

Elements Workspace Tenant Preference Plan

Purpose:

The commercial workspace tenant preference process outlines the process by which the Watershed organization recommends potential ground-floor tenants for The Elements building at The Bend. This preference plan outlines the structure, responsibilities, and decision-making processes of the Workspace Tenant Selection Panel. This plan also outlines the foundational criteria by which all candidates for **ground floor commercial spaces** will be evaluated for Elements, the first building constructed for the District Development. It ensures transparency and alignment with the Watershed District Development project and organizational mission: progress on 100 Commitments, supporting fiscal sustainability, and meeting identified community needs.

- Create a replicable model for future workspace tenant selection across other buildings in the District.
- To ensure a transparent, consistent, and equitable process for Elements tenant evaluation and selection.
- To evaluate applicants based on a consistent and community informed criteria
- To provide accountability and documentation throughout the decision-making process.
- Provide documentation for future amendments by community feedback and project team approval.

Deliverables:

- Secured Letters of Intent (LOIs) from tenants covering at least 50% of the commercial square footage to directly support Watershed's financing strategy
- A panel recommendation outlining a values-aligned, community-driven tenant mix and use case strategy for Elements

Commitments:

Of Watershed's 100 Commitments ([here](#)), the Workspace Tenant Preference Plan will contribute to the following commitments:

- **Financial Sustainability (C4)** - workspace rent capped at \$24/sq ft
- **Space for micro-businesses (C5)** - offer street-level workspaces of less than 300 square feet for micro-businesses
- **Community Serving (C7)** - tenants whose work directly supports artists, artisans, nonprofits, or neighborhood-serving small businesses
- **Preserve Commercial Space (C14)** - ensure that no net loss of commercial space results from the project
- **Inclusive Art Space (C34)** - Designate a street-level space in the first building for artistic collaboration, with a focus on artists from historically under-resourced communities
- **Diverse tenant (C46)** - tenants identifying as artists, immigrants, refugees, or people of color

Elements



Overview of the Two-Path Approach

To balance securing financing with our commitment to transparency and community engagement, the process will follow two concurrent paths:

- **Path 1: Pre-Screened Waitlist (Accelerated):** prioritizing speed and financial feasibility
- **Path 2: Community Partners Outreach:** prioritizing broader network outreach and transparency

IMPORTANT: The structure and approach of Path 2 represent the direction of future commercial tenant selection across the District. As such, this process serves as both a pilot and a precedent for embedding equity, accountability, and community partnership across commercial tenant selection.

Path 1: Pre-Screened Waitlist Orgs (Accelerated)

This path fast-tracks organizations already identified through the Equinox/Bend waitlist and current tenants.

Sourcing Candidates

Candidates will be sourced from Equinox and Bend commercial waitlists as well as current tenants.

Initial Screen

All candidates will be screened for the following initial screening criteria

- Continued interest in commercial space in the District Development Plan

- Alignment with realistic use type and available space (Elements = 2000 sqft)
- Fit with construction/move in timeline
- **Preference for commercial tenants** (C5, C81) which meet the following use types:
 - Open to the public
 - Interactive/community participation
 - Culture and/or art-related
 - Food-related & community gathering

Financial Feasibility Conversations

Candidates will enter direct conversations with the Bend's Financing Team to assess financial feasibility and readiness through

- Ownership vs rental relationship
- Credit history
- Liquidity and funding commitment
- Consistency of business operations
- Documentation review

Confirmed Partners

The objective is to secure LOIs covering at least 50% of commercial square footage in Elements from this pool.

Integrating Both Paths

Once LOIs are secured from Path 1 tenants, the project team will determine how much commercial space remains and identify gaps in tenant type, use, or demographic representation. These findings will directly guide Path 2 panel decisions to ensure the final tenant mix is balanced, diverse, community-rooted, and advances Watershed's Commitments.

Path 2: Community Partners Outreach

This path invites a broader pool of candidates to apply through a public intake process, allowing both the panel and candidates more room to explore collaborative projects and orgs that may be earlier in their development or not yet fully established.

Recruitment of Candidates

Candidates will be recruited via the following channels:

- Equinox and Bend networks via direct outreach and referrals to local entrepreneurs, artists, food and beverage businesses, and cultural organizations
- Watershed, Equinox, and Bend networks via digital communications, such as social media and newsletter.
- Form submission to work at the Bend, found on both Equinox and the Bend website
- Form submission via [Workspace Tenant Interest Form](#)

Deadline for consideration is end of day, **June 30, 2025**.

Initial Screen

Same criteria as Path 1

Panel Composition

Selection process: Nominated and approved by District Development project manager and leadership to reflect the functional expertise of existing commercial tenant relationships, community relationships, and expertise in criteria outlined in **Workspace Tenant Evaluation Criteria Rubric** (see below).

Consisting of 5 voting members total, including:

- Community and Property Steward
- Community Development Partner
- Community Investment Partner
- Community Relations Representative
- Architectural and Urban Planning Consultant

Facilitator: Art Imperative Director

Documenter: Watershed Board Member

Panel Responsibilities

- Facilitation of panel meetings.
- Thorough documentation of decisions throughout review process including screening, scoring, and final review and selection.
- Review and evaluate all eligible tenant materials.
- Score candidates using Evaluation Criteria (below)
- Engage in discussion to reach final decisions to reach final decision on tenant selection.

Independent Scoring

- All panelists will receive a summary outline of candidates who meet initial screening criteria
- Each panelist independently scores candidates using the following rubric, aka: **Workspace Tenant Evaluation Criteria Rubric**

Priority	Description
Activation hours	How many days is the tenant opened to public? How many hours per day?
Use-type: commercial (C5, C81)	Is the candidate a commercial tenant whose work is compatible with <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active public engagement and programming (eg. public events)• Relating to culture, arts, or food• ~2,500 cultural/art-related• ~1,300 food related and community gathering• Free/open admission opportunities
Financial sustainability (C4)	For rental relationship, can the candidate meet and sustain ~\$24/sqft rent? For ownership opportunities, would the candidate be able to purchase commercial space at ~\$450/sqft? What is the timeline for confirming funding or financing for your space? Is the business currently operating, or are you in the startup/planning phase?
Displaced tenant	Is or WILL the candidate be displaced from an existing location due to the project?
Equinox tenant	Is the candidate a current tenant?

Diverse tenant (C46)	Does the candidate identify as artist, immigrant, refugee, and/or PoC?
Community serving (C7)	Is candidate's work benefiting the community (artist, artisan, nonprofit, artisan, local)?
Feasible use of space	Is candidate's plan compatible plan for space usage (layout, amenities, feasible tenant improvements, etc)?
Preserve commercial space (C14)	Does the plan result in net loss of commercial space?
Inclusive Art Space (C34)	Does the space serve 1) artistic collaboration for 2) historically under-resourced communities?

- Scores are submitted, compiled, and summed across all panelists.
- The **top 50% of candidates** by total score advance to discussion.

Panel Deliberation

- Panel convenes to review the top [x] candidates
- Facilitated discussion considers **holistic/cohort aspects** including:
 - Diversity of activation/active hours
 - **C7: Community-serving workspaces** – aim to fill 100% of workspaces with artists and artisans, nonprofits, and neighborhood-serving small businesses
 - **C46: Diverse workspaces:** workspaces with tenants whose owners, managers, and employees represent our communities served, with targets of **50% artists and 50% from immigrant** and refugee communities and communities of color
 - Potential risks
 - Needs not captured in individual scoring
- Decision-making aims for **full consensus**. If consensus is not achieved, fallback to a **Fist to Five voting**.
- Panel deliberation documented including:
 - Panel comments and discussion summary
 - Rationale for applicant ranking
 - Record of votes if applicable
- The panel may determine that a re-initiation of the selection process is necessary and proceed accordingly.

Confidentiality

- Candidate information and deliberations are confidential.
- Final outcomes may be shared publicly, but deliberation notes are internal.

Confirmed Partners

Finalists selected through the panel process will be invited to enter LOI conversations.

Proposed Timeline

The panel process is designed to ideally **complete within one month** starting from initial recruitment. Meeting frequency is therefore flexible but intended to achieve the deadline of tenant or use type list selection by June 15, 2025

- May 23: Path 1 initial screen complete
- May 23: Path 2: network recruitment starts
- May 30: Path 1: partners identified
- June 6: Path 1 end: LOIs secured
- June 30: Path 2: end network recruitment
- July 1 – July 11: Path 2 - Independent Scoring
- July 21-Aug 1: Path 2: Panel Review & Discussion
- Aug 8: Path 2 end: Finalist Engagement