

**SOUTH ORANGE VILLAGE COMMUNITY CO-RETAIL SPACE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
- RETAIL CONSULTANTS AND OPERATOR -**

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PART 1 - INTRODUCTION: PROJECT HISTORY, MISSION, AND CONCEPT

Project History and Mission

The Taylor Vose redevelopment recently opened at a prime downtown location in South Orange, NJ. As part of this building, the Township of South Orange Village has access to an approximately 2,000 square foot ground-floor commercial retail space. The space is dedicated by contractual agreement to be used as a developmental and incubation space to support local artists and small businesses.

In January 2023, South Orange Village Community Co-Retail Space (SOV CCS) was formed by the Township to design and implement this “co-retail” use. This 501(c)3 nonprofit organization aims to assist, educate and nurture local creatives and entrepreneurs as they develop their businesses into sustainable ventures by providing an affordable, experiential, community-building retail space.

Accordingly, this space will be built and operated with a mission to ***empower local entrepreneurs and creatives by providing a public marketplace that encourages customers to support and shop local in an experiential co-retail space.***

Concept

The SOV CCS Board of Directors envisions the space as a venue for various types of retail and experiences in support of the above mission. The SOV CCS is targeting an initial goal of holding a soft opening (limited in scope) as soon as possible, and eventually developing into a fully-occupied and operational co-retail space within 2023.

Below are examples of the types of participants, retail, and activities that could be associated with the space. The following are initial ideas and examples; a developed concept will define what ultimately operates in the space:

- **Participants:**
 - **Retail Consultant(s)** who will work with the SOV CCS Board to further develop the concept, lay the foundation for operational planning, and advise the Board during the pre-opening period.
 - **Operator** who will manage the space overall and coordinate the various other participants below, post-opening. The Operator may also be an Anchor Vendor (see below).
 - **Anchor Vendors** who will staff and operate the space and sell their own goods, as well as local goods (see below).
 - **Local Vendors** who will provide products to be sold in the space, but who will not staff or operate the space.
 - **Artists-in-residence** who will create art and installations for the space.
 - **Instructors and hosts** who will run events in the space.

- **Retail types:**
 - Anchor retail (operated by Anchor Vendors)
 - Local goods (products sourced from Local Vendors)
 - Flash sales and pop-up retail (e.g. holiday market)
 - Food retail (e.g. prepared packaged foods / “cottage goods”)
 - Limited food service (e.g. coffee/tea, prepared onsite)

- **Events and activities:**
 - Meetings and cultural (e.g. book clubs, music “salons”, author talks)
 - Classes/physical (e.g. yoga, other small group exercise)
 - Classes/creative (e.g. music, art)
 - Classes/educational (e.g. vocational/continuing ed, writing, language, tutoring)
 - Culinary (e.g. pop-up dinners, food/beverage tastings, food product releases)

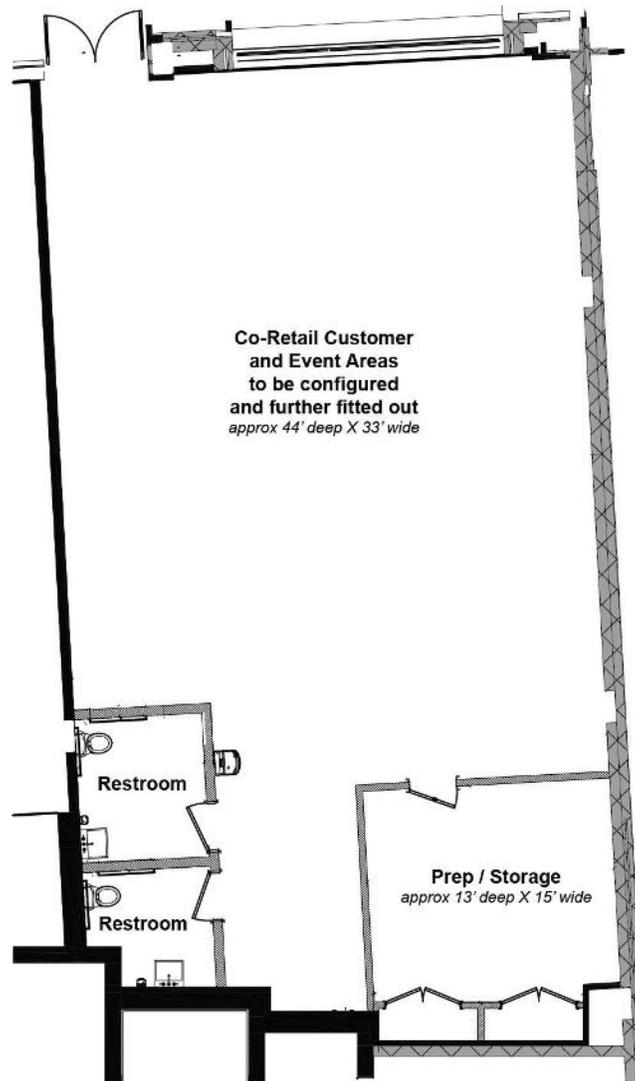
- **Community partnerships**
 - with schools (e.g. K-12 schools and Seton Hall University)
 - with existing South Orange businesses (e.g. other stores, farmers market)
 - with local nonprofits and community groups

PART 2 - THE SPACE

This project will be located in the following retail space:

- The northernmost ground-floor commercial retail space located at 59 South Orange Avenue, South Orange, NJ 07079
- Approximately 2,000 usable square feet
- Large storefront window, high ceilings
- Space will be turned over by the developer to SOV CCS in “warm vanilla shell” condition, for further fit-out and furnishing. See below floor plan for reference.

SOV CCS aims for this space to host welcoming and inclusive experiences for the entire South Orange community and those that visit our town. SOV CCS imagines the storefront to provide a point of collaboration and creativity, and for the space to be designed to offer flexibility for seasonal vendor pop-ups, food and beverage vendors, rotating art, community-building initiatives, and other changing uses.



PART 3 - PROJECT SCOPE

The current needs for this project are broad, and we anticipate that they will fall into the following 6 categories:

1. **Concept Development** — Concept refinement, market and feasibility analyses, preliminary operating budget models, and retail strategic plan.
2. **Operational Planning** — Vendor and participant sourcing and selection, general operational model, opening plan with schedule (i.e. plan to get to initial soft opening).
3. **Space Design and Construction** — Design and implementation of the interior fit-out (anticipated to be flexible furniture- and millwork-based).
4. **Marketing and Communications** — Store naming, marketing/advertising strategy and plan, community outreach and awareness efforts.
5. **Graphic Design** — Branding and graphic assets for store signage, collateral (e.g. shopping bags), digital presence, etc.
6. **Operator** — Co-retail space operations. Creating store operating procedures and best practices, navigating store logistics (e.g. establishing POS and accounting systems, ensuring proper business licenses/insurance/bonds), and ultimately managing the space and coordinating the various other participants (anchor vendors, local vendors, instructors and artists), post-opening. The Operator may also be an Anchor Vendor. (See *PART 1, Participants* above).

PART 4 - RFP RESPONSES, TIMELINE, SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS, AND SELECTION

Through this RFP, SOV CCS seeks to find the following:

- **A Consultant or Consultants** to advise on Project Scope items 1 through 5:
 - 1. Concept Development
 - 2. Operational Planning
 - 3. Space Design and Construction
 - 4. Marketing and Communications
 - 5. Graphic Design

- **An Operator** to execute Project Scope item 6:
 - 6. Operator / Co-retail space operations

Given the broad scope needs, RFP respondents are welcome to submit proposals that cover any or all Project Scope items for which they feel they are qualified.

As examples:

- A respondent who is interested in ultimately operating the space, but who also is comfortable with concepting and operational planning, may propose their services for Project Scope items 1, 2, and 6.
- Conversely, a respondent who has a background in retail concepting, planning, design, and marketing may choose to propose their Consultant services for Project Scope items 1 through 5, with the understanding that a separate Operator will be chosen to run the space post-opening.

In the hopes of tapping into a broad range of backgrounds, talents, experiences, and skill sets in support of this community-centered space, SOV CCS encourages proposals from anyone who feels they can contribute to any part of this project, even if their services would only cover some of the Project Scope. That being said, the SOV CCS Board will prioritize responses that cover multiple items as outlined above.

SOV CCS expects that this project will ultimately succeed through the combined effort of the Consultant(s) and Operator found through this RFP, plus members of the SOV CCS Board, other community nonprofits, local talent, and volunteers.

IN ORDER TO BE CONSIDERED AS EITHER A CONSULTANT OR OPERATOR PLEASE PROVIDE RESPONSES TO ITEMS A THROUGH E BELOW:

- A. **Team and Contact Information:** Respondents may be individuals or teams. If a team, please provide names and roles of all team members. Please also provide contact information (name, email, and phone number) for a single main contact for the respondent.

- B. **Expression of Interest:** Please provide a brief statement on why you are interested in this project. A paragraph or two will suffice.

- C. **Past Work:** Please briefly describe relevant work or projects to which you previously contributed that would be relevant to this project. If you are responding as a team, you can provide examples from the various team members' past efforts. Feel free to include any examples you wish, to demonstrate what you could contribute to the project.

D. Deliverables and Fee Proposal:

Suggested format: For Project Scope items 1 through 5, SOV CCS anticipates engaging on a fee-for-deliverables basis. Using the categories described in PART 3 above as a framework, please propose deliverables associated with each category (as applicable), and your proposed fee for each deliverable. Please feel free to include other scope categories and deliverables not mentioned in PART 3. For example:

- 1. *Concept development*
 - *Retail market analysis and programming recommendations* [\$ fee]
 - *Start-up and pre-operational budget recommendations* [\$ fee]
 - *Year 1 and Normal-course budget and P&L projections* [\$ fee]

If proposing services for Project Scope item 6 (Operator / Co-retail space operations), please propose a fee structure for your work managing day-to-day operations and coordination of the participants of the co-retail space.

Alternatively: If you believe your services are better proposed using a different approach, please feel free to provide your fee proposal in a different format.

- E. **Additional Information:** Please feel free to provide any additional information that would be helpful for the Board's consideration.

RFP Timeline, Submission Instructions, and Review/Selection Process

Feb 7, 2023	RFP released.
Feb 17	Due date for questions. If you have any questions about the RFP, please email so.retail148@gmail.com SOV CCS will endeavor to answer questions in a timely fashion, individually to each respondent asking the question.
Feb 28	RFP responses due by 6pm ET. Please email responses to: so.retail148@gmail.com and provide them as either a PDF attachment or a link to download/view your response.
Mar 1-14	Interview invites and respondent interviews. SOV CCS anticipates inviting some (but not all) respondents to interview and further discuss their proposals.
Mar 17-24	Consultant(s) and Operator selected. Work to commence shortly thereafter.

Note that the above is an anticipated timeline, and is subject to change.

Responses will be evaluated by SOV CCS's Board of Directors, which will consider the following:

- Alignment of respondent's interest with the mission of this project and its general concept as outlined above. Additional concept ideas are welcomed in responses.
- Alignment of respondent's proposed deliverables with the mission of this project and its general concept. The suggested format for RFP responses is intentionally open-ended, allowing respondents to propose the services that they are best able to provide.
- Relevant experience from previous background, work, and projects, including an ability to respond inventively and flexibly to non-traditional program requirements.
- Ability to work collaboratively with the SOV CCS, the community, and other stakeholders.
- Proposal of reasonable and competitive fees.

Please note that SOV CCS is not bound to award the project to respondents of this RFP, nor is it bound to award the contract to the respondent(s) submitting the lowest Fee Proposal(s).

Note that the final engagement(s) and fees will be negotiated, using the successful fee proposal(s) as a basis.

- End of RFP Document -