



THE CITY OF STAUNTON, VIRGINIA
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FOR
INTEGRATED MARKETING SERVICES FOR
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

January 11, 2010

Proposal

The Staunton Department of Economic Development is seeking proposals from qualified firms to provide integrated marketing services. The first phase of the services involves the development of a comprehensive brochure/mailler and coordinated web development to strengthen the community's business base. The City reserves the right to extend the contract for additional marketing services beyond this initial campaign as specified herein.

All proposals must be delivered to:

City of Staunton
Cynthia A. Steed, Supervisor of Purchasing
116 W. Beverley Street, P.O. Box 58
Staunton, VA 24402
(540) 332-3819

ALL PROPOSALS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY 5:00 P.M. January 29, 2010.

The City of Staunton is not responsible for delays in the delivery of the mail by the U.S. Postal Service, private couriers, or the inter-office mail system. It is the sole responsibility of the Offeror to ensure that its proposal reaches the Supervisor of Purchasing by the designated date and hour. Facsimile and e-mail submittals are not acceptable.

All shall abide by all applicable State and Federal laws.

The City does not discriminate against small and minority businesses or faith-based organizations.

INQUIRIES CONCERNING RFP AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information about the Staunton community is available by visiting the City of Staunton website at www.staunton.va.us or the Staunton tourism website at www.visitstaunton.com. Any questions or comments concerning this Request for Proposal should be directed to:

Amanda N. Glover
Assistant Director of Economic Development
540-332-3869 (office)
GloverAN@ci.staunton.va.us

SPECIFICATIONS FOR REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
FOR
THE CITY OF STAUNTON, VIRGINIA
INTEGRATED MARKETING SERVICES

I. INTRODUCTION

The Staunton Department of Economic Development is seeking proposals from qualified firms to provide integrated marketing services. The objective of the service contract is to assist the Staunton Department of Economic Development in brand extension and awareness in order to better recruit businesses, workforce, and visitors as well as increase Staunton's overall "visibility" and national and regional awareness as a vibrant business community.

II. COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

If you like a place where a thriving city sets its grid into the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains...

If you like striking views, spires and domes, and hilly streets...

If you like a city of history where restored buildings house hip restaurants, shops, and galleries...

If you like intrigue where you turn at the giant watering can to find a wharf with no water, where presidents are born and circus people are remembered...

If you like the plays of Shakespeare or sustainable architecture...

If you like to gather in the park to hear a civic band that has been playing since 1855...

If you like a place where folks swap tips on how to restore historic homes, and where people take to the streets to celebrate...

If you like a place where the independent spirit thrives in gifted artists and musicians and where the solitude of the mountains is just a short drive away...

If you like a place of learning where colleges and schools inspire our youth...

If you like a place where high tech meets down home...

We are that place... the Queen City of the Shenandoah, where the spires of the city are our crown.

We are Staunton, Virginia...

As you like it.

(ABOVE: Brand Statement for the City of Staunton)

Staunton is a community of 23,500 in the heart of the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia at the interchange of I-81 and I-64. Staunton is known for a wealth of preserved building architecture, its cultural offerings, nearby recreational and historic attractions, and as a central business location with quality workforce. The community was chosen in 2001 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as a "Distinctive Dozen" community, one of the 12 best communities in America to visit and in which to live and work. In 2002 Staunton was designated by the National Town Center as one of America's five "Great American Main Street Communities." In 2008, Staunton was named one of the top eight "Terrific Low-Tax Towns" by Where to Retire magazine.

These and other recent national, regional, and statewide designations recognize Staunton's unique attributes and help to draw businesses, residents, and visitors to the community year round. Among these attributes are:

- Ideal mid-Atlantic location at the intersection of I-81 and I-64 and three hours from the D.C. metro area (just outside the 'blast' zone)
- Quality workforce known for its strong work ethic
- A balanced portfolio of industrial, commercial, and service businesses

- A strong “cultural manufacturing” sector – a term used to describe those companies that manufacture items that contribute to cultural expression, such as guitars, organs, stained-glass windows, etc.
- The ideal location for professional firms, back offices, and firms serving the federal government
- Six federal historic districts in downtown with more than 1,000 contributing structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places
- Location in the scenic Shenandoah Valley, near Shenandoah National Park at the Skyline Drive and Blue Ridge Parkway nexus
- The American Shakespeare Center’s Blackfriars Playhouse, the only authentic re-creation in the world of William Shakespeare’s indoor playhouse
- The Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library & Museum at the Woodrow Wilson birthplace
- The Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia, a living history museum composed of four working farms - restored authentic farmsteads from 17th/18th century Ireland, England and Germany, and an 1850s Appalachian farm to show how the immigrant European cultures melded into 19th century America in the Shenandoah Valley
- Mary Baldwin College and 10 other colleges and universities within a 35-minute drive
- Proximity to a myriad of regional attractions including Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello, the University of Virginia, the Virginia Horse Center, and dozens of Virginia wineries
- Outdoor recreational options including hiking, mountain biking, skiing and horseback riding

III. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

Services could include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Serve as the City of Staunton’s Economic Development marketing agency to promote and encourage prosperous development of Staunton’s business base. The required promotions range from regional to national in scope. The successful contractor will work in conjunction with the Department to conduct a marketing program to attract potential manufacturing businesses, professional firms, back offices for companies in the D.C metro area, entrepreneurs, talented workforce, as well as other interested persons to the City of Staunton.
- Analyze regional, national and international **research** to recommend the best strategies and promotions.
- Perform **media production services** including but not limited to: creative concept, graphic design, copy-writing, pre-press and printing for such items as:
 - o **Brochure/Mailer Development** – Comprehensive brochure, with message focus on the benefits of owning/operating a business in Staunton.
 - o **Photography** – professional photography to expand Staunton’s photo resources, available for use in current and future marketing initiatives.
 - o **Website Development** – Based upon the recommendations provided in the Website Assessment recently conducted for the department.
 - o **Mailer Campaign** – print mailing campaign sent to new potential businesses, via targeted purchased mailing list.
 - o **E-mail Marketing** – specific, targeted messages to current and prospective business owners.

- o **Cost-Per-Click (CPC) Campaign** – ad content and keyword development for potential businesses searching online for a location to establish or relocate.
 - o **Print Campaign** – research, recommendations, and production of print advertising for appropriate business publications.
 - o **Web Videos** – online videos (linked to Youtube.com site) featuring local success stories in the business community, etc.
 - o **Other Media Messaging** - The successful bidder will also provide services related to the production and execution of the most advanced and cutting-edge technologies involving media messaging (podcasting, web streaming, blogging, etc.).
- Provide **advice, counsel, and assistance** to the Department on matters pertaining to marketing and advertising to ensure the Department's benefit to the fullest extent possible. The contractor will monitor, analyze and report on executed advertising campaigns. Upon request, the successful firm will prepare a written analysis of the campaign, including effectiveness, results and recommendations for improvement.
 - Assist with **long-term marketing goals**/planning for the future.
 - Perform such **other services** as requested.

Length of the initial campaign

The initial campaign will run for six (6) months from the contract award and will include development of a comprehensive brochure/mailer and coordinated web development to strengthen the community's business base.

The City of Staunton reserves the right to continue services with the selected firm for additional marketing campaigns and to seek other marketing services that assist in promoting Staunton and publicizing the community.

IV. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals should be as thorough and detailed as possible so that the City may properly evaluate the capabilities of respective firms to provide the required services. **At the same time, proposals should be concise (a maximum of 15 pages) and supply information based on the following criteria:**

- A. Firm History and Organization
- B. Personnel
 - a. Identify and provide resumes (may be abbreviated), including references, for key project personnel.
 - b. List outside firms, if any, that may be part of the services team
- C. Experience: Provide a description of the firm's background in integrated marketing projects. In particular, please indicate any previous experience with local government contracts. This information should include:
 - a. Project name and address;
 - b. Description of services provided, and
 - c. Contact person and telephone number
- D. Approach to Providing Services: Please outline your firm's proposed approach to providing services referenced in Section III (Specific Requirements).
- E. Fee Schedule

- F. Availability: The City would like to begin work as soon as a contract for services is completed. Please address the availability of your firm and key personnel to meet this requirement.
- G. Insurance: Agreement to carry Professional Liability Insurance in an amount not less than \$100,000/\$500,000, and offer a minimum of \$1,000,000 excess liability insurance umbrella form, or such other insurance as is satisfactory and may be approved by the City. All insurance coverages shall be written by companies licensed to do business in Virginia, shall be administered by a Virginia registered agent, and shall ensure prior written notification to the City prior to cancellation of the policy.

V. REVIEW AND AWARD

To be considered for selection, applicants must submit a complete response to this Request for Proposal. Failure to submit all information requested may result in the rejection of the incomplete proposal. City staff will review proposals. A maximum of the three most qualified firms will be invited for interviews by the City.

An authorized representative of the company shall sign proposals. Four (4) copies of the proposal must be submitted to the City of Staunton. E-mail and facsimile responses are not acceptable.

Express deliveries should be sent to:

**Cynthia Steed, Supervisor of Purchasing
City of Staunton
116 W. Beverley Street
Staunton, VA 24401**

The following criteria will be used in evaluating the responses to this RFP:

- a) Previous experience (10 points)
- b) References (i.e., satisfaction of former clients) (10 points)
- c) Credentials of project team proposed to perform work (10 points)
- d) Understanding of problems and tasks as depicted in proposal (30 points)
- e) Project Approach (25 points)
- f) Fees (value of services provided in comparison to cost – 15 points)

VI. TERMS OF THE CONTRACT

The City expects to choose a firm promptly and intends to begin the contracted services as soon as possible after January 29, 2010.

The City reserves the right to divide the marketing services sought in this proposal into phases or campaigns, with one or more companies, with City approval required for proceeding from one phase or campaign to another. The City reserves the right to extend this contract for services for additional 6 to 12 month periods, upon mutual agreement between the City and the successful contractor(s) through June 30, 2013.

The City reserves the right to negotiate contract terms with the successful firm for items/services other than those specifically stated in this RFP in the best interest of the City and agreed to by the contractor.

PROCUREMENT GUIDELINES

I. COMPETITIVE NEGOTIATION

The procurement method is competitive negotiation of other than professional services, as defined in Section 2.2-4301 of the Code of Virginia (1950) as amended. This Request for Proposal indicates, in general terms, the nature of the program and services being sought. Each offeror is to submit the proposal(s) that best suits the needs of the City.

The specific requirements for the contents of the proposals are contained in the RFP. Offerors are encouraged to provide additional information not specifically identified as a requirement if that additional information enables the proposal to better suit the needs of the City. In order to procure the program that best suits the needs of the City, the competitive negotiation process and evaluation criteria consider factors in addition to cost.

II. AWARDING THE CONTRACT

The award of a contract shall be determined in the sole discretion of the City based upon evaluation of all information as the City may request. The City reserves the right to waive any informality in proposals submitted in response to this RFP when such waiver is in the best interest of the City.

The evaluation process shall be based upon the criteria set forth in Section V of this request for proposals. Price will be considered but will not be the sole determining factor. Selection shall be made of two or more offerors deemed to be fully qualified and best suited among those submitting proposals, on the basis of the factors involved in the Request for Proposal. Negotiations shall then be conducted with each of the offerors so selected. After negotiations have been conducted with each offeror so selected, the City shall select the offeror which, in its opinion, has made the best proposal, and shall award the contract to that offeror. When the terms and conditions of multiple awards are so provided in the Request for Proposal, awards may be made to more than one offeror. Should the City determine in writing and in its sole discretion that only one offeror is fully qualified, or that one offeror is clearly more highly qualified than the others under consideration, a contract may be negotiated and awarded to that offeror.

The City of Staunton shall endeavor to award the contract within sixty (60) days from receipt of proposals. Notice of award will be posted on the City Web Site. (www.staunton.va.us/vendors)

III. PUBLIC INSPECTION OF PROCUREMENT RECORDS

Proposals submitted shall be subject to public inspection only in accordance with Section 2.2-4342 of the Code of Virginia, which reads, in essence, as follows:

Except as provided in this section, all proceedings, records, contracts, and other public records relating to procurement transactions shall be open to the inspection of any citizen, or any interested person, firm or corporation, in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

Cost estimates relating to a proposed procurement transaction prepared by or for a public body shall not be open to public inspection.

Any competitive negotiation offeror, upon request, shall be afforded the opportunity to inspect proposal records within a reasonable time after the evaluation and negotiations of proposals are completed but prior to award, except in the event that the City decides not to accept any of the proposals and to reopen the contract. Otherwise, proposal records shall be open to public inspection only after award of the contract.

Any inspection of procurement transaction records under this section shall be subject to reasonable restrictions to ensure the security and integrity of the records.

Trade secrets or proprietary information submitted by a bidder, offeror or contractor in connection with a procurement transaction shall not be subject to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; however, the bidder, offeror or contractor shall (i) invoke the protections of this section prior to or upon submission of the data or other materials, (ii) identify the data or other materials to be protected, and (iii) state the reasons why protection is necessary.

IV. ETHICS IN PUBLIC CONTRACTING

By submitting their proposal, all offerors certify that their proposal is made without collusion or fraud and that they have not offered or received any kickbacks or inducements from any other offeror, supplier, manufacturer or sub-contractor in connection with their proposal, and that they have not conferred on any public employee having official responsibility for this procurement transaction any payment, loan, subscription, advance, deposit of money, services or anything of more than nominal value, present or promised unless consideration of substantially equal or greater value was exchanged.

V. ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

By submitting their proposal, offerors certify to the City of Staunton that they will conform to the provisions of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, the Virginia Fair Employment Act of 1975, as amended, where applicable and Section 2.2-4311 of the Virginia Public Procurement Act.

1. During the performance of this contract, the offeror agrees as follows:
 - a. The offeror will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment, except where there is a bona fide occupational qualification reasonably necessary to the normal operation of the offeror. The offeror agrees to post in conspicuous places, available to employees and the applicants for employment, notices setting forth the provisions of this nondiscrimination clause.
 - b. The offeror, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the offeror will state that such offeror is an equal opportunity employer.
 - c. Notices, advertisements and solicitations placed in accordance with federal law, rule or regulation shall be deemed sufficient for the purpose of meeting the requirements of this section.
2. The offeror will include the provisions of the foregoing paragraphs a, b and c in every subcontract or purchase order of over \$10,000, so that the provisions will be binding upon each subcontractor or vendor.

VI. DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

By submitting their proposal, offerors certify to the City of Staunton that they will conform to the provisions of Section 2.2-4312 of the Virginia Public Procurement Act. offerors agree to (i) provide a drug-free workplace for the offeror's employees; (ii) post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or marijuana is prohibited in the offeror's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violations of such prohibition; (iii) state in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the offeror that the offeror maintains a drug-free workplace; and (iv) include the provisions of the foregoing clauses in every subcontract or purchase order of over \$10,000, so that the provisions will be binding upon each subcontractor or vendor.

VII. IMMIGRATION REFORM

By submitting a proposal, offerors certify that, they will not, and shall not knowingly employ an unauthorized alien as defined in the federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.

VIII. PROMPT PAYMENT ACT

Any contract awarded as a result of this Request for Proposal shall incorporate the terms and conditions of Article 4 of the Virginia Public Procurement Act with respect to Prompt Payment.

IX. REJECTION OF PROPOSALS

The City reserves the right, at any time prior to award of the contract, to reject any and all proposals, or any part thereof, to make no award, and/or to issue a new Request for Proposal, or make modifications, corrections of additions to the information contained herein.

Offerors are cautioned this is a Request for Proposal, NOT a request to contract.

X. COSTS FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION

Any costs incurred by offerors in preparing or submitting proposals are the offeror's sole responsibility; the City will not reimburse any offeror for any costs incurred as a result of the preparation of this Request for Proposal.

XI. APPROPRIATIONS

The obligations of the City of Staunton are subject to and contingent upon annual appropriation by City Council of sufficient funds for the purposes of this contract. In the absence of such annual appropriation, either the City of Staunton or offeror may terminate the contract by giving not less than ten (10) days prior notice to the other, specifying this reason for the termination, and upon effective termination pursuant to this provision, any compensation due shall be equitably adjusted by mutual agreement.

XII. FORUM SELECTION

Any action, proceeding, or claim in any way related to this agreement or the relationship between the parties shall be filed and maintained solely in the General District Court or the Circuit Court of the City of Staunton, Virginia.