



COUNTY OF LAKE
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
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Lakeport, California 95453
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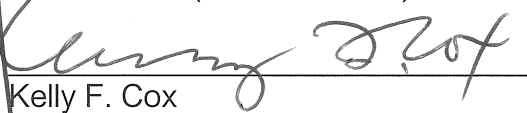
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
TO DEVELOP A MARKETING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The County of Lake seeks proposals from qualified firms or individuals to develop a Marketing & Economic Development Strategic Implementation Plan.

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- ◆ Proposals must be signed, dated and submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. on February 11, 2011.
 - ◆ An original and five copies of each proposal must be submitted to:

Kelly F. Cox
County Administrative Officer
255 North Forbes Street
Lakeport, CA 95453

- ◆ For additional information contact Matt Perry by telephone (707-263-2580), facsimile (707-263-1012), or e-mail (matt_p@co.lake.ca.us).



Kelly F. Cox
County Administrative Officer

SCHEDULE

Release of Request for Proposals	January 24, 2011
Proposal submission deadline	February 11, 2011
Proposal evaluation and	Week of February 14, 2011
Oral presentations (if necessary)	February 23, 2011 (tentative)
Award of contract	March 8, 2011(tentative)
Completion of plan	June 30, 2011 (target date)

BACKGROUND

Lake County, with a population of 65,000, is located approximately 100 miles north of San Francisco and 90 miles northwest of Sacramento. Lake County is home to Clear Lake, the largest natural lake (with 68 square miles of surface area) entirely within the borders of California, as well as other lakes, streams, and mountains. Along with agriculture, tourism is one of the two largest sectors of the local economy. The County levies a 9% transient occupancy tax on lodging facilities in the unincorporated area, which currently generates approximately \$500,000 per year in revenue, including TOT in-lieu contributions from three local tribal governments who operate gaming and lodging facilities. TOT revenue is allocated to tourism promotion, including operating a visitor information center and two museums, park maintenance, lake related programs and law enforcement services. The current \$500,000 in annual revenue is significantly less than the amount collected prior to closure of Konocti Harbor Resort & Spa in the fall of 2009. The Resort is currently for sale and the County hopes that it will be sold and placed back into full operation. Year around headliner concerts were held at the Resort prior to its closure, which attracted thousands of visitors to Lake County.

The County's existing Economic Development Strategic Marketing Plan was prepared and adopted in 2002, and in the years since the County has made a strong effort to implement most of the recommendations in that Plan. Due to the fact that the existing Plan is almost ten years old it is appropriate and necessary to update the Plan. The County has received grant funding from the CDBG program to finance the update. Approximately \$33,000 in grant funding is available for this project.

SCOPE OF WORK

Although the final scope of work is subject to negotiation, the County expects the plan update to include, at the very least, the items described below. The County reserves the right to contract with different consultants and/or perform some of the work in-house, depending upon the proposals submitted and contract negotiations.

As previously indicated, tourism is a major component of the economy of Lake County. Lake County has a long history as a vacation destination dating back to the late-1800s when travelers would arrive by stagecoach and travel by steamboats across Clear Lake to "take the waters" at many hot springs resorts. Today, Clear Lake is experiencing renewed interest in tourism as it is home to the state's largest freshwater lake and hundreds of thousands of acres of public forest and open space, as well as significant growth in its wine industry.

The County of Lake operates the Lake County Marketing and Economic Development Program as a division of the County's Administrative Office. Much of the County's tourism marketing is dependent on funding from Transient Occupancy Tax (T.O.T.), and it is important to implement economic development efforts focused on increasing tourism revenue.

To that end, the County is in need of an updated marketing and economic development plan with a strong tourism component. The goal of the plan is to identify specific economic development efforts to support and enhance existing tourism-related businesses, as well as specific actions that can be taken to attract investment in and development of new tourism-related businesses.

In order to target these economic development efforts, this plan should provide specific strategic actions, tasks, and milestones for economic development and marketing. Areas of particular focus may include agritourism and the growing local wine industry, nature/ecotourism, visitor-oriented retail, visitor-serving transportation, as well as lodging availability and demand.

The plan will need to be consistent with the policies in the County's recently approved General Plan, which was adopted by the Lake County Board of Supervisors on September 2, 2008. In addition to balanced land use, other important considerations include enhancing the quality of life for Lake County residents, infrastructure development, and sustainability and green development.

The consultant(s) will be required to perform the following tasks:

- Review of existing plans and data. Review of previous economic development and marketing plans, the recently adopted Lake County General Plan, as well as other relevant studies and reports including a retail leakage study completed in 2008, a very recent Retail/Restaurant Development Strategy study completed by the Buxton Company under contract with the County, recent T.O.T. revenue data, visitor spending data, etc.
- Research. Research to be completed will include an inventory of existing room/lodging unit availability, quality/service/amenity levels, and an analysis of lodging demand. This also may include development of a visitor survey tool that will quantify total annual visitor volume today and can be used annually to track annual visitation.
- Development of three-year implementation plan. Specific recommendations and actions to enhance the local tourism industry through a range of efforts, which could include investment attraction, tourism expansion/diversification strategies, priorities for infrastructure development, programs to support local business such as façade improvement and microenterprise assistance, policies for green building and historic preservation, etc.
- Elements of the existing plan to be included in the new Plan: The consultant will review in detail the County's 2002 Economic Development Strategic Marketing Plan and determine which contents of that Plan should be included in and transferred to the new Plan, which contents should be included in an amended form and which contents should not be included in the updated Plan.

- Community meetings. This will include facilitating at least two community meetings to gather input and present recommendations.

Final Product Description:

The final product will be a bound and tabbed report, with CDBG acknowledgement on the front cover, which will include the following components:

Marketing & Economic Development Strategic Implementation Plan This should include specific recommendations and actions that can be taken over a three-year period to enhance the local tourism industry through a range of efforts, which may include investment attraction, tourism expansion/diversification, infrastructure development, and suggested policy changes.

Lodging Needs Analysis This should include an inventory of current available lodging in Lake County, identification of any gaps in the spectrum of lodging types, and an analysis of market demand and trends to determine the need for lodging types, amenities, service levels, quality, and price-points.

Visitation Analysis This should include an analysis of the total annual number of visitors to Lake County and/or basic visitor profile data.

FORMAT AND CONTENTS OF PROPOSAL

The format and contents of the proposal should be presented in the same order as listed below:

1. Cover letter briefly describing the consultant's interest in and ability to provide the requested services.
2. Brief history of the consultant.
3. Description of consultant's ability to provide the requested services, including the following:
 - a. Location of office(s). Indicate primary office from which services will be provided.
 - b. Staffing and organizational capacity of the firm. Resumes of individual officers and employees of the firm, especially those directly involved in providing the requested services, should be included as an appendix to the main body of the proposal.

- c. Experience in preparing similar plans. Provide complete list of similar plans prepared by the consultant, with client contact names, agency name, telephone number, and date of plan preparation.
- 4. Description of proposed methodology to prepare strategic plan.
 - a. Primary staff who would be assigned to work on each Section under Scope of Work.
 - b. Research methods to obtain understanding of current circumstances, including but not limited to, the following: existing market perceptions, effectiveness of recent advertising campaigns, quality and quantity of lodging facilities, and quality and quantity of visitor attractions.
- 5. Description of Proposed Cost
 - a. Hourly rates for each staff member (principal, associate, etc.) who would be assigned to this project.
 - b. Timeline and cost chart. Break down the project into phases or tasks. Show estimated amount of time to complete each phase or task, by whom (e.g. principal consultant, associate), and associated cost.
 - c. Indicate other expenses which are requested to be reimbursed.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The County does not intend to hold a conference to respond to questions regarding this RFP. However, if the County deems it necessary to hold a conference, all recipients of the RFP will be notified in writing.

Interpretations and Addenda

The County reserves the right to amend, alter, or change the rules and conditions contained in this RFP prior to the deadline for submission of proposals. Any revisions to the RFP will be accomplished through addenda or supplements to the RFP and shall become a part of the RFP. The County will not be responsible for any other explanation or interpretation. All addenda will be sent to all recipients of the RFP.

Submission of Proposals

Each consultant must submit an original proposal and five (5) copies. Proposals must be clearly labeled as a proposal for the Economic Development Strategic Marketing Strategic Plan and addressed to Kelly F. Cox, County Administrative Officer, 255 North Forbes, Lakeport, CA 95453. Proposal envelopes must contain the name and return address of

the consultant. Proposals must be signed, dated, and submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. on February 11, 2011. Proposals received after this date and time will not be considered.

Postmark by the deadline shall not constitute receipt; actual receipt by the County is mandatory. Facsimile or electronically transmitted proposals will not be accepted. All proposals received are final. All proposals submitted become the property of the County.

Proposal Confidentiality

Proposals will be maintained as confidential until a recommendation is submitted to the Lake County Board of Supervisors regarding the award of contract(s). At that time, all proposals will become public record.

If any proposal contains trade secrets or other information that is proprietary by law, consultant must notify the County of its request to keep said information confidential. A consultant's request for confidentiality must be made in writing and enclosed in the envelope containing the proposal. The proprietary or confidential data must be readily separable from the proposal in order to facilitate eventual public inspection of the non-confidential portion of the proposal.

Consultant's Qualifications

The County may make reasonable and appropriate investigations deemed necessary to determine the ability of the consultant to perform the work; and the consultant shall furnish to the County all information which may be requested for this purpose. The County reserves the right to reject any proposal if the evidence submitted by, or investigation of, the consultant fails to satisfy the County that said consultant is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract and to complete the work described therein.

Rejection of Proposals

Issuance of this RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the County to award a contract. The County reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP, or to cancel this RFP, if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the public to do so.

Evaluation and Selection Process

A selection panel will evaluate the proposals. Said panel will evaluate the proposals and may interview the top ranked consultant or consultants. The following criteria will be used to evaluate the proposals:

1. Cost of services and cost effective methodology in performing assignment.
2. Reputation and experience of the consultant in the type of work required.
3. Capability or potential of the consultant to accomplish work responsibility within the required time frames.

4. Performance of the consultant on prior contracts and/or projects.
5. Extent to which the proposal addresses the scope of work outlined in this Request for Proposals.

Following the evaluation, the County Administrative Officer or his designee will begin negotiating a contract with the highest ranked consultant. The principles of competitive negotiation will be followed, i.e., the terms, cost, scope of work, and standards of performance are negotiable. Should agreement not be reached with the highest ranked consultant, the County will begin negotiations with the second ranked consultant. Once a contract is negotiated, it will be submitted to the Board of Supervisors for official approval.

Appeal Procedure

Recommendations or decisions may be appealed by writing a letter to the Board of Supervisors, detailing the basis of the appeal. Appeals must be filed within 72 hours of receiving notification of the recommendation for award of the contract, or prior to actual contract award by the Board of Supervisors, whichever occurs first.