



## **Request for Proposal**

### **City Marketing and Branding Initiative**

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Submit To: Mary Trupo  
Director of Communications and Public Engagement  
City of Cleveland Heights  
40 Severance Circle  
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118  
[mtrupo@clvhts.com](mailto:mtrupo@clvhts.com)  
[www.clevelandheights.com](http://www.clevelandheights.com)

## **PURPOSE OF RFP**

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit proposals to establish a lump sum contract through competitive negotiation with a qualified consulting firm with solid experience in marketing research (both quantitative and qualitative), message/positioning development, and corporate identity/branding including development of a brand values statement; logo development and graphic standards; recommendations for brand rollout and implementation to include interactive and social medial marketing as well as traditional marketing, media and promotions; and recommendations for results tracking/measurement.

The City of Cleveland Heights is seeking the development of a comprehensive brand marketing campaign to drive business attraction and retention, energize current residents and position as a desirable place for relocation, and enhance general perception.

## **SPECIFICATIONS OF RFP**

### **A. PURPOSE**

1. The City of Cleveland Heights requests proposals by qualified firms to research, create, and develop an implementation plan for a community branding initiative for the City of Cleveland Heights. Responses to this Request for Proposals (RFP) will provide the City with the information required to assess, evaluate, and select a consultant based on prior experience, qualification, methodology and approach, and work performed in similarly sized communities. It is important to note that this is a community branding initiative rather than an initiative to brand any one agency or entity. Respondents should be aware that this initiative is a priority for the City.
2. The primary goals/objectives to be achieved by the branding initiative include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Uniformity - The brand should convey a common message and image to audiences both within and outside of the City of Cleveland Heights. A defined message that will market the City of Cleveland Heights locally, statewide, nationally, and internationally as a great place to live, work, shop and do business; the right place for development, redevelopment and investment; the perfect mix for a business-friendly community.

- b. Community Identity/Pride – Identify and promote what makes the City of Cleveland Heights distinct and appealing in a regionally competitive environment for investors, businesses, retailers, visitors, and residents.
- c. Community and Economic Development Promotion – Promote a healthy economy, attract private investment, new residents and young professionals, and retain key businesses and creative talent.
- d. Flexibility - The brand must be flexible and adaptable in order to meet the needs of a variety of departments and municipal functions within the City, as well as groups and businesses within the City in their specific marketing initiatives, while maintaining consistency with the overall brand. It must also be flexible enough to grow and evolve along with any changes in the market.
- e. Endorsement - The brand must be authentic and resonate with citizens, businesses, and community groups within the City of Cleveland Heights and throughout the region.

## **B. ELIGIBILITY**

1. The consultant should specialize in project management, research, marketing, and creative design as it relates to development of a community brand. To be eligible to respond to the RFP, the consultant must demonstrate that it is a firm with significant experience with community branding initiatives. Priority will be given to those firms that have experience with local governments.
2. The City of Cleveland Heights desires to issue a contract to a single qualified consultant to lead the project. Consulting proposals based on a consortium approach where more than one firm will provide support within a consulting team are acceptable with single project manager.

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

Project Management – The consultant will lead all aspects of the City of Cleveland Heights community marketing and branding initiative, including the following:

1. Advisory to the Steering Committee (to be determined) – This team will be composed of representatives from the City and community leaders. Meetings throughout the process will be required.
2. Lead for various focus groups comprised of residents and business owners to determine existing attitudes, perceptions, opportunities and challenges to enhancing the City’s image.
3. Facilitator during the research process and/or testing of the new brand - Include descriptions of community engagement efforts that will take place during this process. The City has a very involved and engaged community. The consultant will be expected to employ creative means of public involvement to ensure that multiple segments of the community are aware of and involved in the project.

4. Research – Research will be the basis for the development of a brand concept, creative elements, messaging/positioning and the overall brand initiative. The consultant will create and implement a brand research plan, which will include qualitative and quantitative research with key publics to identify the following:
  - a. List of key stakeholders, groups, or influential individuals, as well as a cross section of citizens and business owners in the City of Heights and those outside of the city that have a vested interest in the branding initiative and need to be involved in the process.
  - b. The key elements of the City of Cleveland Heights.
  - c. Analysis of current efforts and existing creative elements such as logos, tag lines, and creative designs.
  - d. Analysis of competitor marketing strategies.
  - e. Measures that will be used to determine if the branding effort is successful.
5. Strategic Plan – The consultant will develop strategic objectives that will include implementation, management and ongoing promotion of the brand to include, but not be limited to the following:
  - a. Promotion of the use of the brand among many City of Cleveland Heights and community agencies, groups and businesses while maintaining brand integrity.
  - b. Maintenance and consistency of brand image and messaging while providing suitable flexibility for the target audiences of the participating agencies.
  - c. Recommendation of ways to articulate the brand; define markets and promotional avenues; and advise on strategies to better promote and create brand awareness.
6. Creative/Development of Brand – The consultant will develop creative elements that include design concepts, logos, messages, mission statement, tagline, and other products to support the overall brand initiative. A minimum of three distinct creative options must be presented, based on the results of the research. The selected logo design (including the possibility of current logo) will be delivered with a style manual and guidelines for use and the capability of use in the following
  - a. Print and electronic advertising
  - b. Website design
  - c. Media placement
  - d. Public Relations
  - e. Events
  - f. Templates
7. Implementation Plan – The consultant will develop an action plan for implementation of the brand in sufficient detail to allow Steering Committee to understand the approach and work plan. An Action Plan should include, but not be limited to the following:
  - a. Estimated costs/budget associated with the implementation process.
  - b. Proposed timelines for development of creative elements.

- c. Recommended positioning logo and brand guidelines.
  - d. Implementation plans for brand identity applications and brand identity maintenance plan.
8. Evaluation Plan - The consultant will develop a plan for ongoing evaluation of the brand's effectiveness and reporting of results of the strategy to the Steering Committee, key stakeholders and the public.

## **SPECIFIC PROPOSAL PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS**

Proposals should be as thorough and detailed as possible so that the City may properly evaluate the capabilities of the firm to provide the required Services and Results.

The firm shall submit one (1) original and four (4) copies of their proposal along with one (1) electronic copy.

Respondents are required to submit the following items for a complete proposal:

1. A description of the firm's capabilities and experience conducting similar plans. Include a description of the firm, its organizational structure, location of the principal office and the location of the office that would manage this project.
2. A summary of professional qualifications and experience of the individuals the firm would assign to the project and their individual project responsibilities. Indicate whether these individuals have worked together on previous projects. Indicate each individual's current commitment, availability to start this project and percentage of time that they will be assigned to complete their project tasks on this job.
3. Specific plans or methodology to be used to perform the services with timeline proposed for each phase of the project. Include a description of community engagement efforts included and deliverables proposed.
4. Estimated timeline for completion through implementation.
5. Names, addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses of clients for which the firm performed projects of a similar type and size within the last five years with reference letters, and awards received. Describe in detail, each projects outcome and the process your firm used to achieve those outcomes.
6. A work sample of a completed project(s) that is representative of the work proposed for the City.
7. Proposal Lump Sum Fee (not-to-exceed) for this project. Provide a detailed cost for each phase of the project, including but not limited to, the number of meetings with stakeholders, travel expenses, and document production costs.
8. Proposed engagement agreement with terms and conditions.

## **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Proposals will be evaluated by the City using the following criteria:

1. Qualifications and experience of the firm and individuals to be assigned to this project in providing requested services.
2. Specific plans or methodology to be used to perform the services.
3. References from other clients.
4. Quality of illustrative examples.
5. Proposed Lump Sum Fee
6. All qualified submissions received by the deadline will be analyzed by the City according to the criteria outlined in this RFP. Failure to comply with the provisions of the RFP may cause a proposal to be rejected.
7. The City reserves the right to (a) accept or reject any and/or all submissions of proposals; (b) to waive any irregularity, technicality, informality or discrepancy in a proposal; (c) accept any alternative submission of proposals presented, which in its opinion, would best serve the interests of the City; (d) give full and proper evaluation of the Vendor or team presenting the proposal.
8. The City shall be the sole judge of the proposals, and the resulting negotiated agreement that is in its best interest, and its decision shall be final.

### **Equal Opportunity**

The City of Cleveland Heights is an Equal Opportunity Employer and prohibits, in accordance with the law, discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, ancestry, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity. Minority Business Enterprise, Female Business and Small Business Enterprise shall be afforded full opportunity to submit qualifications. The contractor awarded a contract pursuant to this RFP shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, ancestry, disability or handicap, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Vendor's employees must be treated during employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, ancestry, disability or handicap, sexual orientation, or gender identity. As used herein, "treated" means and includes without limitation the following: recruited, whether by advertising or other means; compensated, whether in the form of rates of pay or other forms of compensation; selected for training, including apprenticeship, promoted, upgraded, demoted, downgraded, transferred, laid off and terminated. The contractor shall, during the term of the contract with the City, post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, notices to be provided by its hiring representatives setting forth the provisions of this nondiscrimination clause and that contractor is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

### **Miscellaneous**

**1. Indemnification:** Vendor shall protect, indemnify and save the City harmless from and against all liabilities, damages, losses, claims, actions, costs and expenses of any nature resulting from injuries or damages to persons or property on or about the City property arising out of or in any manner connected with the use, condition or occupancy of the City property by Vendor or any act or omission of Vendor, its agents, vendors or employees.

**2. Insurance:** Vendor agrees to maintain, at its expense, at all times during the project on City property, comprehensive general liability insurance, with a minimum amount of \$1,000,000 per occurrence (\$5,000,000 in aggregate), properly protecting and indemnifying the City and naming the City as an additional insured, written by insurers licensed to do business in the State of Ohio. Vendor shall provide the City a certificate of such insurance, which shall provide that the insurer shall not cancel or alter the policy without giving the City written notice at least thirty (30) days in advance.

**3. Liability:** Vendor agrees that all property of Vendor in, on or about the City property shall be at the sole risk and hazard of Vendor. The City shall not be liable or responsible for any loss, injury or damage to Vendor or any property or business of Vendor, including any theft or damage caused by any invitees, vendors, employees or members of the public. Page 6 of 8

**4. Default:** Should the Vendor at any time refuse or neglect to supply a sufficiency of properly skilled workers or materials of the proper quality, or fail in any respect in the performance of any provision of the agreement, the City shall have the right to immediately suspend the contract until such time as the City is satisfied that the agreement may continue, and/or if Vendor shall at any time be in default of the performance of any of the conditions or obligations of the contract, and shall fail to remedy such default within fifteen (15) days after receipt of written notice of the default, the City may, at its option, immediately and without further notice, terminate the contract, and remove Vendor's products and equipment and store it, as the City deems necessary and in its best interest, until such time as Vendor removes or recovers the products and equipment and makes all required payments to the City. No such actions shall be deemed any manner of trespass or forcible entry and detainer. Notwithstanding the provisions of the contract, the remedies provided for herein in the event of default on the part of the Vendor are in addition to, and not in lieu of, any other remedies or relief made available to the City under the laws of the State of Ohio. In addition, nothing in the contract shall limit or condition the City in its enforcement of Health, Fire and Building Codes, and other laws. Waiver by the City of any default, breach or failure of Vendor under the contract shall not be construed as a waiver of any subsequent or different default, breach or failure.

**5. Oversight:** All work performed by the Vendor under the contract shall be under the oversight of the Cleveland Heights Director of Communications or her designees.

**6. Independent Vendor:** The Vendor hereby acknowledges that it is an independent contractor and neither it nor its employees or agents are employees of the City. The Vendor shall be responsible for the payment or withholding of any federal, state or local taxes, including, but not limited to, income, unemployment, and workers' compensation, and the City will not provide, or contribute to any plan which provides for benefits, including but not limited to unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, retirement benefits, liability insurance or health insurance. All individuals employed by the Vendor who provide services to the City are not public employees under Ohio state law.

**7. Applicable Law:** Ohio law, including Ohio public records law, and City of Cleveland Heights charter and ordinance provisions, shall apply.