

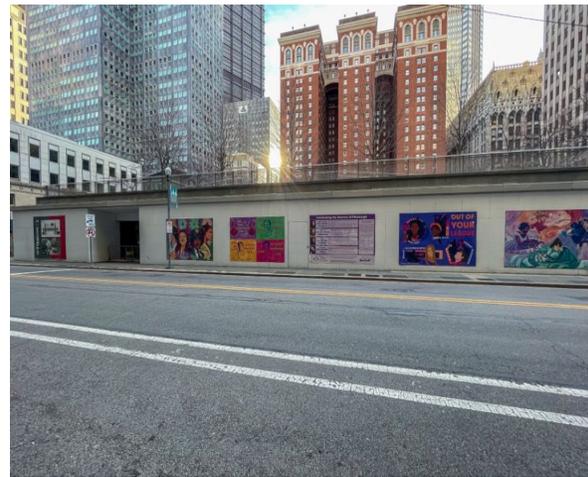
## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

for Architectural and Engineering Design Services

**MELLON SQUARE RETAIL COMMERCIAL FEASIBILITY**

**532-538 SMITHFIELD STREET**

**DOWNTOWN PITTSBURGH**



**Issue Date: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2026**

**Proposal Due Date: MARCH 31, 2026, at 05:00 PM ET**

**MELLON SQUARE RETAIL COMMERCIAL FEASIBILITY**  
**ARCHITECTURE & ENGINEERING SERVICES**  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

**1. INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW**

The Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA) will receive proposals from qualified Architecture & Engineering Firms (Consultant(s)) to reimagine the function of retail space along Smithfield Street with an occupancy that can activate the entire plaza through its role as a destination for the city and the region. The subject premises currently contain four separate vacant retail spaces (530-538 Smithfield Street) adjacent to Mellon Square Park and the Mellon Square Garage. The properties are bounded by Sixth Avenue to the north, Smithfield Street to the west, Oliver Avenue to the south, and William Penn Place to the east.

The goal of this Request For Proposals (RFP) is to determine the most appropriate use that will activate the entire length of the retail space. Treating the area as both an interior and exterior environment will further activate the block between Sixth and Oliver Avenues that will see new pedestrian infrastructure, lighting, and art from the next step of the Smithfield St. Reconstruction project.

**2. SCHEDULE**

Selection of Consultant is expected by May 2026. It is anticipated that the Consultant will begin the project in May 2026.

RFP Release	Tuesday, February 17, 2026
Pre-Proposal Meeting	Tuesday, March 3, 2026, 10:00AM
Deadline for Questions	Wednesday, March 24, 2026
Proposal Submission Deadline	Tuesday, March 31, 2026, 05:00PM
Selection and Notification of Award	Friday, April 17, 2026
Contract Execution	Friday, May 1, 2026
Notice to Proceed	Monday, May 4, 2026

Proposals will be accepted no later than **05:00 p.m. ET on Tuesday, March 31, 2026**. Contract documents are available after **05:00 PM on Tuesday, February 17, 2026**, *only* on the URA’s **Ion Wave Technologies (IWT) platform**. Paper copies are not available for pickup. ***Contract documents will not be mailed. Proposals are only accepted through IWT.***

Instructions to register for IWT are found here: [Ion Wave Registration](#). If you need any assistance with this process or encounter an issue during registration, please contact Ivy Coleman at [icoleman@ura.org](mailto:icoleman@ura.org).

An in-person pre-proposal meeting will take place on site on **Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. ET**. Please email Donita Thomas, Project Manager, [dthomas@ura.org](mailto:dthomas@ura.org), to obtain information for this meeting. All interested parties are strongly encouraged to attend.

Site Visit: All Consultants interested in visiting the site outside of the pre-proposal meeting may do so at their own convenience, although access to the interiors is not provided.

Questions concerning the proposal documents may be submitted through the IWT bidding platform or by emailing Donita Thomas, Project Manager, at [dthomas@ura.org](mailto:dthomas@ura.org). Questions will be answered in a timely manner until five (5) business days prior to the due date.

### **3. PROJECT BACKGROUND**

Mellon Square, designed and constructed in 1955, is one of the crown jewels of Pittsburgh’s downtown environment. Bordered on all sides by a range of early-20th to mid-20th century architecture, the square is comprised of an elevated public plaza situated over multiple levels of below-grade parking garage. The square is understood to be a masterpiece of mid-century urban design. Uniquely organized, the plaza is accessed at grade on the east side facing the William Penn Hotel, while the west side is elevated an entire floor level above grade with two corner stairs providing pedestrian access to the square. The garage is entered on the north and south sides of the square, which slopes with the adjacent grades along Sixth and Oliver Avenues. The plaza itself is delineated with multiple axial pathways defined by an elongated triangular concrete pattern and rectilinear planting areas. The highlight is an asymmetrical fountain fronting the eastern side of the plaza. Representing a complex architectural expression of a downtown square, the plaza provides a unique opportunity for a community-focused public space that residents and visitors can enjoy.

Recently, Mellon Square has been limited in its full function as a destination. This is primarily due to the failure of the ground-level retail space along Smithfield Street to garner interest as a destination. The lack of a commercial destination prevents full use of the plaza above, which has led to limited visitation hours that further impacts the functionality of the space. What should be a focal point of the downtown experience sits empty and creates a significant loss to the urban environment and the public.

The City of Pittsburgh (City) as owner, Pittsburgh Parking Authority (PPA) as original tenant, the URA as the sublease tenant and Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy make up the “Project Team.” The Project Team will select **Consultants** to work with the URA to provide Engineering & Architectural technical services to analyze and determine the feasibility for the development of a new concept at the ground and upper levels of the existing Mellon Square structure. In conjunction with this redevelopment effort, PPA is currently constructing a public restroom located at 530 Smithfield Street (the corner of Smithfield and Oliver Ave) to be managed by the City, limiting the scope of this project to 532-538 Smithfield Street. Pertinent details for the public restroom scope are found in Exhibit B. The analysis should focus on proper integration of the intended use within the unique nature of the building, and in such a way that does not negatively impact the architectural expression of the existing plaza. The additions, particularly at the upper level, should align with the overall design of the plaza and should allow for the new use to function successfully and maximize use of the upper-level plaza.

### **4. PROJECT GOALS AND SCOPE INTENT**

The selected Consultant will analyze and determine the feasibility for the development of a new restaurant, multiple retail spaces, a grocery store, or assembly space at the ground and upper levels of the existing Mellon Square structure. Though not limited to these concepts, the analysis should focus on seamless integration of the intended use within the unique nature of the building and in such a way that does not negatively impact the architectural expression of the existing plaza. The additions, particularly at the upper

level, should align with the overall design of the plaza and should allow for the new use to function successfully and support maximal use of the upper-level plaza.

In addition to activation of the existing space with a new use, proposals should consider careful integration of an experience linked to the retail space at ground level with the plaza space directly above. At present, the west side of the plaza is lined with large tree planters and a continuous walkway with limited seating. The resulting spatial arrangement of the west side of the plaza is denser and less accessible than the east side. Therefore, it represents a unique opportunity to expand the functionality of the ground level space to the upper level. This integration can provide much needed activity to the upper level of the plaza, allowing visitors to the ground level space the opportunity to utilize the upper plaza as well.

Integration of a more complex function on both levels of the plaza can be done with a focus on the historic landmark status of the plaza. This is imperative to the success of the project and to extending the life of the space into its next years.

The selected Consultant is required to produce a feasibility study that includes realistic and actionable concepts for the build out of the space. The Consultant is responsible for all data collection, reviews, field surveys, and coordination with public and private agencies and utilities. Review of the design is anticipated to be performed by the Project Team.

#### **4.1 SCOPE OF SERVICE**

The following is a detailed scope of the required services:

##### **1. General Services**

- a. Project management and coordination
- b. Meeting and progress reporting
- c. Agency coordination

##### **2. Project Kickoff**

- a. Participate in project kickoff with the Project Team
- b. Establish a communication and coordination plan
- c. Confirm project goals, assumptions, and available documentation
- d. Identify information gap

##### **3. Existing Condition Review**

The Consultant shall perform a comprehensive review of existing conditions, including:

- a. Review available documents, prior studies, and relevant records
- b. Conduct site reconnaissance and visual assessment of retail spaces, plaza, and accessible areas
- c. Identify and document structural, utility, and other constraints that may influence the design decision

##### **4. Utilities and Building System Overview**

- a. Identify the presence and general routing of major utilities serving the building
- b. Assess capacity of electrical, water, sewer, and mechanical system
- c. Identify ventilation, exhaust, and mechanical feasibility of the building for food service and/or assembly uses

##### **5. Use and Market Analysis**

The Consultant shall work with the Project Team to identify and evaluate at least three (3) viable concepts for activation of space. Potential uses for the space include but are not limited to:

- a. Restaurant/food hall
- b. Grocery store
- c. Assembly space

Each concept shall be assessed for:

- d. Compatibility with Mellon Square’s architectural character
- e. Ability to activate both ground and plaza levels
- f. Operational feasibility and public accessibility

## **6. Conceptual Design**

Based on the analysis, the Consultant shall develop at least three (3) conceptual designs and advance up to two (2) preferred concepts to a higher level of refinement. Each conceptual design shall include:

- a. Diagrammatic plans and space planning
- b. Sections
- c. Circulation and access diagram
- d. Exterior improvements
- e. Perspective views

## **7. Technical Feasibility**

For each concept, the Consultant shall prepare a narrative and diagrammatic evaluation of the following:

- a. Structural feasibility, including openings, and load implications
- b. MEP
- c. Fire and life safety
- d. Accessibility
- e. Utility

## **8. Regulatory Review**

The Consultant shall conduct complete Code review, including zoning, ADA act, and other ordinances relevant to potential development of the space. The Consultant shall identify and summarize:

- a. Applicable zoning and use requirements
- b. Code and occupancy classification
- c. Accessibility requirements
- d. Permitting process
- e. Historic preservation review

## **9. Opinion of Probable Cost**

- a. For each conceptual design, the Consultant shall prepare a Preliminary Statement of Probable Cost for the project.

## **10. Project Meetings**

The Consultant shall meet not less than three (3) times during Conceptual Design Phase as follows:

- a. The first meeting shall be during the site reconnaissance visit.
- b. The second meeting shall be for the presentation of conceptual design and findings

- c. The third meeting shall be for incorporation of Project Team’s feedback into final recommendations

## 5. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

The Consultant shall submit a Proposal that includes a Technical Section, a Fee Section and timeline for deliverables, bound within one document.

- a. The **Technical Section** shall address the following specific issues:

1. A cover letter with a statement of qualifications along with the main contact person’s name and contact information responsible for the project at your firm.
2. A narrative describing your understanding of the project and your unique suitability to provide these services.
3. A plan of work and technical approach – include a description of the proposed course and sequence of actions or tasks, including methodologies to address the goals of the project.
4. A listing of the architectural, structural engineering, and mechanical engineering team. Include names and resumes of relevant staff for the project.
5. A description of your firm’s ability to provide technical feasibility study services, if applicable, with resumes of staff.
6. Please provide a list of all similar projects that your firm currently has in progress and the status of each.
7. Please provide your best estimate of the time it would take to complete the activities defined in this work scope.
8. Provide information on your current workload and its impact on your ability to meet the schedule you have defined.
9. Please provide not less than three (3) or more than five (5) samples of similar elevation and perspective rendering your firm has prepared for similar projects.

- b. The **Fee Section** shall address the following specific issues:

1. Fee Structure: Using the proposed Fee Structure form attached, please provide a breakdown by task and line-item details as to your firm’s preliminary fee structure based on the work scope defined in this RFP, including any reimbursable costs.
2. Hourly Rates: Please submit a schedule of hourly rates by employee classification, including terms and rates of overtime, if any, for additional work if requested.

## 6. MINORITY AND WOMEN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PARTICIAPATION

The Project Team is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to minorities and women and equal opportunities for business growth and development to minority and women entrepreneurs. To that end, the Project Team requires that all contractors and subcontractors performing work for the Project Team shall demonstrate a good faith effort to obtain the

participation of minority and women business enterprises in the work to be performed for the Project Team and to employ minorities and women during performance of the work. It is the Project Team’s objective to obtain minority and women’s participation in its contracts with the goal being 18 percent (18%) of the contract amount to be expended for minority participation and 7 percent (7%) of the contract amount to be expended for women’s participation. The Project Team promotes the full utilization of subcontracting activities to ensure a successful Minority and Women’s Participation Plan.

The proposal package must include a Preliminary Minority and Women Business Enterprise Narrative detailing how the respondent plans to meet the Project Team’s expressed minority and women-owned business enterprise (MWBE) participation goals for the project in the event the respondent is awarded the contract (the “Plan Outline”). The Plan Outline should be written on company letterhead and must include the following:

- A one- or two-page narrative summary detailing how the respondent plans to meet the 18 percent (18%) MBE goal and 7 percent (7%) WBE goal through the incorporation of MWBE firms on the project
- Potential scope areas where work can be subcontracted, along with any outreach efforts to ensure that MWBE firms are aware of the opportunity
- A list of any MWBE firms that will be included as a part of the team or invited to bid on work
- An expressed commitment to demonstrating a good faith effort to meet the Project Team’s MWBE goals
- An expressed commitment to remain in communication with the URA’s MWBE program officer to develop a finalized MWBE plan should the project be awarded
- Respondent(s) will be asked to develop a final MWBE Plan upon the awarding of a URA contract.

Any questions about MWBE requirements should be directed to **Marcus Robinson, Assistant Director of Grants and Compliance, at (412) 255-6654 or [mrobinson@ura.org](mailto:mrobinson@ura.org).**

## **7. SUSTAINABILITY**

The Project Team is committed to fostering, encouraging, and supporting sustainable development and green building practices to the maximum extent possible in the City of Pittsburgh. Issues of sustainable design and how green building practices can be incorporated into this project should be addressed in the proposal. The Project Team will consider the design team’s experience with sustainability and green infrastructure during the selection process.

## **8. CONSULTANT SELECTION CRITERIA**

Selection for this assignment will be made based on the following criteria:

- The technical qualifications of the staff and subcontractors assigned to the project and their professional experience with similar type projects.
- Organization and management of the project, including efficient staff utilization

- The level of significant MBE/WBE participation.
- The quality of the narrative on sustainability and the experience of the Project Team in incorporating sustainability concepts in projects.
- Project design schedule and the teams perceived ability to meet the schedule.
- The Fee Section of the Proposal. Attention is called to the fact that the contract anticipated to be awarded through this RFP process is for professional services. As such, best value, rather than lowest fee structure will be the determining factor in selecting Consultant. Cost will, however, be an important factor in determining the best value.

## 9. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND PROCESSING

Proposals will be accepted no later than **05:00 PM prevailing time on Tuesday, March 31, 2026**. *Proposals will only be accepted through IWT.* Instructions to register for IWT can be found here: [Ion Wave Registration](#). If you need any assistance with this process, or encounter an issue setting up the registration, please contact Ivy Coleman at [icoleman@ura.org](mailto:icoleman@ura.org).

Questions concerning the proposal documents may only be submitted through the IWT bidding platform. Questions will be answered in a timely manner until five (5) business days prior to the due date.

## 10. LEGAL INFORMATION

The URA intends to select a Consultant based upon information in the response to the RFP submitted by the proposer, the proposer's experience and qualifications, performance in previous undertakings, and other pertinent factors. The URA reserves the right to verify the accuracy of all information submitted

The URA shall be the sole judge as to which proposal best meets the selection criteria. The URA reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject any or all proposals received, to waive any submission requirements contained within this RFP, and to waive any irregularities in any submitted proposal.

The URA, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to reject any response when, among other things, the available evidence or information does not satisfy the URA that the proposer(s) is qualified to carry out the proposed project; is a person or firm of good reputation or character for strict, complete, and faithful performance of business obligations; and/or if the proposer(s) refuses to cooperate with and assist the URA in the making of such investigation.

## 11. NONDISCRIMINATION

The proposer, for itself and its employees, contractors, and primary subcontractors, agrees not to discriminate, whether in employment, contracting or otherwise, against or segregate any person or group of persons on any unlawful basis, or on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression.

## 12. DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY

Proposers acknowledge that, by submitting information and proposals to the URA, the URA does not undertake any obligations, and shall have no liability with respect to any referenced property, this RFP, and/or responses thereto, nor with respect to any matters related to any submission by a proposer.

**EXHIBIT A  
COST SUMMARY**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Scope Summary</b>	<b>Estimated Hours</b>	<b>Proposed Fee</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1	Project Management and Coordination	Kickoff, meetings, Coordination			
2	Existing Condition Review	Drawings review, site reconnaissance			
3	Utility and Building system	Subsurface investigation			
4	Use Analysis	Evaluation of concepts			
5	Conceptual Design	Plans, Sections, Diagram, Renders			
6	Regulatory, code & HRC Review	Zoning, Code, ADA, HRC			
7	Cost & Implementation	Opinion of Probable Cost			
8	Presentations	Meetings with Project Team			
9	Deliverables	Reports, drawings, etc.			
	<b>Total</b>				

**EXHIBIT B**

**530 SMITHFIELD STREET  
PUBLIC RESTROOM SCOPE**

**EXHIBIT C**

**REFERENCE MATERIALS**

MELLON SQUARE – PRESERVATION, INTERPRETATION & MANAGEMENT PLAN