



Request for Proposals: Marketing, Communications, Website Management, and Social Media Services

Proposal Submittal Deadline: April 29, 2024

Introduction

The City is seeking professional, full-service, integrated marketing, advertising, communications, social media, and website maintenance services for their tourism brand, Visit Arroyo Grande, and is requesting proposals from qualified firms.

Firms should have the capability and experience required to provide comprehensive, strategic, and innovative services on designated projects. The goal of the marketing program is to attract tourists to the area to increase occupancy and average daily room rates at Arroyo Grande lodging properties.

Visit Arroyo Grande's brand (logo, color palette, tagline, etc.) is established. The City wishes to build upon this identity in its future marketing efforts with the selected firm.

Qualified firms shall make recommendations for the coming fiscal year (July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025); the contract will be for one year with the option to extend for a second year.

Background

In 2011, the City of Arroyo Grande formed a Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID). The TBID Board of Directors operates as a destination marketing organization under the name of Visit Arroyo Grande.

Spearheaded by Arroyo Grande lodging businesses, Visit Arroyo Grande is comprised of seven (7) hotels and at least sixty-one (61) vacation rental/home stays. It is governed by a Board of Directors representing lodging partners and businesses in the tourism/hospitality industry. The purpose of the TBID is to promote scenic, recreational, cultural, and other attractions in the district (the City of Arroyo Grande) as a tourist destination for the benefit of lodging operators.

Proposal guidelines

Firms are expected to prepare beyond the one-year mark (July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025) to implement certain projects; however, projects beyond June 30, 2025 are dependent on the annual approved budget.

The successful firm will coordinate all services under an Agreement with the City of Arroyo Grande or their designee(s). Firms may provide additional creative/innovative suggestions for deliverables identified in the proposal as “optional deliverables.”

Firms may submit proposals for one or more components of this Scope of Work.

Budget

Marketing agency contract including media buys: not to exceed \$225,000

Term

This RFP is for a one-year agreement with the option to extend for a second year.

Marketing and Communications

Develop and implement a variety of promotional, publicity and advertising programs, and informational materials consistent with specifications provided.

Develop a comprehensive strategic marketing and advertising plan that addresses the following:

- Propose new or expand current marketing programs to promote the District (City of Arroyo Grande) and submit timelines for development/implementation. Campaign may include but not be limited to, digital, print, video, radio, outdoor, online media, and direct marketing;
- Identify strategies that increase overnight stays, especially during off-peak seasons;
- Propose creative tactics such as advertising campaigns and events and packages; and
- Develop and propose a system of measurable results and outcomes.

Online Strategy

- Complete reports to coincide with monthly meetings of the committee - show metrics and report implications and suggested adjustments and report monthly to lodging operators, TBID and Arroyo Grande City Council;

Online Strategy continued

- Explain what tools your agency has available for online media monitoring, reporting and analysis, and brand/reputation monitoring; and
- Generate all images/creative assets to be paired with posts. Photographs and branding guidelines will be provided by Visit Arroyo Grande from internal marketing database.

Firms should also provide the following information:

- Examples of copy created for online platforms;
- Examples of graphic content to be paired with editorial copy;
- Sample of monitoring report format;
- Best practices report, example of online data analysis and action items; and
- A description of how agency stays at the forefront of technology and emerging media.

Website

The firm will take responsibility for all aspects of the Visit Arroyo Grande website, content management system (CMS), and related hosting. The scope of services should include, but is not limited to, all software, hardware, administrator and end-user training, hosting, SEO programming, and other services required to implement and support the website and should:

- Be consistent with current and future Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility guidelines and any other applicable state and federal accessibility requirements;
- Include a privacy policy;
- Be capable of capturing email addresses; and
- Include a blog.

City/Chamber Involvement

The City and South County Chambers of Commerce will make every effort to provide demographic information, photos, existing information on economic development tools, reports, etc. The firm should strive to be self-sufficient to the extent possible.

Consideration/Meeting Requirements

The qualified firm should be prepared to meet directly or confer over the phone as needed. The firm will be required to attend regular TBID meetings, and Arroyo Grande City Council Meetings, as needed, prepare an Annual Report, and make annual presentations.

Agreement

The project agreement will be based on the final scope of work that is mutually agreed upon between the City and firm(s). The agreement will be negotiated for the project for the extent of services to be rendered and for the method of compensation. Firm(s) are requested to submit a line-item cost estimate that is realistic for the proposed approach. The budget should cover all costs including fees, mileage, and production costs. Firm(s) shall not perform any work on the project before execution of a written agreement by both the City and the Firm(s) and the furnishing of the required insurance certificate and business license by the Firm(s). The City requires a minimum insurance limit of \$1,000,000 each for general liability, automobile, and errors and omissions. The draft Consultant Services Agreement is attached and should be reviewed before the RFP submittal.

Key Dates

April 1, 2024

Release of RFP

April 29, 2024

Deadline for submittal

June 2024

Award of contract

July 1, 2024

Contract commencement

Questions

Questions regarding this RFP shall be submitted to Sheridan Bohlken, Recreation Services Director, City of Arroyo Grande, via email at sbohlken@arroyogrande.org. Questions with their answers will be posted on the City's website.

Proposal Requirements

The document should be standard (8½" x 11") letter-sized paper.

The name and resume of the responsible person who would be in charge of the project, information on team members by role, an estimate of the time required to complete the project; and disclosure of billable rate for each task.

An executive summary of the proposal being submitted.

The proposed fees are to be broken down by task demonstrating how the fee was calculated. The cost proposal shall provide a specific fixed cost estimate and a “not to exceed” cost ceiling. The proposal shall address all hourly wage rates, including all reimbursable expenses and overhead.

Describe the Firm’s experience, especially as related to completing similar projects as being discussed in this RFP.

Identify and provide resumes of any sub-consultants who will be utilized on this project.

A proposed project schedule for the fiscal year shall be included in the proposal with verifiable references.

Selection Process

The City of Arroyo Grande and an Ad-hoc Committee of the AGTBID will review responses to the Request for Proposal based on the evaluation criteria below and make a recommendation to the AGTBID Board of Directors which will then forward their recommendation to the City Council for final approval.

Qualified firms will be invited to give an oral presentation on their proposal, at the discretion of the TBID Board of Directors.

The City reserves the right to reject any proposals and to award contract(s) for any, all, or none of the aspects of the Scope of Work.

Evaluation Criteria

- A. Suitability of the Proposal – the proposed solution meets the needs and criteria presented in the RFP.
- B. Expertise in recommending and communicating appropriate technical and aesthetic solutions as demonstrated by the proposal and references.
- C. Aesthetic Capabilities – Prior work reflects artistic and innovative, user-friendly interfaces that engage communities and viewers.
- D. Proposal Presentation – The information is communicated in a clear, logical manner and is well organized.

General Information

- A. The City reserves the right to request additional information from any or all the respondents.

- B. The City reserves the right to reject any or all the proposals. Late or incomplete proposals may not be considered. The City shall have sole discretion in determining the completeness of each proposal.
- C. The City shall reserve the right to contact past clients for references.
- D. The terms and scope of the agreement will be determined based on professional negotiations between the City and the prospective Firm. If the City and the prospective Firm fail to reach a contractual agreement, the City may negotiate with any other highly-ranked consultant.
- E. The City reserves the right to waive minor discrepancies and to reject any and all proposals for any reason.

Proposal Submittal Requirements

Quantity - Four (4) copies (three bound and one unbound), plus one electronic copy in Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format.

Deadline for Submittal - The filing deadline for submittal of the above proposal is 5:00 p.m. on Monday, May 13, 2024. The City reserves the right to extend the deadline date. All documents should be emailed to sbohlken@arroyogrande.org or sent in a sealed package, clearly marked "RFP AGTBID" to Sheridan Bohlken, City of Arroyo Grande, 1221 Ash Street, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420.

Specific Deliverables

The consultant shall develop a comprehensive portfolio that addresses, at a minimum, the following:

1. Develop strategy to quantify success on marketing campaign through initiatives that measure return on investment;
2. Next phase brand identity that includes but is not limited to advertising campaigns;
3. Develop tourism incentives that include package deals for hotels;
4. Enhance social media presence in Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube and other social media outlets as they arise. Integrate social media with visitarroyogrande.org and create other strategies to boost internet traffic visibility;
5. Build a feeder market strategy to increase traffic from cities LA and SF;
6. Respond to TripAdvisor, Travelzoo, and other internet-based tourism sites; and
7. Collaborate with major attractions and special events.

Firms may provide additional creative/innovative suggestions for deliverables identified in the proposal as "optional deliverables".