation of the initiative. Existing City resources that *may be* allocated to these projects include the Storefront Improvement Program, the GreenWorks Rebate, and Community Development Block Grant funding for neighborhood business attraction incentives.

While the City will serve as an important partner in the planning and implementation process, the selected partners will serve as lead organizations of the initiative.

This REI does not commit the City to award a contract. This REI and the process it describes are proprietary to the City and are for the sole and exclusive benefit of the City. No other party, including any Respondent, is granted any rights by this REI.

VIII. Timeline

The deadline for responses to be submitted to the City is Friday, September 17 by 5:00 PM. The City expects to select four partner organizations within a month of the submittal deadline and to begin convening participant meetings in early Fall 2010.

A non-mandatory information session will be held on Thursday, September 2 from 2:00-3:00 p.m. at 1515 Arch Street, 18th floor conference room.

IX. Submission Procedures

Respondents must complete and submit the following:

Five (5) copies and one (1) electronic version of the following materials:

- Cover sheet
- A letter of interest
- Proposal narrative

1. **Cover sheet** *(see attachment)*

2. **Letter of Interest** *(maximum of 2 pages)*

The letter of interest should describe the following information:

- Your organization's qualifications
- An overview of relevant experience
- Organizational capacity to participate in the initiative
- Existing partnerships and/or community interest in the concept

3. **Proposal Narrative** *(maximum of 3 pages)*

This narrative should include the information indicated below.

- **Project Location** *(Neighborhood; Commercial Corridor and boundaries; City Council District(s))*
- **Concept and Impact Statement**
 - Describe the concept proposal and need for this initiative based on current economic conditions (i.e. vacancy rate) on the corridor.
 - Indicate whether there was a recent plan for the target corridor or surrounding community and whether the concept proposal is consistent with such a plan.
 - Include a brief analysis of existing residential and physical conditions in the area, including recent or pending changes.
 - Describe briefly your organization's current activities on the corridor and how this concept proposal would leverage existing programs and resources along the corridor or in the surrounding neighborhood.
- **Resources**

Please describe committed or potential resources, as well as resource gaps in your concept proposal. Elaborate on any resources and/or assistance you believe the City and/or other partners could provide to fill these gaps.

Submit Expressions of Interest to:

Brian Flanagan
Department of Commerce
City of Philadelphia
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102
brian.flanagan@phila.gov
(215) 683-4683



ReStore Corridors Through Art

COVER SHEET

RESPONDENT INFORMATION

Name of Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip Code: _____

Contact Person & Title _____

Day Phone: _____

Evening Phone: _____

Fax: _____

PROPOSAL INFORMATION

Proposed Location (Specify address, if applicable; corridor; boundaries and City Council District(s)):

Signature:

Date Signed: