

CITY OF PEEKSKILL

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
(RFP)**

**PROFESSIONAL CONSULTING SERVICE
TO PERFORM CULTURAL HERITAGE
TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN**

RFP Issue Date: January 25, 2010
RFP Submittal Date: February 24, 2010

**City of Peekskill
Request for Proposal
Cultural Heritage Tourism Strategic Plan**

I. Introduction and Summary

The City of Peekskill is requesting proposals from qualified consultants or consulting firms with experience and expertise in the creation, planning, and implementation of Strategic Cultural Heritage Tourism Plans. This plan would assist the City in assessing, planning, and marketing the City as a cultural heritage tourist destination and attracting visitors from throughout the New York City Metropolitan region and beyond.

A) Background

Located in the northwest corner of Westchester County and at the gateway to New York State's Hudson Valley Region, The City of Peekskill (The City) is 45 miles north of New York City (Times Square) and 35 miles west of Fairfield, CT. The City is 4.5 square miles and has an estimated 2008 population of 24,484. Historically, The City's strategic location on the Hudson River and later at the crossroads of major state highways gave it an economic advantage over other locations in northern Westchester and the Lower Hudson Valley. Much of the City's economic base was founded on manufacturing which was built on these advantages and began diminishing in the late 1960s through the early 1980s.

Beginning in the early 1990s and for the past decade, The City began to reinvent itself through establishing and cultivating a creative community through the formation of an artist district. From the establishment of this district in 1991, The City slowly began a come back that included:

- The creation of the first Business Improvement District in Northern Westchester County in 1996.
- The establishment of a satellite of Westchester Community College now the Center for Digital Arts
- The emergence of The Paramount Center for the Arts whose mission is to bring cultural and educational programming to the northern Westchester and Putnam County area at affordable prices.
- The opening of the Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art cited by the New York Times as "the most dynamic contemporary art site in Westchester... Maybe one day, these regional, more experimental art places might supercede art-stately New York City."
- The designation in 2005 of the city's downtown on the National Register of Historic Districts.

All of these initiatives have worked to help revitalize the City. However, all of these projects were taking place in the downtown and the City's waterfront was severely neglected. Then in the earlier part of this decade, the City received a significant grant from the NY Empire State Development Corporation for a series of projects to help revitalize the City's waterfront with recreational, educational, and historical projects. Some of these projects include the City partnering with a national (The National Maritime Historical Society), regional (Scenic Hudson), and local (Peekskill Lincoln Society) organizations in order to successfully complete each project.

Finally, the City believes it has one other important infrastructure asset at the waterfront which is not being utilized to its maximum potential. This is known as Fleishman's Pier (also sometimes referred to as China Pier). Fleishman's Pier is a legacy left over from the period when the City was a manufacturing center and Fleishman's was the City's biggest employer. Fleishman's Pier still has channels and infrastructure in the Hudson River to accept ferry boats and other smaller ships. The City see Fleishman's Pier as an opportunity to be enhanced in order to tap into the New York City tourism market and the overall reemergence of the Hudson River as a vehicle in which to deliver tourists from North, West, and South of The City.

Taken individually, many cities would be happy with one of these assets. However, as great as each asset maybe individually, collectively they are disparate. Therefore this RFP is seeking to engage a consultant(s) to help the City create a Strategic Cultural Heritage Tourism Plan that will enable the City and its stakeholders to leverage the existing and proposed attractions and venues for the greatest economic return, without negatively impacting the quality of life expected by our residents.

B) The Economic Transformation of Peekskill

During the first decade of the 21st Century, the City of Peekskill and surrounding region have evolved to leverage those earlier strategic advantages and develop new strategic assets. Many of these assets are related to the region's changing demographics, while others are more oriented to service and creative industries. These assets include:

- The City is located within and adjacent to the two wealthiest counties in New York State.
- The city is situated at the crossroads of both east/west and north/south state highways – Routes 6, 9, 202, and 35.
- A commuter train station with a 55 minute commute to New York City's Grand Central Terminal.

- The city is located less than one hour from three international airports, JFK, LaGuardia, and Stewart International Airport (which is only 35 minutes from downtown Peekskill).

II. Statement of Work (SOW)

Please see Attachment A for background on waterfront projects.

The selected consultant will perform the following activities in order to produce a Cultural Heritage Tourism Strategic Plan.

A) The goals to be achieved through this process are as follows:

1. Design a comprehensive strategic cultural heritage plan aimed at appropriate demographic markets both inside and outside the Hudson Valley.
2. Develop a brand for the City of Peekskill (since no tourism marketing brand presently exists) that will help Peekskill deliver the greatest short term and long term return on investment for City government and community stakeholders
3. Establish quantifiable performance measures for the plan that can be presented to the Mayor and Common Council, interested stakeholders, and Peekskill residents.

B) The selected consultant will address the following tasks:

- 1) Analyze Peekskill's waterfront attractions, venues, and amenities - existing and soon to open (These include the Lincoln Depot, Peekskill Landing, Waterfront Park and Trail, and Annsville Preserve Park) – to determine how to market these to draw daytime and overnight visitors to The City. In addition, the City also wants the consultant to analyze not the engineering viability of Fleishman's Pier, but the market viability of such a facility to attract tourist ships and boats to bring tourists to Peekskill.
- 2) Assess Peekskill's existing attractions and determine how best to integrate them into an overall Strategic Cultural Heritage Tourism Plan.
- 3) Identify new or additional targeted tourist markets based on certain demographic and type of attraction, venues, and amenities in The City – existing and soon to open.

In order to make the best use of the City's available resources, the consultant will review background information on the City's existing tourist attractions and those planned or underway. In addition, the consultant will need to familiarize themselves with Westchester County's tourism market data. All of this information will be provided directly to the consultant by the City.

After concluding this review and analysis the consultant will meet with the staff from the City. The consultant will demonstrate an understanding of these attractions and venues. The consultant will then lay out their process and goals for obtaining information through the facilitation of meetings with four distinct groups.

The consultant will prepare and hold four facilitated meetings with the following groups

- a. City of Peekskill's Mayor, Common Council, and City Manager
 - b. Core group of Peekskill's established not-for-profits including Peekskill Arts Council, Peekskill Business Improvement District, Peekskill Art Loft, The Rotary Club of Peekskill, The Peekskill Museum, Peekskill Celebration, and Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce.
 - c. Group of for profits and not-for-profits involved with prospective tourism: Scenic Hudson, National Maritime Historical Society, Lincoln Society in Peekskill, The Paramount Center for the Arts, The Westchester County Office of Tourism, Route 6 Tourist Association, Historic Hudson River Towns (The Gold Standard), Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art, Peekskill Inn, Holiday Inn Express, Annsville Creek Paddlesport Center, U.S. Waterways, and other prospective ferry or boat services.
 - d. Public Meeting for residents, businesses, and other not-for-profits interested in this undertaking.
- 4) Identify an existing public, not-for-profit, or public private partnership entity (or propose one) which can effectively coordinate and execute the programs and initiatives outlined in the plan.
 - 5) Prepare a report of findings and recommendations, along with the appropriate budget required to achieve the goals and implement the strategies which will strengthen The City's presence in the regional tourism market and attracting a greater annual number of visitors. Simultaneously, the consultant will assist the City to create a strategy to develop the necessary resources to meet the needs for implementation.

C) Final Report

At the conclusion of the facilitation process, the consultant will attend and present the final report at two meetings. The first meeting the consultant will present to City staff their draft report that outlines the mission, goals, and strategies that resulted from their review of data and information and consensus that they drew from their facilitated meetings. In addition, the consultant will have prepared a draft budget that they believe is necessary for the City to adequately implement the proposed plan. In attendance at this meeting will be staff and appropriate department heads and the consultant will take this input and incorporate it into the final draft plan and budget.

At the second meeting, to be held no later than two weeks from the conclusion of the first meeting, the consultant will return to make a full presentation of the final plan and budget before the City of Peekskill's Mayor and Common Council.

III. Selection Process

The City intends to award a contract resulting from this RFP to the responsible consultant whose proposal represents the best value. The City holds the right to reject any and all proposals if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the project.

The award of a contract will be made to the consultant whose proposal represents the best value to the City, as reflected by the selection criteria established below. The City will weigh the relative benefits of each proposal and the award will be based on an integrated assessment of the combined merit rating and price. Under this “best value” analysis, the City reserves the right to award to other than the lowest priced proposal or to other than the highest merit rated proposal.

The selection of the successful firm will be made by the Common Council, will include, but not limited to the following criteria:

1. Applicable Experience – Quantity and type of experience with similar work.
2. Approach to Project – methods of identifying, understanding and addressing project.
3. Cost Saving Innovations – Presentation of cost saving ideas for the project.
4. Technical Expertise - Expertise in dealing with the technical issues related to the project.
5. Adequate Resources - Sufficient staff, equipment and systems in place to complete proposed work within proposed time frame.
6. Project Innovations - Ideas or suggestions to improve the quality/schedule of project.
7. Project Proximity - Physical location of firm(s) in order to maximize attention to this project.
8. Performance on Past Projects - Success on previous projects of a similar nature.
9. Familiarity of Project - Knowledge of project background, needs, goals, limitations and special considerations.
10. Proposal Quality - Readability, completeness, brevity and organization of written proposal and quality of oral presentation

Any cost incurred by the respondents in preparing or submitting a Request for Proposal or interviewing for this project shall be the respondents' sole responsibility.

IV. Minimum Requirements for the Proposal

The consultant will submit two printed copies of this report with all appropriate supporting documents and a computer disk (PDF Format) containing the same. Information in each submittal shall be considered public information by the City of Peekskill. Any information considered to be trade secrets, privileged or confidential should not be revealed in the proposals. Contents of the proposals could be made public after the contract has been awarded and executed. The following sections are required in the submittal:

Budget: Billing or pricing structure for these services needs to be included. Estimated lump sum budget based on the statement of work and the proposed approach detailing the time and budget allotted to each consultant and sub-consultant by task. The budget section should include the cost of public outreach and contacting the potential stakeholders, such as mailings, websites, questionnaires, etc. Also, the consultant(s) should identify what other costs are typically charged in addition to the professional service hours.

Project Team: Identify the project team members and their positions within, or relationship to, the firm. Detail any anticipated sub-consultants. Provide member resumes as part of each description. Provide a description of the expertise of each team member(s), roles and experience of key personnel.

Schedule: Provide an anticipated schedule, beginning with the estimated date of contract execution, to perform the work listed under Statement of Work above. This schedule should show a start date, prospective meetings dates, final documentation delivery dates, and any other information the submitting firm feels is appropriate.

Similar Experience/References: The submitting firms should list similar project experience detailing project(s) description, location, budget, etc. Submitting firms should also provide a comprehensive list of references. Examples of comparable projects completed in the past 3 years, with references for each.

Level of Support: A description of the type and level of support typically required through each phase of the project, including, but not limited to, staff support, GIS maps/data, and provision of meeting space, meeting materials and meeting logistics, additional supporting background.

Other Information: Provide any information which may be beneficial to the project, or unique qualities/ideas that will improve the project or provide additional value.

All submittals shall be sent or delivered by the deadline to:

All submitted Proposals should be submitted by 11:00 am on Wednesday, February 24, 2010 to

Office of the City Clerk
City of Peekskill
840 Main Street
Peekskill, NY 10566

Proposal should be marked: Cultural Heritage Tourism Study

Please address any questions about the RFP to Christopher Marra at 914-293-0916 or cmarra@cityofpeekskill.com.

ATTACHMENT A

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTING SERVICE TO PERFORM CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN

Lincoln Plaza & Depot

The Lincoln Plaza Project involves the preparation of design plans for the 1.1 acre site that is now occupied by the Lincoln Depot which will be developed into a museum. The site is located near the Hudson River in Peekskill, New York at 10 South Water Street at the foot of Central Avenue, across the Metro North Railroad tracks from Peekskill's Riverfront Green Park. The site was the location for a number of historic events; most notably a stop in 1861 by Abraham Lincoln on his inaugural train ride.

The Vision

Lincoln Plaza will be a significant and inviting entrance to the future Lincoln Depot Museum, provide a place for public gathering, and link the City's downtown and waterfront areas. The design includes details to enliven and articulate this open space, creating a vibrant and functional public plaza. The museum and plaza will serve as a focal point between the downtown area and the waterfront via Central Avenue and a pedestrian overpass spanning the railroad tracks. This site will also be a destination on the Greenway/RiverWalk Trail, a pathway that is planned to link each of the Hudson River communities along the waterfront.

Lincoln Plaza includes the following elements:

- Visitor Center – This will include offices, a gift shop, storage, restrooms, and a concession area. Since it is not part of the Plaza project, it has been designed at a conceptual level only.
- Gathering Area - A hardened crushed stone surface would be added in front of the Depot with the Lincoln statue as the centerpiece. This will provide a firm base for small outdoor gatherings and will simulate a loading area from the 19th century.
- Lawn Area – At the front of the site (near South Water Street) there is a large open lawn area where events such as the civil war re-enactors encampment may occur.
- Naturalization of McGregory Brook – The brook at the north edge of the site resembles a storm drainage channel. It will be naturalized to resemble a natural stream by planting riparian vegetation.
- Streambank Boardwalk – A boardwalk that emulates a historic industrial waterfront wharf will parallel McGregory Brook.
- Heritage Pathway – An existing railroad spur that runs through the site diagonally will be relocated to the west side of the depot where a historic rail line once occurred. The former railroad spur would then be turned into the primary pathway across the site.
- This "Heritage Pathway" will resemble a railroad ballast with two thin metal "rails" placed to resemble tracks. The surface of the pathway will have inscriptions with interpretive information.
- Railroad Car with Elevated Deck – A historic railroad car will be displayed on the relocated rail line along with a handicapped accessible, elevated deck to allow visitors to look into the car.

China Pier (Charles Point Park)

China Pier at Charles Point provides an expansive view of Peekskill Bay on up to Bear Mountain, and the Bear Mountain Bridge. It was used by the Fleischmann Company to import the raw materials at its vast yeast and gin factory. Now, it hosts the tall ships during Peekskill Celebration and provides a great spot for a picnic and river watching.

Peekskill Landing

The Peekskill Landing Park is a vacant 4.4 acre waterfront site at the mouth of the McGregor Brook and adjacent to the City's Riverfront Green Park and the Hudson River. The City of Peekskill's riverfront was historically one of intense commercial and industrial activity for most of the 19th century serving as a port for the shipping and receiving of raw materials and finished goods.

In July of 1998 the City of Peekskill and the Scenic Hudson entered into a "Co-Ownership Agreement" to jointly purchase the Peekskill Landing Park to create a mixed-use public park. After Peekskill Landing has been redeveloped into a public park, the property will be deeded to the City for with a payment of \$1.00 and protected by a Conservation Easement to guarantee the site being used in perpetuity only for park and recreational uses. Before the property can be transferred, the City is required under the Co-Ownership Agreement to invest a minimum of \$1,500,000.00 in the environmental investigation, remediation and redevelopment of the site. The original Land Use Plan of the Co-Ownership Agreement envisioned the Peekskill Landing Park as an extension of the existing Riverfront Green Park. This Land Use Plan proposed to create a mixed-use public park consisting of some or all of the following components: a tourism center, maritime museum, boat building facility, and waterfront trail on Peekskill's Historic Hudson Riverfront.

In 2005 the City hired the Landscape Architectural Firm of Quennell, Rothschild & Partners, LLP (QRP) in order to renew the public outreach and create a new Land Use Plan and design new conceptual plans for the park. This new Land Use Plan (pictured) proposed the construction of a waterfront boardwalk; reconstruction of a pier at the historic "Center Dock;" relocation of the Historic Lent House; a small restaurant and a Community Center. The City has been in discussion with both the National Maritime Museum and Scenic Hudson to reinstitute the original Land Use Plan, which included the tourism center, maritime museum, boat building facility, and waterfront trail. The City will be initiating a new round of public meetings to incorporate citizen comments and input.

The Waterfront Trail and Park

The Master Plan was adopted by the Peekskill Common Council in August 2009 after extensive public input. It serves as a guide for future park improvements along the Hudson River shoreline from McGregory Brook to Lent's Cove.

The primary goal of the plan is to develop a continuous multi-use waterfront walkway from McGregory Brook to Peekskill's southern border with Buchanan. This walkway will be designed according to Westchester County's RiverWalk standards. Along the walkway, public amenities will be provided, such as picnic areas, kayak launches, viewpoints, and improvements to the existing parkland. The plan recognizes that this 1.5 mile long waterfront trail does not exist in isolation. The City's waterfront promenade will continue to the north over the existing McGregory Brook footbridge onto Peekskill Landing, where a pedestrian overpass is proposed to cross the railroad tracks to North Water Street with access to Central Avenue and the downtown. The shoreline trail continues to the north through Annsville Preserve Park and connects with the Paddlesport Center in Cortlandt. At its southern end, the trail will continue past Lent's Cove along Westchester County's planned RiverWalk.