

Merchant and Leasing Coordinator

Cleveland Public Market Corporation



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Under the direction of a committed Board of Directors, the tax-exempt, nonprofit Cleveland Public Market Corporation (“CPMC”) is striving to make West Side Market the nation’s premier public market by meeting the evolving needs of merchants, customers, and the community. CPMC’s **mission** is to preserve the city’s public market tradition while making the local food system more accessible, equitable, and diverse. CPMC is seeking a Merchant and Leasing Coordinator to join the management team.

Following national best practices among the nation’s large urban markets, Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb and his administration initiated the effort to transition day-to-day operations of West Side Market from city management to CPMC. While the City will maintain ownership of the land and buildings, CPMC is on track to take over operation of West Side Market in early 2024.

The City and a diverse Advisory Committee of city government representatives, local stakeholders, and Market merchants provided input into a [masterplan](#) prepared by an experienced public market consultant. The masterplan is guiding the new organization as it makes physical and operational changes that diversify income, support the Market’s merchants, and improve the customer experience.

Merchant and Leasing Coordinator

Cleveland Public Market Corporate is hiring a Merchant and Leasing Coordinator, a key leadership role in revitalizing one of Cleveland’s greatest assets – historic West Side Market. The Merchant and Leasing Coordinator assists merchants, enforces leases and product quality standards, recruits new merchants, oversees merchant onboarding, provides consistent communications to merchants, and provides/coordinates business and merchandising assistance.

The Merchant and Leasing Coordinator, who reports to the Executive Director, plays a critical role in recruiting new merchants to fill vacancies and diversify the product offerings and to support all of the Market’s merchants to help them achieve high sales and follow the Market’s rules.

The Merchant and Leasing Coordinator will help implement the West Side Market masterplan and fulfill CPMC’s mission of striving to make West Side Market the nation’s premier public market by meeting the evolving needs of merchants, customers, and the community.

Major Duties and Responsibilities

As part of a new and small organization, all staff members are expected to exhibit flexibility and willingness to address issues as they arise, helping to ensure that West Side Market has

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the management capacity needed to drive success. The following list anticipates the major duties and responsibilities for this position:

1. Merchant recruitment: develop outreach campaigns to identify potential merchants from throughout the region who meet the Market's product mix and diversity goals, recruit them to join the Market, and negotiate lease terms.
2. New merchant onboarding: assist new merchants through the process of stall design, equipment selection, licensing, training, and opening.
3. Merchant training: develop programs in partnership with small business support organizations to benefit Market merchants in areas such as merchandising, financial management, and customer service training.
4. Develop and nurture positive relationships with Market merchants and the merchants' association.
5. Enforce leases, including oral and written communication to merchants who have lease infractions, and the imposition of fines and potentially notices of default for failure to comply.
6. Help develop and orchestrate public events, particularly ones that include pop-up vendors.
7. Develop and nurture positive relationships with organizations that provide entrepreneurship support and connections to diverse area businesses.
8. Provide input into annual budget creation as it relates to leasing, recruitment, and business assistance.
9. Provide information for annual reports that highlight merchant-related information.
10. Create performance metrics related to merchant recruitment and support, and track performance.
11. Assist with the implementation of the West Side Market masterplan as it relates to merchants.
12. Maintain knowledge about best practices in merchant relations with public markets.

The Opportunity

The projected first-year accomplishments for the Merchant and Leasing Coordinator include:

- Lead the re-leasing process with current tenants.
- Clearly communicate lease expectations with tenants and enforce lease terms.
- Identify ways to assist existing Market merchants with business practices, customer service, marketing, and merchandising.

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- Create strategies for leasing outreach, create partnerships with diverse area organizations that support small businesses, and initiate leasing discussions with at least 30 potential merchants.
- Create an advertising campaign with Marketing Director to expand interest in Market business opportunities.
- Support the work of the Merchant Relations Committee: prepare agenda, coordinate meeting schedules, draft and distribute meeting notes.
- Create metrics to guide evaluation of merchant performance and leasing.

As part of the inaugural team working for the newly formed nonprofit corporation that is taking over management of West Side Market, the Merchant and Leasing Coordinator will have a unique and exciting opportunity to set the stage for the Market's next chapter and help bring it to its full potential. The Merchant and Leasing Coordinator can significantly contribute to the crafting and execution of the vision for West Side Market as its revitalization moves forward.

Compensation

The Merchant and Leasing Coordinator is expected to earn a salary in the \$40,000 to \$45,000 range. Compensation will be commensurate with the candidate's experience and knowledge. In addition, the candidate will receive CPMC's standard benefits for full time employees, expected to include medical, dental, retirement, and relevant and related work reimbursements, paid holidays, and other paid time off.

Location

The position is located at CPMC's offices in West Side Market, 1979 W. 25th Street, Cleveland, OH 44113. Some remote work is permissible. The candidate must be able to visit potential merchants throughout the region and to participate in programs and activities within the Market, including events and tours.

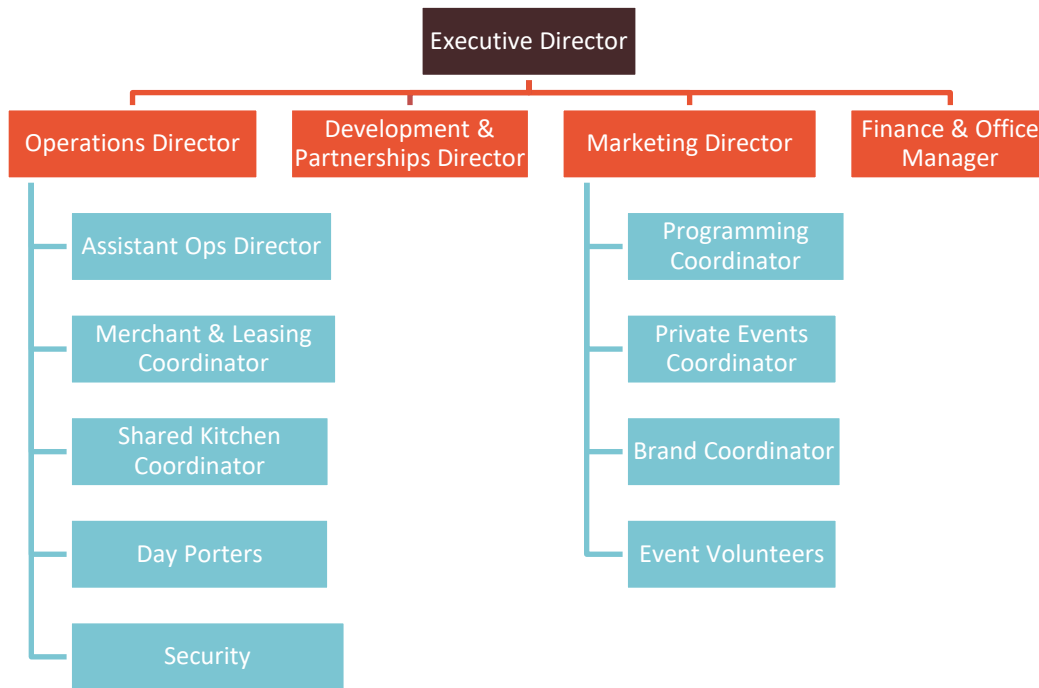
Candidates must be consistently available and willing to work in-person on weekends. The position requires regular in-person work on Saturday and/or Sunday at West Side Market. Staff will be expected to work together to achieve fair scheduling that balances employee needs with the Market's needs to be staffed on weekends to provide excellent support to vendors and customers.

Reporting Relationships

The Merchant and Leasing Coordinator reports to the Executive Director. The Merchant and Leasing Coordinator works closely with the Market management team to ensure the success of the Market. While subject to change, this chart shows these relationships:

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The Merchant and Leasing Coordinator staffs and supports the work of CPMC’s Merchant Relations Committee, which is led by the board’s Vice President of Merchant Relations and includes other board members, Market merchants, and outside experts. The committee, which likely will meet every other month, advises the board on matters involving merchants such as leasing, tenant attraction and evaluation, evictions, grievances, short term leasing, merchandizing strategies, and business assistance programs.

The City and CPMC are negotiating a lease and management agreement that defines the responsibilities of each entity for ongoing operations, maintenance, and capital improvements. The Merchant and Leasing Coordinator will interface with government agencies whose work touches the Market, likely to include Economic Development, Public Works, Department of Public Health, and regulatory agencies.

The Candidate

Education

A bachelor’s degree in a relevant field is valued. However, lived, learned, and previous relevant experience will be given equal consideration. Language skills in addition to English are desired.

Professional qualifications

The ideal candidate will have experience in either retail food or food & beverage

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operations, particularly with small businesses. Experience working for a small and young nonprofit organization is useful, as is experience with entrepreneurship support organizations and other aspects of the local foods sector.

In addition, the ideal candidate will possess the following:

- A minimum of three (3) years' experience in relevant positions.
- Self-starter with a passion for working with independent food businesses and with business recruitment and leasing.
- Working knowledge of regulatory issues facing food businesses.
- Experience working and thriving in a diverse urban community and ability to relate to those different from oneself
- Experience working with nonprofit advisory groups.
- Excellent written and oral communications skills.
- Knowledge of standard office procedures, practices, and adept use of technology tools.
- Willingness to work some non-traditional hours, including evenings and weekends.

Desired Traits

- **Organized:** Able to manage multiple high-priority tasks simultaneously.
- **Problem Solver:** Demonstrates excellent mediation skills and decision-making abilities; seeks to understand the "why" and the "how". Solutions oriented.
- **Self-Starter:** Proactively sets goals and develops strategies and schedules for meeting those goals; self-motivating even in the face of challenge.
- **Mission driven:** Authentically able to embrace CPMC's mission, vision, and values.
- **Collaborative:** Demonstrates ability to collaborate with community partners, funders, coworkers, small businesses, and a board or oversight committee.
- **Inclusive:** Commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive work environment; demonstrated ability to relate to and work effectively with persons of diverse racial, ethnic, gender, sexual preference or orientation, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- **Interpersonal Skills:** Demonstrates skill in the development and maintenance of effective working relationships with all levels of executive and managerial personnel, merchants, various governmental agencies, and other key stakeholders.
- **Emotional intelligence:** Copes well with conflict, stress, and crisis situations; uses and manages own emotions in positive ways to drive for success.

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- **Integrity:** Possesses the highest ethical and moral standards.

CPMC firmly supports the principle and philosophy of equal opportunity for all individuals, regardless of race, religion, sex, age, national origin, or disability.

About CPMC, West Side Market, and Cleveland***CPMC's Core Values***

All management staff are expected to adhere to CPMC's core values:

Diversity – Welcome and serve businesses, residents, and visitors with diverse lived experiences and perspectives.

Opportunity – Create the conditions for thriving, independent, and diverse local businesses that offer good jobs in the community.

Authenticity – Preserve the unique historic characteristics that make West Side Market a cherished institution.

Food access and education – Improve the community's access to and knowledge about high-quality, interesting, creative, affordable, and healthy food.

Sustainability – Center environmental impact in decision-making.

Community engagement – Promote diverse and representative leadership that values input by stakeholders.

Community building – Create spaces and programs that build community connections.

Fiscal responsibility – Make sound financial decisions to achieve self-sufficient operations.

Professionalism – Operate to the highest standards of integrity, creativity, and competence.

West Side Market

Cleveland's West Side Market is one of the greatest public markets in America and a beloved destination for residents and visitors alike. Located in Cleveland's vibrant Ohio City neighborhood at the corner of Lorain Avenue and W. 25th Street, West Side Market opened its doors in November 1912.

Serving as both a functional space and architectural marvel, the Market has undergone expansions and renovations throughout its more than 110-year history. Today, the Market Hall, Arcades, and outdoor public spaces comprise more than 85,500 square feet of vendor and gathering areas.

Over 60 dedicated vendors are at the heart of West Side Market, predominately small family businesses with many operating stalls over multiple generations, several dating to 1912.

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The Market has maintained its focus on fresh meat, produce, and seafood over the decades and offers a diverse selection of baked goods and other specialty foods. The Market is recently experiencing some vacancies, providing the opportunity to expand the product mix and diversify the population of businesses so it better reflects the racial and ethnic composition of the community. The masterplan offers guidance about marketing, vendor recruitment, physical upgrades, and operational improvements.

Cleveland and Northeastern Ohio

Cleveland Public Market Corporation and West Side Market are in one of the nation's most exciting metropolitan areas. The Greater Cleveland region includes residents with diverse identities and backgrounds and has maintained a solid economy with a mix of service, healthcare, academic, and manufacturing businesses. A rich arts and culture scene includes galleries, community festivals, restaurants, a world-renown orchestra, art museums and a thriving theatre district. On the shores of Lake Erie, the area is also home to beautiful parks and a myriad of recreational opportunities. Educational organizations include outstanding public and private school systems, community colleges, and several public and private institutions of higher learning. Professional and collegiate athletics include major league football, baseball, basketball, and collegiate Division I, II and III sports programs.

Contact

Interested candidates should send a cover letter and resume to the Hiring Committee at cpmc@westsidemarket.org.