



Request for Proposals: Corso Italia Innovation Through Data Analytics

June 20th, 2023

INTRODUCTION

The Corso Italia Business Improvement Area (the BIA) is a family-friendly neighbourhood of hidden gems with a strong commercial legacy ready to reignite. Here, we celebrate the spirit of our rich and diverse heritage. Alive with history at every turn and welcoming to all, we're both a destination neighbourhood and a place to call home. Located along St. Clair Avenue West between Westmount Avenue and Lansdowne Avenue, boasting over 170 eclectic businesses.

The history of the Corso Italia neighbourhood stretches back to the shores of the glacial Lake Iroquois, which carved out the Davenport Bluffs during the last Ice Age. Generations of families have made their homes here for over 10,000 years. Since the nineteenth century, Corso Italia has served as an entryway into Toronto for thousands of immigrants and newcomers to Canada.

Like its residents, Corso Italia has continued evolving through the years. At one time the largest Italian community in the city, Corso was the destination for shoes and wedding dresses, cafés and espresso — and a welcoming community. Later, new Canadians from Portugal and Latin America moved to the area, adding Spanish and Portuguese to the Italian soundscape of the neighbourhood.

Corso Italia today is a vibrant mixed community of young families, single people, and retired couples. While fewer new immigrant families are settling in the neighbourhood, over three-quarters of the residents are first- or second-generation immigrants. Corso Italia is a neighbourhood in transition, rich in opportunities for current and new residents. It remains a place of welcome and a home for all.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The BIA invites proposals from individuals and companies that can deliver business services and data insight to its business members.

The successful Proponent will provide the key components of the Corso Italia Innovation Through Data Analytics Project. The project will focus on helping local businesses interpret and action market research data to grow and expand their businesses through improved marketing and product/service mix.

The project will be delivered between July 2023 and November 2023 and will be a lump sum contract based on meeting the identified deliverables.



Project Context

There are a range of challenges facing Main Street businesses and communities. They include:

- Lack of Data – BIAs and independent small businesses often lack access to sophisticated market research data that can be leveraged to identify new business and market opportunities.
- Healthy Retail Mix – attracting sustained traffic along a main street requires the right mix of retail and services. Still, without data, it is difficult to understand market opportunities that can fill vacancies.
- Insight and Support – even with data, independent small businesses often need hands-on support to take an insight into action.

The planned Innovation Through Data Analytics Project aims to address these challenges and assist the BIA, and its members in leveraging existing detailed market research data that the BIA has acquired to support the community's economic growth.

The Approach – Data-Driven Analysis

The successful Proponent will receive detailed market research data to inform their work. This will include a detailed community profile for the BIA that includes the following:

- Trade Area Analysis – a detailed overview of the local demographics, household expenditures, media behaviours, mobility patterns, shopping habits and social norms of the local trade area.
- Visitor Draw – detailed mobility data identifying those travelling from outside of the trade area to the BIA to shop and experience the community, including their demographics, household expenditures, media behaviours, mobility patterns, shopping habits and social norms of the local trade area.

Together these two data sets will be used to support the successful Proponent in delivering the project.

Project Deliverables

The successful Proponent will be responsible for delivering the following items under the direction and guidance of the BIA Marketing Subcommittee:

- 1. New Business Opportunities** – this element will focus on identifying new business opportunities that can contribute to a healthy retail mix in the BIA, specifically identifying new businesses with market potential based on the provided data.

This will include the following steps:



- **Business Inventory and Opportunity Identification** – complete an inventory of existing businesses and compare it with the household expenditures by business type in the community to identify new business opportunities.
- **Develop and Implement a Marketing Plan** – based on the new business opportunities, develop and implement a marketing plan to attract those businesses to the community, including leveraging the BIA website to promote those business opportunities.

- 2. BIA Marketing Recommendations** – based on the market research insights, develop recommendations to inform the BIA's marketing, specifically its outreach to residents and potential outreach to visitor groups and their interests.

This work will take the form of actionable insights and recommendations in a PowerPoint format that will be shared with the BIA's Marketing Sub-Committee and the BIA's marketing contractor. The successful proponent will not be required to action the recommendations.

The recommendations should cover the following:

- **Audience** – a detailed overview of the target audiences that the BIA draws and their growth potential (both locally and visitor groups).
- **Channels** – identify the best media channels for promoting the BIA to its target audiences.
- **Messaging** – the best messaging for the BIA's identified target audiences.

- 3. BIA Email Collection Campaign** – based on the above recommendations, work with the BIA's marketing contractor to launch an email collection campaign to expand the number of emails for its target audiences.

The successful Proponent will not be required to implement the plan but to advise the BIA's marketing contractor on the best approach based on the market research data insights.

- 4. Market Research Insight for Businesses** – based on the market research insights, develop a PowerPoint presentation that can be shared with local businesses to help inform their marketing and business plans around products and services. This will include the following:

- **Workshops** – up to three (in-person or virtual) workshops to share market research insights.
- **One-On-One Meetings** – visit local businesses and share market research insights one-on-one.



5. **Additional Business Support** – based on the one-on-one meetings with businesses, provide additional business insight and support for those businesses focused on growing their operations. This may include, but not be limited to:
- **Grant Applications** – support them in applying for funding grants to implement ideas generated from the market research, for instance, applying for digital marketing support through the Digital Main Street Program or to the City of Toronto’s Retail Accelerator Program.
 - **Referrals** – connecting them to other business resources, such as the City of Toronto’s small business office or other support programs.

Through this project, it is expected that the successful Proponent will deliver the following metrics during their contract:

- # of Businesses Engaged – through the workshops and one-on-one support, engage 100 local businesses (160 in the BIA).
- Increase in BIA Mailing List – increase the BIA’s mailing list by 40% (very low baseline).
- Business Opportunities – identify at least two new business opportunities for the BIA..

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proponents must include the following in their proposal:

- A one-page cover letter including the proponent’s name, business name and contact information.
- A brief account of work/education/training history in supporting local main street businesses and community development.
- The total cost to meet the identified deliverables, including a proposed timeline. Provide hourly / per diem rates for out-of-scope services that may arise.
- A description of the proposed approach to the project that demonstrates:
 - Your understanding of the project and the BIA’s objectives; and,
 - Your experience with similar projects.
- At least two references from previous clients of similar projects, including contact name, company/organization name, telephone number, email address and website address.

Deadline for Proposal Submission: June 29th, 2023

Questions may be submitted to Katerina Gourmos, BIA Coordinator, at corso@torontocorsoitalia.com no later than June 21st, 2023.

TIMELINES

June 20th, 2023
June 26st, 2023

RFP issued
Deadlines for submission of questions



June 29th, 2023

July 4th to 6th, 2023

July 10th, 2023

July 17th, 2023

November 30th, 2023

Deadline for submission responses

Interview of Proponents

Selection of successful Proponent and Start of Contract

Contract Commencement

Contract Completion