



## City of Muskegon Request for Proposals (RFP)

Project Name: Grocery Market Analysis & Needs Assessment

Posted: Thursday, January 15, 2026

Date Proposal Due: Thursday, February 19, 2026 2:00PM

Issuing Office:

City of Muskegon  
Development Services  
933 Terrace St  
Muskegon, MI 49440  
231-724-6780

## **Introduction**

The City of Muskegon's Development Services Division is seeking proposals from qualified firms to conduct a comprehensive citywide grocery market analysis and needs assessment. The study will evaluate current grocery access, measure local demand, and recommend feasible grocery store models for the City.

The City's goal is to better understand the potential for a new grocery store within its boundaries, identify models that align with resident needs, and receive clear recommendations for implementation. This work will help guide future City decision-making and serve as a foundation for engaging potential partners and operators.

## **Background**

Muskegon residents and stakeholders have highlighted the need for improved access to affordable, healthy foods. While several stores currently sell fresh produce, gaps remain in equitable access to full-service grocery options. The City seeks to proactively evaluate the feasibility of different grocery models that meet this need.

This project is citywide in scope. It is not tied to Muskegon County's broader food access initiatives, though firms may acknowledge relevant regional context. While any successful study will relate grocery resources in the metro area broadly to the findings, the emphasis of this study is on feasibility for grocery in the city only.

## **Project Objectives**

The selected firm will:

- Conduct a citywide market analysis of grocery demand and food access.
- Identify and evaluate the feasibility of different grocery models (independent, co-op, chain, etc.).
- Use community engagement to gather resident input on grocery preferences, needs, and barriers to access.
- Provide clear recommendations for the most feasible grocery models in Muskegon, including rationale and actionable next steps.
- Produce supportive mapping of existing grocery locations and walking-distance radii to illustrate coverage gaps (context only, not site selection).

## **Scope of Work**

### **1) Market Analysis**

- a) Review demographics, household income, and consumer spending patterns.
- b) Conduct a grocery retail leakage analysis to determine where resident currently shop.
- c) Provide an overview of existing grocery and food retail options within The City.

## **2) Community Needs Assessment**

- a) Design and implement community engagement (surveys, focus groups, stakeholder interviews).
- b) Document barriers to grocery access (transportation, affordability, convenience).
- c) Capture resident perspectives on preferred grocery store models.

## **3) Feasibility & Recommendations**

- a) Evaluate grocery store models for The City's context (scale, type, ownership structure).
- b) Assess feasibility from an economic, social, and operational perspective.
- c) Provide actionable recommendations for next steps, including consideration for potential operators or partners.

## **4) Mapping (Supportive)**

- a) Develop maps showing existing grocery locations in The City with walking-distance radii.
- b) Use mapping to illustrate access gaps and support feasibility analysis (not intended as a site selection exercise).

## **Deliverables**

The selected firm will provide:

- Draft report for staff review.
- Final written report with executive summary, findings, maps, and recommendations.
- Maps illustrating grocery access coverage and walking-distance gaps.
- Presentation of findings to City staff (and, if requested, to City Commission).

**Timeline:** All deliverables are due by May 31, 2026.

## **Proposal Requirements**

Proposals must include:

- **Cover Letter:** Provide a cover letter indicating your interest.
- **Firm/Team Background:** Describe the firm, years in business, services offered, and office location. Identify the project manager and key staff who will be assigned to the project and list any subcontractors or partner organizations with their roles.

- **Relevant Experience:** Provide a summary of comparable projects completed within the past five years, particularly grocery or retail market analyses and food access studies. Include client names, project descriptions, completion dates, and references.
- **Methodology & Approach:** Outline the proposed approach to completing the market analysis, needs assessment, community engagement, and recommendations. Detail the tools, data sources, and strategies to be used.
- **Timeline:** Present a project schedule with major milestones that demonstrates the firm's ability to complete the work by May 31, 2026.
- **Cost Proposal:** Provide an estimated cost for the project, including a breakdown of professional fees and expenses.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest with the City of Muskegon. Note that the City reserves the right to determine whether a conflict of interest exists and, if so, whether it disqualifies the firm.
- **Required Statements:** Confirm compliance with federal, state, and local regulations. State the firm's commitment to non-discrimination in employment practices. Acknowledge that proposals may not be withdrawn for sixty (60) days after submission.

## Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Firm's experience and qualifications.
- Quality and clarity of proposed methodology.
- Understanding of Muskegon's project objectives.
- Capacity to complete the project on schedule.
- Cost effectiveness.

The evaluation will be general and not based on a weighted point system.

## Proposal Deadline

Proposals must be delivered or mailed in a sealed envelope clearly marked "Grocery Market Analysis & Needs Assessment" to the following address no later than 2:00 PM local time on Thursday, February 19, 2025:

City Clerk's Office  
City Hall  
933 Terrace Street  
Muskegon, MI 49440

At that time and place, all proposals will be publicly opened and read aloud.

## **Pre-Proposal Questions**

All questions may be directed to the following City staff contact person:

Jake Eckholm, [jake.eckholm@shorelinecity.com](mailto:jake.eckholm@shorelinecity.com), 231-724-6702

## **General Requirements**

Attention is called to the fact that the City requires: that the Contractor consider hiring local work force insofar as possible; that not less than the salaries and wages set forth in the Specifications must be paid (if applicable); that 14% minority and 6.9% female are the goals established for participation in each trade; that the Contractor must ensure employees and applicants for employment are not discriminated against based upon their race, creed, color, religion, sex, national origin, physically challenged condition nor veteran background; and that all pertinent regulations must be complied with. No bid may be withdrawn within sixty (60) days after bid opening.

The City of Muskegon reserves the right to reject any or all bids or to waive any informalities or irregularities in the bidding.