



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL:
Strategic Communications Consulting Services
for the
Santa Clara County Open Space Authority
RFP-2012-01
Response Due by 5 PM, February 24, 2012

Introduction

The Santa Clara County Open Space Authority ("Authority") is an independent special district created on February 1, 1993, by an act of the Legislature. The Authority serves a large portion of Santa Clara County by protecting sensitive lands, preserving natural communities, and managing open space. The Authority is governed by a seven member Board of Directors. Additional information on the Authority is available on the agency website www.openspaceauthority.org. The Authority is issuing a Request for Proposal for Strategic Communications Consulting Services to assist in the development of the agency's strategic communications plan. The plan will guide the Authority's efforts to engage the public in the Authority's mission, develop key partnerships, and future programs throughout its service area of Santa Clara County.

The Authority is seeking proposals from all qualified parties interested in performing the requested services. Responses are due by 5 PM February 24, 2012.

Scope of Work: Strategic Communications Consulting Services

The Authority is interested in fully qualified vendors ("Consultant") that preferably are familiar with the San Francisco Bay Region, have experience in government and public affairs, and knowledge of conservation and open space. Consultant(s) will perform the following tasks and services.

1. Conduct a situation analysis to benchmark public perception; e.g. level of awareness of the Authority within Santa Clara County, understanding of the mission and its value to the community, favorable/unfavorable rating. Inputs to the analysis will include results from public opinion research, stakeholder interviews, review of media coverage, current collateral, website, Facebook page, and list of strategic partners and alliances.
2. Complete a scan of the Authority's internal environment, including resources and capabilities, and external environment, including social, political, economic trends and related government policy. Incorporate these findings into a SWOT or similar analysis that details internal strengths and weaknesses, and outlines external threats and opportunities that will inform the communications strategy and execution.
3. Identify priority target audiences for the Authority, which include elected officials, government agencies, conservation organizations, business and community leaders, and key private and public sector organizations. These should include existing or potential strategic partners, and the diverse communities in Santa Clara County.

4. Establish measurable goals with specific milestones to be achieved within the sixteen months timeframe of the strategic communications plan.
5. Design communications strategy that identifies communications channels relative to priority audiences. These are to include broadcast and print media relations, social media, speakers' bureau, events, education and outreach programs, print publications, and electronic communications.
6. Craft a positioning statement that captures the unique vision, mission, attributes and contributions of the Authority. Craft key messages for target audiences that are resonant, consistent, and reinforce the Authority's positioning.
7. Conduct 1-2 day speaker and message training for key staff, Board, and CAC.
8. Deliverables include full documentation of the situation and SWOT (or similar) analyses, a written strategic communications plan, written positioning statement, and key messages for target audiences, handouts for speaker and message training, and delivery of training. Deliverables also include a transfer of best practices, and skills building to Authority staff to facilitate the execution of the strategic communications plan. The Consultant(s) will work directly with the Authority's communications specialist who manages consultants.

Proposal Components

Your proposal should include the following components:

1. Cover Letter - The cover letter shall introduce the Consultant(s) and summarize its qualifications. The cover letter should also contain the location of the office and names, title, address and telephone numbers of the individual(s) assigned to the project.
2. Description and Estimated Timeline of Proposed Services – Proposal must address each of the proposed services as stated in the Request for Proposal, and any additional services the Consultant deems necessary.
3. General Description of Experience - The Consultant shall provide a general description of experience, including a brief history, types of services provided, and experience in providing similar services as those requested in this RFP.
4. References - This section shall consist of a list of at least three (3) clients (include names of contact persons, telephone numbers, and a brief description of the work performed) for whom the Consultant has performed services similar to those required by this RFP. Please do not include information on projects that are not similar in scope and character to the proposed RFP work scope.
5. Proposed Fee Schedule - The Fee Schedule/Hourly Rate should reflect the total costs for all personnel, materials and services necessary to complete the scope of services requested in this RFP.

Special Terms and Conditions

1. All material as part of the response to this request for proposal shall be considered the property of the Authority.
2. Respondents will not be compensated for any expenses incurred in the process for responding to the RFP or, if requested, in submitting further information or appearing for an interview.
3. No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied any benefits or otherwise discriminated against in connection with the award and performance of any contract on the basis of race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, sex, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, or any other basis prohibited by law.

4. The Authority's standard consulting agreement is attached hereto.

Selection Procedures

Proposals will be evaluated by Authority staff members and recommended to the Authority's Board of Directors for approval.

Proposal Submittal

Please submit your proposal to the Authority, no later than 5 PM, February 24, 2012 and include proposal number #RFP-2012-01.

Submit proposals to:

Andrea Mackenzie, General Manager
Attn: #RFP-2012-01
Santa Clara County Open Space Authority
6980 Santa Teresa Blvd., Suite 100
San Jose, CA 95119

amackenzie@openspaceauthority.org

Any questions regarding this Request for Qualifications should be directed to the above listed person.