



RFP-03-23
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

ISSUE DATE
THURSDAY JUNE 15, 2023

CLOSING DATE AND TIME
12:00 NOON THURSDAY JULY 20, 2023

CLOSING LOCATION
Strathcona Regional District
990 Cedar Street
Campbell River, BC V9W 7Z8

CONTACT PERSON
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. PROJECT SUMMARY	3
B. ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS	3
1.0 DEFINITIONS	3
2.0 TERMS AND CONDITIONS	4
3.0 EVALUATION.....	4
4.0 ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS	4
5.0 CHANGES TO PROPOSALS.....	4
6.0 PROPONENT EXPENSES.....	4
7.0 CURRENCY AND TAXES	4
8.0 SUBCONTRACTORS AND PARTNERSHIPS	4
9.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST	4
10.0 ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSALS	4
11.0 CANCELLATION OR DELAY OF RFP	5
12.0 EXECUTION OF CONTRACT	5
13.0 LIABILITY FOR ERRORS	5
14.0 MODIFICATION OF TERMS.....	5
15.0 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION	5
16.0 USE OF DOCUMENT	6
17.0 CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION	6
C. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS	6
18.0 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION.....	6
19.0 PROJECT MANAGER	7
20.0 ENQUIRIES	7
21.0 RFP ADDENDA.....	7
22.0 DISCLAIMER	7
23.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA.....	8
D. SPECIFICATIONS AND SCOPE OF WORK	8
24.0 SCOPE OF WORK.....	8
25.0 PERMITS AND CERTIFICATES	9
26.0 PROJECT SCHEDULE	9
27.0 CHANGE IN SCOPE	10
E. CONTRACT CONDITIONS	10
28.0 COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS.....	10
29.0 LAWS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA	10
30.0 INDEMNITY	10
31.0 INSURANCE	10
32.0 REGISTRATION WITH WORKSAFE BC	10
F. PROPOSAL FORM	11

A. PROJECT SUMMARY

Background

Established in 2008, the Strathcona Regional District (SRD) serves Campbell River, Gold River, Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/Che:k:tles7et'h', Sayward, Tahsis, Zeballos, and four electoral areas: A (Kyuquot/Nootka-Sayward), B (Cortes Island), C (Discovery Islands-Mainland Inlets), and D (Oyster Bay-Buttle Lake).

The Regional District provides over 48,000 residents (2021 census) with a diverse range of services, including water & sewage systems, fire protection, land use planning, parks, bylaw enforcement, recreation, broadband infrastructure, emergency planning and response.

As noted in the 2020-2024 Board Strategic Plan, developing a proactive approach to engaging with the SRD communities and communicating decisions to the public is a strategic priority for the organization. The Communication Department currently has one full time employee dedicated to supporting the organization's communications efforts.

Project Purpose

The Strathcona Regional District's Communications Department is responsible for communications planning and supports community engagement, media relations, issues management, and emergency operations. The department also manages the development and implementation of a variety of communication tools including SRD websites, social media channels, advertising, and digital and print materials.

The purpose of this project is to develop a comprehensive communications strategy that includes a five-year communications work plan which will guide the communications department and enhance existing corporate communication tools, techniques and procedures.

B. ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

1.0 DEFINITIONS

Throughout this RFP, the following definitions apply:

"Closing" means the closing date and time specified on the first page of this Request for Proposals.

"Contract" means the written agreement resulting from this Request for Proposals executed by the Strathcona Regional District and the contractor.

"Contractor" means the successful proponent to this Request for Proposals who enters into a written contract with the Regional District.

"Must", "shall" or "mandatory" means a requirement that must be met in order for the proposal to receive consideration.

"Project" means that work to be completed in accordance with this Request for Proposals.

"Proponent" means an individual, company or partnership that submits, or intends to submit, a proposal in response to this Request for Proposals.

"Proposal" means a submission in response to this Request for Proposals.

"RFP" means this Request for Proposals.

“Should” or “desirable” means a requirement having a significant degree of importance to the objective of the Request for Proposals.

2.0 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The terms and conditions applicable to this RFP are contained within this document. Submission of a proposal in response to this RFP indicates acceptance of all terms and conditions contained herein or in any addenda issued by the Regional District.

3.0 EVALUATION

Proposals will be evaluated by the Regional District based on the criteria identified herein. The intent of the Regional District is to enter into a contract with the proponent whose proposal represents the best value to the Regional District based on the Regional District’s evaluation of the proposals received.

4.0 ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS

If alternative solutions are offered, the information should be submitted in the same format as a standard proposed response but must be clearly marked as an “Alternative Proposal”. If a proponent submits more than one proposal each must be separately and uniquely identified.

5.0 CHANGES TO PROPOSALS

By written notice a proponent may, prior to closing, amend or withdraw its proposal. Upon closing all proposals become irrevocable and may not be amended or withdrawn prior to the deadline for acceptance except where the proponent and the Regional District have mutually agreed to a change for the purpose of entering into a contract.

6.0 PROPONENT EXPENSES

Proponents are solely responsible for their own expenses in preparing and submitting their proposals. The Regional District will not be liable for any claims for costs or damages incurred by a proponent in preparing a proposal, loss of anticipated profit in connection with a final contract or any other matter whatsoever.

7.0 CURRENCY AND TAXES

Prices must be quoted in Canadian dollars and exclusive of taxes which shall be shown separately on the Proposal Form. No adjustment of fees or pricing will be made due to international currency fluctuations and/or any import duties and any additional taxes as a result of the contractor sourcing any materials, components and/or labour from international sources.

8.0 SUBCONTRACTORS AND PARTNERSHIPS

If subcontractors are to be used they must be clearly identified in the proposal. Joint submissions in the form of a partnership or consortium are acceptable including a joint submission by proponents having no formal corporate links. However, each proposal must identify the legal entity which is to be responsible for the overall performance of the work which constitutes the project.

9.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Contracting or subcontracting with any firm or individual whose corporate or other interests could, in the Regional District’s opinion, give rise to a conflict of interest in connection with the services will not be permitted. This includes, but is not limited to, any firm or individual involved in the preparation of this RFP.

10.0 ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSALS

This RFP must not be construed as an agreement to purchase goods or services nor as an invitation to perform any service for the Regional District, except as specifically outlined herein. Proposals shall remain open for acceptance by the Regional District for at least 30 days after

the RFP closing date. Proposals must state the latest date for acceptance at the time of submission.

The Regional District is not bound to accept the lowest priced proposal or any proposal. Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of stated criteria and the Regional District is under no obligation to request clarification or further information, whether written or oral, from any proponent prior to completion of the evaluation process.

The Regional District reserves the right to reject any and all proposals for any reason or to accept any proposal in whole or in part which the Regional District, in its sole unrestricted discretion, deems to represent the best value for the Regional District. Proponents acknowledge the Regional District's rights under this clause and absolutely waive any right of action against the Regional District for failure to accept their proposals whether such right of action arises as a result of negligence, bad faith or for any other reason.

The Regional District reserves the right to enter into negotiations with one or more proponents with respect to the services to be provided, and expressly reserves the right through such negotiations to request changes, alterations, additions or deletions from the terms of any proposals received.

Formal acceptance of any proposal and the subsequent confirmation of project award must not be construed as authority for the proponent to proceed with the project as this will be dependent on the execution of a contract and the fulfillment of any conditions precedent imposed by any authority having jurisdiction over the work or service to be performed.

11.0 CANCELLATION OR DELAY OF RFP

The Regional District reserves the right to delay and/or cancel this RFP at any time and for any reason and will not be held responsible for any direct or indirect loss, damage, cost or expense incurred or suffered by any proponent as a result of such cancellation.

The acceptance of any Proposal and the subsequent execution of a contract may be subject to funding and approval by the Board of Directors of the Strathcona Regional District or any of its delegated authorities.

12.0 EXECUTION OF CONTRACT

After acceptance by the Regional District, the successful Proponent will be provided with written confirmation. A contract will be executed when all preconditions have been met. No proponent will acquire any legal or equitable rights or privileges with respect to this project until a contract has been entered into with the Regional District.

13.0 LIABILITY FOR ERRORS

The information contained within this RFP is not guaranteed or warranted to be accurate by the Regional District, nor is it necessarily comprehensive or exhaustive. Nothing in this RFP is intended to relieve proponents from conducting their own research and forming their own opinions and conclusions with respect to the matters addressed in this RFP.

14.0 MODIFICATION OF TERMS

The Regional District reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to modify the terms of this RFP at any time prior to the closing time. Such modifications will be communicated to all proponents through a formal addenda process.

15.0 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Proposals are subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* which provides that all information contained therein, with some exceptions, is subject to access by the public. Information that is considered to be confidential or proprietary in nature should be clearly noted as such by the proponent. The Regional District cannot guarantee that

any information contained within a proposal will remain confidential if a request for access is made.

16.0 USE OF DOCUMENT

This document, nor any portion thereof, may not be used for any purpose other than the submission of proposals.

17.0 CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

Information pertaining to the Regional District obtained by the Proponent as a result of participation in this RFP process, other than information that is generally available as part of the public record, is to be treated as confidential and must not be disclosed without prior written authorization from the Regional District.

C. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

18.0 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals shall be submitted in one of the following formats:

Electronically in PDF format, along with the signed and dated Proposal Form provided herein, to the secure RFP submission portal on the SRD’s website. The deadline for receipt of proposals is 12:00 noon Pacific time on July 20, 2023 at the following address:

<https://srd.ca/uploads/submissions/>

Once submitted, proposals may not be viewed or changed. To make a correction, a clearly labelled corrected version shall be submitted to the portal and an email sent to procurement@srd.ca indicating which version is intended for consideration.

In person delivery or by mail/courier in duplicate complete with one digital copy in portable document format (.pdf file) on a CD, DVD or USB device along with the signed and dated Proposal Form provided. The deadline for receipt of proposals is 12:00 noon Pacific time on July 20, 2023 at the following location:

Strathcona Regional District
990 Cedar Street
Campbell River, BC V9W 7Z8

Proposals must be submitted in a sealed package with the name and address of the proponent and the RFP title clearly marked on the outside.

SAMPLE LABEL

Name of Proponent Address of Proponent
CONFIDENTIAL – DO NOT OPEN
RFP-03-23
STRATHCONA REGIONAL DISTRICT 990 Cedar Street Campbell River, BC V9W 7Z8

Late proposals will be disqualified.

Proposals that are conditional, illegible, obscure, contain arithmetical errors, erasures, alterations or irregularities of any kind may, at the discretion of the Regional District, be disqualified.

The person(s) authorized to sign on behalf of the proponent and to bind the proponent to statements made in response to this RFP **must execute** the Proposal Form. Unsigned proposals will be disqualified.

Proponents shall be solely responsible for the delivery of their proposals in the manner and time prescribed. All submissions must be delivered according to the instructions provided herein and the Regional District will accept no responsibility for documents delivered to any other location.

19.0 PROJECT MANAGER

Proponents are required to designate an individual who shall be the Designated Project Manager (“Project Manager”) for the project. The Project Manager shall be the contractor’s project/construction manager responsible for the delivery of all contracted services to the Regional District. The Project Manager, and not subordinate staff, shall at all times be directly responsible for the management of the project. The Project Manager shall attend all meetings of the project team during the term of the project. The Project Manager shall not be replaced without the prior written consent of the Regional District.

20.0 ENQUIRIES

All enquiries related to this RFP are to be directed, in writing or by email, to:

Strathcona Regional District
990 Cedar Street, Campbell River, BC V9W 7Z8
Phone: 250-830-6700
Fax: 250-830-6710
Email: procurement@srd.ca

Information obtained from any other source is not official and should not be relied upon.

21.0 RFP ADDENDA

Addenda to this RFP may be issued prior to closing in response to queries received or at the initiative of the Regional District. Such addenda will be in written form and will be made available on the BC Bid (<http://www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca>) and Strathcona Regional District (www.srd.ca) websites. Information contained within RFP addenda is considered an integral part of the RFP and should be considered by proponents when responding to this RFP.

Verbal communications will not be binding unless confirmed by written addenda.

22.0 DISCLAIMER

Each proponent is responsible to review and understand the terms and conditions of this RFP and the scope of the work described. The Regional District makes no representation or warranty as to the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in this RFP and proponents are solely responsible to ensure that they have obtained and considered all information necessary to understand the requirements of the RFP and to prepare and submit their proposals. The Regional District will not be held responsible for any loss, damage or expense incurred by a proponent as a result of any inaccuracy or lack of completeness associated with this RFP, or as a result of any misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the requirements of this RFP on the part of any proponent.

23.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The SRD will evaluate proposals based upon, but not limited to, the following criteria:

Criteria	Points
Methodology and approach	30
Project team and relevant expertise	25
Cost to the Regional District (Max. \$45,000)	15
Proposal clarity and layout	10
Demonstrated ability to provide the Services within the proposed project schedule	10
Reference checks from similar projects	10

If required, a short list of proponents may be established to be contacted by the Regional District. The purpose for contacting a proponent at this stage would be to gain a greater understanding of the proponent’s proposal as submitted. Depending on the nature of the questions to be answered an interview may also be arranged to facilitate a more in-depth understanding of the proposal.

D. SPECIFICATIONS AND SCOPE OF WORK

24.0 SCOPE OF WORK

The intention of this project is to develop a five-year communications work plan that articulates communication strategies for the organization and a work plan to guide the efforts of the Communications Department. The plan should include a review/audit of existing communication practices, tools and procedures to help inform the comprehensive communications strategy and work plan. The strategy will be an internal document.

The communications strategy will help focus and prioritize resources to be more proactive and strategic in supporting departments with their communication needs. The strategy will also include public engagement recommendations to meet SRD’s goal of being an open and engaged organization, and support the Board’s Strategic Plan while ensuring diverse voices are included in our consultation opportunities.

The scope of work includes but is not limited to, the following tasks:

- Perform a communications audit to review SRD’s existing communication services, engagement practices, needs, and tools.
- Facilitate the development of a five-year Communications Strategy based on the information gathered through the audit and local government best practices to guide SRD’s internal and external communications, including public awareness and educational campaigns, advertising, media relations, community engagement, digital and online communications, and employee engagement.

Key deliverables will include:

1- Communications Audit

- Conduct a review and analysis of existing communications practices and engagement strategies, use of technology, social media platforms, department structure and current use of traditional tools and techniques.
- Examine information flow, feedback channels, consultation processes and collaboration processes.

- Identify strengths and gaps to meeting community and SRD needs within available resources and budget.
- Assess structure of communications department, services, and processes to respond to community and organizational needs, as well as public expectations.
- Identify opportunities for process improvements and efficiencies.
- Examine demographics of residents within SRD and their preferred communication methods.
- Compare community engagement/corporate communications functions within similar sized regional districts.
- Consult with internal partners, including a cross-section of SRD staff, management and board with a focus on needs, service experience and business processes.
- Review relevant documents, such as the corporate strategic plan, communication documents, surveys, and policies.

2 – Development of a Five-Year Communications Strategy

Based on the information gathered through the audit, recommendations and local government best practices, the communications strategy will include:

- Goals, objectives, identifying target audiences and impacted/interested groups.
- Work plan with prioritized initiatives, timelines, budget, and resources required.
- Draft policies and procedures for staff and board regarding communications and media relations.
- Recommendations for SRD’s branding/visual identity standards and digital asset and photography management.
- Recommendations for public engagement processes
- Key performance measures to ensure that recommended public communications tools are accessible for those with disabilities.

3- Presentation of the completed project to SRD Senior Management

- Incorporate feedback and prepare a final document.

25.0 PERMITS AND CERTIFICATES

If necessary, the successful proponent will obtain, at its own cost, all necessary permits to carry out the work of this project. The contractor will be required to provide certificates of conformity with any requirements of authorities having jurisdiction.

26.0 PROJECT SCHEDULE

The Regional District is anticipating that this project will be completed in 2023. The following schedule is provided as a guideline:

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| • Kick-Off Meeting | Aug. 24, 2023 |
| • Draft - Communications Strategy | Oct. 12, 2023 |
| • Presentation to SRD Senior Management | Nov. 16, 2023 |
| • Final report – 5-year Communications Strategy | Nov. 30, 2023 |

Proponents should include in their responses whether or not they can comply with this timeline. In accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in this document, preference may be given to proponents that can complete the work of the contract within the schedule outlined herein.

27.0 CHANGE IN SCOPE

The Regional District reserves the right to amend the scope of work during the term of the proposed contract. In such cases, the Regional District would request a quotation from the contractor for the change in scope.

E. CONTRACT CONDITIONS

By submission of a proposal, the Proponent agrees that should its proposal be successful, the Proponent will enter into a contract with the Regional District that subject to negotiation, may include the following contract clauses:

28.0 COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS

The contractor will give all notices and provide all permits, licenses and other approvals required to perform the work. The contractor will comply with all laws applicable to the work or performance of the contract.

29.0 LAWS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Any contract resulting from this RFP will be governed by and will be construed and interpreted in accordance with all laws in affect in the province of British Columbia.

30.0 INDEMNITY

Notwithstanding the provision of insurance coverage by the contractor, the contractor hereby agrees to indemnify and save harmless the Regional District, its officers, agents and employees from and against all claims, demands, losses, costs, damages, actions, suits or proceedings by whomever made, brought or prosecuted and in any manner based upon, arising out, related to, occasioned by or attributable to the activities of the contractor, its servants, agents, subcontractors and sub-operators, in providing the services and performing the work of the contract, excepting always liability arising solely out of the negligent act or omission of the Regional District.

31.0 INSURANCE

Any contract resulting from this RFP will require that the contractor, without limiting its obligations or liabilities and at its own expense, provide and maintain throughout the contract term:

- a. Comprehensive commercial general liability insurance in an amount not less than \$2,000,000 inclusive per occurrence, insuring against bodily injury and property damage and including liability assumed under the contract;
- b. Automobile liability on all vehicles owned, operated or licensed in the name of the contractor in an amount not less than \$2,000,000.

The Regional District is to be added as an additional insured and the policy shall contain a cross liability clause. All required insurance will be endorsed to provide the Regional District with 30 days advance written notice of cancellation or material change.

The contractor will provide the Regional District with evidence of the required insurance in the form of a certificate(s) of insurance, immediately upon execution and delivery of the contract.

32.0 REGISTRATION WITH WORKSAFE BC

The contractor and any approved subcontractors must be registered with WorkSafe BC and WCB coverage must be maintained for the duration of the contract. Prior to receiving any payment, the contractor may be required to submit a WCB Clearance Letter confirming all assessments have been paid and the contractor is in good standing. The contractor and any approved subcontractors shall abide by all provisions of the Workers Compensation Act of British Columbia.

F. PROPOSAL FORM

RFP-03-23

**CLOSING DATE AND TIME
12:00 NOON PACIFIC TIME THURSDAY JULY 20, 2023**

This form must be completed, signed and included with the submission.

The undersigned confirms that its submission is in response to the above noted RFP.

The proponent acknowledges receipt of Addenda # _____ through Addenda #_____.

Proponent:

Address:

**Contact
Name:**

Phone:

Fax:

Email:

Completed Price	\$
Taxes	\$
Total Completed Price	\$

Proponents should ensure that all requirements of the RFP are dealt with in their proposal submission and that all materials and products proposed comply with the specifications therein.

Authorized Signature

Name and Title

Date