



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CITY OF CHICAGO ANNOUNCES REQUESTS FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR CHICAGO RIVERWALK COMMUNITY MARKETPLACE FOR THE 2022 SEASON**

**CHICAGO** - The City of Chicago Department of Assets, Information & Services (AIS) today announced it is inviting food and beverage, retail, arts and other businesses with the qualifications and expertise to apply to operate a concession on the Chicago Riverwalk Community Marketplace for the 2022 Season, beginning next May. This procurement is specifically looking to provide opportunities to businesses offering concession services reflective of the cultural diversity and neighborhoods of the City of Chicago on the Chicago Riverwalk.

"The Community Marketplace remains a major contributor to the success of our beloved Chicago Riverwalk," said Chicago Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot. "By opening this opportunity up to our small businesses, we will be able to ensure their long-term success and emerge from the pandemic with an even more vibrant economy."

The City currently intends to establish a pool of qualified operators offering a variety of concessions showcasing the best of the City on the Chicago Riverwalk. The Riverwalk Community Marketplace is located on the south bank of the Chicago River between Michigan Avenue and Wabash.

"The Chicago Riverwalk has transformed Chicago's downtown waterfront into an active, pedestrian-friendly environment and a cultural destination for both residents and tourists alike", said AIS Commissioner David Reynolds. "It is very exciting to see the Community Marketplace emerged as a popular destination in the heart of the Chicago Riverwalk contributing to the uniquely Chicago experience with bustling bars and restaurants, cultural events, and public art. Construction of the Community Marketplace was completed in 2019 to provide opportunities to small minority and women-owned business and every season it has grown in popularity."

Minority and women-owned businesses are strongly encouraged to respond, as those vendors that opened seven days per week during the 2021 season generated more than \$100,000 in total revenues.



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“We would absolutely recommend other small businesses apply to join the Riverwalk. This has been the best imaginable springboard for our little shop,” said Colores Mexicanos. “The space is small enough to be manageable as a first storefront, the rent is accessible, and the exposure is incredible.”

The City will host a Pre-Submittal Seminar on October 13, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. City representatives will explain the application process, describe the Community Marketplace program, and answer questions during the call. The Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection is also hosting a webinar on October 12 at 10 a.m. Questions asked during the Pre-Submittal Seminar will be answered and posted on the Riverwalk website. Applications to join the program are due November 8, 2021. Applications are available online at [www.chicagoriverwalk.us](http://www.chicagoriverwalk.us).

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