



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) to provide:  
**PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICES**  
for the CITY OF SEASIDE VISITORS BUREAU

*RFP PROJECT 2023PR/SEASIDE*

PROPOSALS DUE by 4 PM:  
Wednesday, November 1, 2023

# City of Seaside Visitors Bureau

## Request for Proposals to provide Public Relations Services

### **About the City of Seaside Visitors Bureau**

The City of Seaside Visitors Bureau (SVB) is the official destination marketing/management organization for the City of Seaside, operating as a department of the City. The mission of the SVB is to strengthen the Seaside economy by attracting year-round overnight visitation and showcasing Seaside as a unique and premier travel destination on the Oregon Coast. The SVB manages a comprehensive marketing program that includes print, digital, broadcast, environmental and other avenues of promotion in addition to providing information and local, regional, and statewide tourism-focused collateral through the Seaside Welcome Center at Highway 101 and Broadway.

### **Scope of Services**

The SVB is accepting proposals to retain the ongoing services of a qualified, hands-on PR firm or agency for a full suite of services. The successful bidder will work with the SVB to inspire travelers to visit Seaside and the North Coast of Oregon through earned media in target markets and provide good examples of destination stewardship for travelers (especially in the summer months). Proven public relations experience with travel destinations, tourism marketing, and/or representing cities/states will make for a more competitive proposal.

Proactive media outreach and leveraging known contacts to raise the profile of Seaside and increase awareness of existing attractions, amenities, activities, and events is the main objective. While not an inclusive list, the scope of work includes:

- Develop story ideas and pitches
- Conduct media outreach to target markets in the Pacific Northwest and beyond
- Establish and manage public relations strategy, PR plan and PR editorial calendar
- Identify opportunities for travel writers, as needed
- Support our paid media campaigns and tourism-focused events and initiatives.
- Track and report on earned media
- Create talking points and fact sheets for media contacts
- Work closely with the SVB throughout

### **Program Budget**

The successful bidder will initially provide an estimated 6-month outline of proposed services (outlined above) and costs to the SVB at the contract start and then a 12-month outline at the outset of each fiscal year thereafter. The SVB follows a July through June fiscal year. Hours billed per month are not to exceed 30 without prior approval of the SVB.

### **Term of Contract Award**

The initial term will be 6 months, with an option to renew for three additional one-year periods. Renewal of the contract is contingent on both parties agreeing to continued work. The contract will take effect no later than January 1, 2024. Both parties may choose to renew on July 1, 2024 for one year, July 1, 2025 for one year, and July 1, 2026 for one year.

## **RFP Schedule**

- September 25, 2023 – SVB issues formal RFP.
- November 1, 2023 – RFP proposals due by 4 PM Pacific Standard Time (PST).
- November 2023 – Interviews with top-tier candidate(s).
- December 2023 – Recommendation to Seaside City Council to award contract.
- January 1, 2024 – Contract effective date (based on execution by all parties)

## **Contract Requirements**

The SVB reserves the right to reject any proposals not in compliance with public bidding procedures and requirements, and may reject for good cause any proposals not in the public interest. The selected bidder will be invited to enter into a contract with the SVB. This contract will stipulate the terms and conditions of the services to be provided, including fees. If a reasonable fee cannot be negotiated, negotiations will proceed with other qualified bidders until a mutually agreed contract is settled. SVB reserves the right to change any terms and conditions of the contract prior to execution of the contract. SVB also reserves the right to terminate the contract at any time and for any reason within 30 days of written notice to the selected firm.

## **Business License, Registration, Certification**

The selected firm shall be licensed to do business in Oregon as required by state codes and maintain current any certification, accreditation or license(s) required to perform work under this contract. Key personnel fulfilling contract duties may not be changed without prior written approval.

## **RFP Submittal Requirements**

Proposals are due to the SVB director by 4 PM PST on Wednesday, November 1, 2023.

To be considered for a possible interview and contract, proposals must:

1. Provide a cover letter (maximum of one page in length) describing the firm's public and media relations background, clients (especially relevant clients), experience and specific areas of expertise concerning the scope of work outlined above. Include number of years in business and scope of general services provided.
2. Provide professional bio/resume for the personnel who will be assigned to the contract. Include any experience, accreditations, licenses or special training related to the RFP.
3. Provide detailed work history (maximum 10 pages in length) covering related work examples, principal responsibilities, and end results.
4. Provide information (maximum of one page in length) on your firm's creative process, culture and describe what sets your work apart from your competitors.
5. Describe (maximum of one page in length) the challenges and opportunities of the work, as you see it, and how your firm would approach building a strategy for Seaside.
6. Provide total projected cost for the initial six-month contract, including a schedule of prices for specific services (retainer fee, non-retainer services, travel expenses for reimbursement). The schedule of prices for the 12-month renewal should match the initial six-month schedule.
7. Demonstrate throughout a solid knowledge of Seaside, Oregon and its visitor economy. Bonus points for understanding the history of tourism in Seaside and the state of tourism on the North Coast of Oregon and throughout the state following the pandemic.
8. Provide a list of at least two business references for which the firm has provided similar services. Include contact name and phone number for each reference.
9. Include at least three examples of earned media with a detailed explanation of how your firm was involved, from pitching to placement.

## **Selection Criteria**

The review will be based on overall evaluation and assessment of the materials contained in each proposal. Qualifications, experience, approach, past results and other factors outlined above will be of utmost importance in the review phase. At the discretion of the SVB director and the City of Seaside Tourism Advisory Committee, any firm deemed most suitable at the end of the initial review may be invited to interview. Otherwise, multiple firms deemed most suitable at the end of the proposal review may be scheduled for interviews. Any candidates invited to interview will be considered suitable on paper to perform the required components of the contract. During interviews, special attention will be given to the perceived ability of the firm to work collaboratively with the SVB and in harmony with tourism and community partners.

Selection criteria for and/or review of the written proposals include the following:

- Evaluation of work experience related to the scope outlined in the RFP – 30%.
- Evaluation of past work (including results) similar to the scope outlined in the RFP – 30%.
- Overall proposal evaluation, including grammar, style, and professionalism – 25%.
- Evaluation of the proposal regarding applicant’s understanding of client needs – 15%.

## **Other Considerations**

**Confidentiality.** It is understood that proposals may contain confidential information relating to previous client strategies, goals and results. Applicants are encouraged to obtain written permission from previous clients before including any confidential or sensitive information relating to those clients. In return, the selection committee shall keep all proposals and the information they contain confidential, subject to standard record keeping processes. No one except the selection committee members and the City of Seaside’s assigned staff shall review or read the proposals. Detailed discussion of each candidate’s qualifications, abilities and proposals, as well as ability to successfully fulfill the contract requirements shall be restricted to the venue of official selection committee meetings and conducted only between official selection committee members.

**Handling of Proposals.** Until the selection process is complete and a contractor is chosen, the selection committee members will each possess one copy of each proposal. The committee members are advised to treat the proposals and the information they contain with the strictest confidentiality. Following the selection process, the committee may opt, for archival business reasons, to keep one copy of each proposal on file in a secure, locked area of the SVB offices. For security reasons, all other copies of the proposals will be shredded or destroyed. Candidates are therefore encouraged to exclude materials that are the sole copy and/or irreplaceable.

**Acceptance/Rejections of Proposals.** The SVB reserves the right, at its discretion, to reject any proposal that does not meet the stated criteria; to waive minor informalities within a specific proposal; to award all, some or none of the work to any applicant; and to revise, cancel or extend this solicitation of proposals.

**Portfolios.** Please do not submit extensive portfolios with proposals. Portfolios may be presented during the interview process by those candidates from whom the selection committee has requested a face-to-face interview.

**RFP Questions/Clarification.** Questions regarding the RFP or requests for clarification of the RFP must be sent in writing or by email to the RFP Administrator, c/o City of Seaside, 989 Broadway, Seaside, OR 97138; [jheineman@cityofseaside.us](mailto:jheineman@cityofseaside.us). Written and emailed questions must be received no later than close of business on October 25, 2023. Requests must contain an email address to which the appropriate response can be sent; the committee will attempt to respond within 24 business hours of receiving such requests.

*(Note: Responses to questions will be sent to the applicant who asked the question and also sent to all other applicants who supplied an email address when obtaining an RFP packet - please complete final sheet of this packet to receive answers to questions asked.)*

**Disclosure.** Other than the name of the selected firm, no other information regarding the candidates or their proposals shall be made public.

**Cost for Preparation of Proposals.** The City of Seaside Visitors Bureau is not responsible under any circumstances for costs incurred due to the preparation or submission of proposals.

**Equal Opportunity.** The SVB encourages minority and women-owned businesses to submit proposals in response to this RFP.

**Contract Award.** The SVB reserves the right to award one or multiple contracts for the outlined scope of work. The SVB also reserves the right to not award a contract to any candidate, if none are deemed suitable.

### **How To Submit Proposals and Deadlines**

Delivered proposals – Delivered no later than 4 PM PST on November 1, 2023.

Mailed proposals – Must be received by November 1, 2023, regardless of postmark.

Emailed proposals – Must be received no later than 4 PM PST on November 1, 2023.

Submit via email ([jheineman@cityofseaside.us](mailto:jheineman@cityofseaside.us)) or by mail/delivery:

City of Seaside  
ATTN: Joshua Heineman, RFP Administrator  
989 Broadway, Seaside, Oregon 97138

# TO BE COMPLETED BY CONTRACT CANDIDATES

PLEASE NOTE: If you wish to be copied on answers to questions posed by other RFP applicants (anonymously), please complete the information below, then scan (or screenshot) this page and email to [jheineman@cityofseaside.us](mailto:jheineman@cityofseaside.us). Any questions asked after the date this request is received will be sent to the email listed below.

## *RFP PROJECT 2023PR/SEASIDE*

Name of company/individual: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of request: \_\_\_\_\_