

**Grays Harbor County
Request for Proposals
Tourism Media Planning and Purchasing Services**

PURPOSE:

Grays Harbor County seeks proposals from qualified professionals/firms in the advertising and media industry to assist the County Tourism Department with the strategic development of advertising and media plans including, but not limited to, bulk media purchases consisting primarily of television and digital marketing platforms.

Budget (2021): Approximately \$275,000, annually

Start Date: Within 30 days of the signing of a services agreement, or sooner if agreed upon by both the selected service provider and Grays Harbor County

BACKGROUND:

Grays Harbor County is located on the coast of Washington State. It is surrounded by Lewis, Pacific, Jefferson, Mason and Thurston Counties. Grays Harbor County is 1,917 square miles in area, making it the 15th largest county in Washington State. The population of Grays Harbor County is approximately 70,000.

Grays Harbor County is fortunate to have a wealth of natural resources and tourism assets that include the beautiful and serene Quinault Rain Forest; over 50 miles of pristine beaches that provide some of the best razor-clam digging in the world, as well as surfing opportunities; the historic fishing community of Westport that supports world-class sport fishing opportunities; rich historical and pop-culture destinations within the cities of Aberdeen, Hoquiam and Montesano; as well as abundant wildlife and outdoor opportunities including: hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, bicycling, paddle sports, beachcombing, and off road vehicle opportunities.

Grays Harbor County administers a tourism promotion program within the operations of the Fairgrounds and Tourism Department. The department is made up of 8 employees, including a Director of Fairgrounds and Tourism, Office Manager/Marketing and Public Relations Coordinator, office staff, event staff and facilities staff. The department has many duties including the operation of a comprehensive tourism marketing campaign that focusses on the promotion of the County's unique tourism draws. The department also includes a Lodging Tax Advisory Committee that provides advisory opinion on tourism related activities. The department is supported solely by 3% Hotel/Motel tax funding. In recent years the County has been fortunate to experience a significant increase in tourism activities and associated revenue.

This is due, in large part, to an aggressive marketing campaign. The Tourism department's marketing brand has been, "Unforgettable Grays Harbor", since 2003.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- 1) Work with Grays Harbor Tourism in the development of both long-term and annual, strategic marketing plans that highlight Grays Harbor County's unique tourism assets. This plan includes, but is not limited to identifying the most effective media outlets to reach specific tourist demographics targeted in each seasonal advertising campaign.
- 2) Develop specific, annual media purchase plans that include scheduled run dates and the networks/stations that will be included in each run.
- 3) As part of the strategic plan, work with Grays Harbor Tourism in the development of a "value added program", in which potential marketing and advertising partners are identified to generate new partnership funds, the ability to leverage funds and resources, as well as bonus media opportunities.
- 4) Work with Grays Harbor County in the trafficking of up to seven (7) annual, :30 second television commercials, as well as bonus spots that promote Grays Harbor's tourism assets.
- 5) Work closely with the other advertising, marketing and business associates of Grays Harbor Tourism, including, but not limited to, the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee, Professional Media Strategists, Public Relations Creative Consultants and videographers. Associated tasks would include, but not be limited to assisting with the trafficking functions of television commercials to selected networks/stations.
- 6) Potentially, assisting with the placement of advertisements on radio, social media, YouTube and other digital media sites.

PROPOSAL DOCUMENTS SHOULD INCLUDE:

- 1) A description of the project team, including, but not limited to staff, subcontractors, and available resources.
- 2) Resumes and/or statements of qualifications of key individuals that will work on the project. This should include related work experience and a description of expertise in the relevant field.
- 3) A detailed strategy as to how Grays Harbor Tourism's needs, in relation to the products and services detailed in this RFP will be met. It should also include how Grays Harbor Tourism's current marketing campaign will be enhanced by the services to be provided.
- 4) References from a minimum of three entities for which you have performed the duties described in this RFP. Reference information must include the name of the company, a contact person, address, phone number, and email.

- 5) The submittal should include a description of hourly compensation for the work described within this RFP. This may also include a description of “value added” opportunities such as media kick-backs, bonus media, fund leveraging, etc. that may be obtained through industry associates and partnerships.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION:

Proposals will be evaluated by a combination of Grays Harbor County Tourism Department staff and Lodging Tax Advisory Committee members on the evidence of understanding of the objectives and work involved, as well as the demonstrated capability of the submitter to accomplish the work desired. The primary criteria and relative weight given to each category during the evaluation process will be:

- 1) Quality of Proposal – 20%

The RFP shall provide a clear conceptual outline of a process that will be used to meet Grays Harbor County Tourism’s needs in regard to the services described within this RFP.

- 2) Experience – 30%

The Proposal shall detail previous work experience, demonstrating proficiency in all areas related to the desired products and services described within this RFP. Proof of adequate staff and resources to support the submitting company/individual’s ability to provide continuity in services shall also be considered.

- 3) Cost – 25%

Each RFP shall include hourly compensation information for work/service categories that have been described. In addition, information on “value added” potential, such as beneficial industry partnerships, bonus media, and other methods of cost savings will also be considered.

- 4) Cooperative Ability – 25%

The successful submitter must demonstrate, within the proposal process, the ability to work with Grays Harbor Tourism Staff and associates to understand and carryout the goals, objectives and creative vision of the Department.

SUBMITTAL PROCESS:

- A. Proposals shall be clearly marked, “Tourism Media Planning and Purchasing Services RFP”.
- B. Proposals (four copies) shall be delivered to the Grays Harbor Fairgrounds and Tourism Office, PO Box 1229, 32 Elma-McCleary Road, Elma, WA 98541. Late, emailed, or faxed proposals will not be accepted.

C. Questions regarding this RFP shall be directed to Mike Bruner, Fairgrounds, Tourism and Parks Manager, at (360) 482-2651 ext. 1870, or by email at mbruner@co.grays-harbor.wa.us.

D. County will utilize the following approximate timetable, which should result in selection of a vendor by December 23, 2020:

Issue RFP	November 20, 2020
Deadline for Submittal of RFP's (5 p.m.)	December 14, 2020
Preliminary Selection of Firm	December 23, 2020
Notify Firm Chosen	December 23, 2020

E. The following terms and conditions apply to every submittal received:

- I. The County reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, and to waive minor irregularities in any proposal.
- II. The County reserves the right to request clarification of information submitted, and to request additional information from any proposer.
- III. The County reserves the right to award any contract to the next most qualified proposal, if the successful proponent does not execute a contract within thirty (30) days after the award of the proposal.
- IV. Any proposal may be withdrawn up until the date and time set above for opening of the RFP's. Any RFP not so timely withdrawn shall constitute and irrevocable offer, for a period of ninety (90) days to sell to the County the services described in the attached proposal, or until one or more of the proposals have been approved by the County, whichever occurs first.
- V. The services contract resulting from acceptance of a RFP by COUNTY shall be in a form supplied by the proponent and approved by COUNTY, and shall reflect the specifications in this RFP. COUNTY reserves the right to reject any proposed agreement or contract that does not conform to the specifications contained in this RFP, and which is not approved by the Grays Harbor County Prosecuting Attorney's office.
- VI. COUNTY shall not be responsible for any costs incurred in preparing, submitting or presenting a response to the RFP.

Failure to submit all items required in response to this RFP shall result in rejection of that proposal as non-responsive.