Request for Proposals

For

City of Decatur, GA Communications Audit & Strategy

Release Date:
March 12, 2020

Responses to be Received By:
April 8, 2020

Return To:
Renae Madison
Communications Manager
City of Decatur
509 N. McDonough Street
Decatur, GA 30030
Renae.madison@decaturga.com
Introduction:

The City of Decatur will receive sealed proposals for a communications audit and strategy. Decatur is seeking an opportunity to enhance internal and external communications to keep its community stakeholders informed and engaged.

The communications audit and strategy will serve as a guide for current and future communications efforts. Potential respondents should have expertise in conducting comprehensive communications audits and developing strategies, and are asked to prepare a proposal including the format for accomplishing the work, the time frame for accomplishing the work, the fee required to perform the work, and references listing previous comparable assignments. The City reserves the right to award a contract to the firm whose proposal and any resulting negotiations are deemed to be in the best interest of the City.

A mandatory pre-bid meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 31, 10 a.m. at Decatur City Hall, 509 N. McDonough Street in Decatur, Georgia 30030, City Commission Meeting Room.

Proposals will be accepted until 5 p.m. on Wednesday, April 8 at Decatur City Hall located at 509 North McDonough Street, Decatur, Georgia 30030, addressed to the attention of Renae Madison, Communications Manager, Community & Economic Development Department.

Submittal of a proposal indicates acceptance of the conditions contained in the RFP. The City of Decatur reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted. All proposals are public records to the extent required by the Georgia Open Records Act. All proprietary information must be clearly marked in the proposals. Proprietary information will be protected to the extent possible under the Georgia Open Records Act. The City of Decatur reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, to waive informalities, to negotiate changes in the scope of work or services to be provided and to otherwise waive any technicalities. Respondents may be required to provide oral presentations as part of the evaluation process.

Firms must ensure that employees and applicants for employment are not discriminated against because of their gender, race, color, genetic information, religion, national origin, political affiliation, age, handicapped status, sexual orientation, sexual preference, or gender identity and expression.

For additional information, contact Renae Madison, Communications Manager, at (678) 553-6561 or renae.madison@decaturga.com

Background on the City of Decatur, Georgia

The City of Decatur is located about 6 miles northeast of Atlanta, Georgia. Spanning 4.7 square miles, the City has a current population of approximately 25,000. The active downtown district maintains its small town character while supporting over 200 restaurants and shops. The City of Decatur prides itself on providing quality services at the least possible cost. This means being accountable to a large audience, including residents, business owners and other taxpayers, for providing quality services that reflect the community’s willingness to invest.

The City of Decatur is home to highly-educated, forward-thinking and technology literate citizens many of whom are professors, media personnel, lawyers and medical professionals. Fifty-five percent of Decatur residents have a bachelor’s degree or graduate degree and sixty-six percent are under the age of forty-five. The City values public input and embraces opportunities to connect with and inform its citizens, and is often recognized for its innovative and creative approach to providing local government services.

Decatur currently communicates with residents through the city website, NextDoor, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, The Decatur Minute blog, the monthly city newsletter (Decatur Focus), commission meetings streamed on the city’s website, and other specialty brochures, newsletter inserts and websites. The city operates on a lean budget with limited dollars available for communication efforts.
Scope of Work:

Audit

Review and assess the city’s communication programs and practices including but not limited to:

- Use of electronic communications including emails, website and social media.
- Use of printed materials and other means of communicating with residents and businesses.
- Evaluation of current communication methods with current communication perceptions, expectations and needs of the community.
- Evaluation of what is working well and what needs attention with current communication processes both externally and internally.
- A comparison of best communications practices and resources used in comparable cities with Decatur’s practices and resources.
- Evaluation of the organizational capacity for maintaining and enhancing communications efforts.

The audit should provide recommendations on desirable practices for implementation, cost-effective actions to promote improved overall communications, as well as the creation of an overall communications plan based on the results of the audit.

Strategy

The scope of work also includes a strategy for the long-term management of effective communication including:

- Recommended changes that may be required to both processes and policies.
- Identification of current communication roles and responsibilities, and recommended changes if needed.
- Recommended templates and standards for City communications.
- Recommended best practices in reaching target audiences, and identification of benchmarks for measuring success.
- Recommended staffing and other resources to support the strategy.

Target Audience:

Below is a list of the primary Decatur audiences and their descriptions.

- **Residents.** They live, play, dine, send their kids to school and may even work in Decatur. They are very diverse in every way, but their common bond is the City.
- **Visitors.** They come to dine, shop, stay in our hotels or enjoy a local festival. Many are looking at Decatur as a potential place to live, work, or raise a family.
- **Local Businesses.** Local businesses range from mom and pop shops to real estate and banking. Some participate in local government and community issues. They chose Decatur as an ideal place to set up their businesses.
- **Prospective Businesses.** Businesses that are considering Decatur as a location. They range from small to large businesses, boutique owners to banks.
- **Media.** They are covering Decatur politics, announcements, growth, and issues. They are writing about events, dining, shopping and other activities in the City.

Deliverables:

- A written report that to include audit results and recommendations.
- A presentation to the Decatur City Commission to highlight audit results and recommendations.
- A Communications Plan to include a strategy for the long-term management of effective communication based on audit results and recommendations.
Accessibility:

As a public entity, the programs, services, and activities provided by the City of Decatur must be accessible to people with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Additionally, the communications strategy should include mechanisms that are accessible to users with various capabilities to receive information.

Budget Considerations:

Consideration will be focused on companies that are willing to develop creative and effective ways of lowering costs while still meeting the goals outlined in this document.

Submission Requirements:

All submissions must be received by 5 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, April 8 to be considered. Late submissions will not be considered under any circumstances.

Consultants are requested to submit four (4) hard copies to City Hall, 509 N. McDonough St. Decatur, GA 30030, Attention: Renae Madison, and one electronic copy via email to renae.madison@decaturga.com. All proprietary information must be clearly marked in the proposals. Proprietary information will be protected to the extent possible under the Georgia Open Records Act.

There are no restrictions on the teaming arrangements for any submission. All Submissions Must Include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page Limit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Detailed description of communications audit and strategy program elements, including a discussion of the firm’s proposed approach to performing the audit and the firm’s proposed scope of work.

2. Introductory information about the company or team making the submission and the proposed project.

3. Key personnel involved in the audit and a statement of qualifications. Include examples of past experience with similar projects.

4. Timeline for the project activities.

5. List of current and former clients who have undergone a similar project.

6. Cost breakdown/ proposed budget.

7. Explanation of firm’s billing procedures including rates, overtime rates, mark-ups, etc.

8. Details of any potential or existing conflicts of interest.

9. Sample professional services agreement.
Selection Criteria:

- Staff expertise and overall experience of personnel assigned to the project.
- Background and experience with similar projects.
- Demonstrated understanding of the proposed scope and approach to the project.
- Cost.
- Interview (to be held the week of April 27)

**Mandatory Pre-bid meeting:** Tuesday, March 31 at 10 a.m. Eastern Time, 509 N. McDonough St. Decatur, GA 30030, City Commission Meeting Room

**Deadline for Final Questions:** Friday, April 3 at 10 a.m. Eastern Time

**Due Date for Submissions:** Wednesday, April 8 at 5 p.m. Eastern Time

**Receipt of Response:** If you do not receive an email/phone confirmation that we have received your response, please call the RFP Coordinator.

**Finalist Interview:** Interviews for selected finalists will be held the week of April 27

Please label all responses as “City of Decatur Communications Audit & Strategy” RFP Coordinator:
Renae Madison
Phone: (678)553-6561
Email: renae.madison@decaturga.com

Submit responses by email and U.S. mail or in person (four copies) to:
Renae Madison
City of Decatur Community & Economic Development Office
509 N. McDonough Street
Decatur, GA 30030
Renae.madison@decaturga.com

Disclaimer:

The City of Decatur reserves the right to retain all information submitted. All submissions are public records to the extent required by the Georgia Open Records Act. All proprietary information must be clearly marked in the proposals. Proprietary information will be protected to the extent possible under the Georgia Open Records Act.