

# JEFFERSON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

## **Detailed Bid Specifications**

Communication & Public Relations Services

## **Bid Opening Timeline**

Please mail or deliver bids clearly titled “Communication & Public Relations Services” by no later than Friday, June 24, 2022 at 3:00 PM to:

Jefferson County Commission  
Commission Office  
124 E Washington St  
Charles Town, WV 25414  
Attn: Jessica Carroll  
jcarroll@jeffersoncountywv.org

Bids will be opened in public at the Commission Office on Friday, June 24, 2022 at 3:01PM.

## **Background**

Jefferson County is located in the eastern panhandle of West Virginia and seated in Charles Town. Jefferson County is the easternmost county of West Virginia, bounded by the Potomac River and Maryland on the north; the Blue Ridge Mountains and Loudoun County, Virginia, on the east; Clarke County, Virginia, on the south; and Berkeley County on the west. It occupies 212.4 square miles. Its incorporated municipalities include Charles Town, the county seat (established in 1789 by George Washington’s brother, Charles); Ranson (1910); Harpers Ferry (1851); Bolivar (1825); and Shepherdstown (1762). Jefferson County was established from a portion of Berkeley County by the Virginia General Assembly on October 26, 1801. Like much of the neighboring area, Jefferson County began to grow more rapidly in the 1970s. Between 1970 and 2000, the number of residents increased from 21,280 to 42,190. The number of residents increased to 57,701 during the 2020 census. The county experienced significant residential growth without a proportionate increase in its business and industrial base. The county is part of the metropolitan Washington area; therefore, the majority of its residents commute outside of the county to work.

In 2021, the Jefferson County Commission contacted a consultant to perform an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) assessment and to explore ways of improving EMS services to citizens while managing cost more effectively. This study evaluated the performance and cost of the current EMS system and provided alternative EMS system models for the County to consider. This study provided comprehensive data analyses, quantitative data reports, reviewed EMS best practices and estimated financials for each EMS model presented. The study was completed in February 2022 and subsequently presented to the public. Since the time that the report was released, there has

been public scrutiny and misinformation regarding that published data and the impact any EMS system changes will have on the services provided to the community.

### **Request for Proposal**

The Jefferson County Commission (JCC) seeks to retain a qualified public relations agency to assist with further development and implementation of the EMS system project (the project) within the affected community. This Request for Proposal (RFP) is intended to inform county residents and assist JCC with providing a multi-faceted communications program for the project. This will include messaging to the public that the image and reputation of the County's EMS system is of great value and a direct benefit for County residents, businesses and visitors. The selected firm must be able to provide strong media and public relations (PR) strategic insight and message development to assist JCC with proactive campaigns and reactive approaches related to topics surrounding this project. The consultant will be expected to monitor and, when appropriate, provide timely response to social media commentary under the direction of the JCC County Administrator. Regular reporting on social media metrics, accompanied by strategic recommendations for improvement, will be required.

The firm selected through a competitive bid process will assist JCC in designing, developing and implementing a comprehensive, integrated and strategic communications, advertising and public relations program for this project. In collaboration with JCC, the selected firm will grow and maintain an ongoing dialogue with key audiences, including:

- County residents, businesses, organizations and stakeholders
- Policy makers, which includes business and political leaders
- News media
- Social media audiences

The selected firm will be responsible for supporting the County's strategic communications, media relations and public relations priorities for this project duration. Our desired partner will have the capacity to provide strategic counsel and direction, actively share and promote our message, amplify our successes and position the case that the activities of the County in relation to this project is creating a better value and quality of life for its key stakeholders.

The JCC reserves the right to perform, manage, and/or administer any function referenced in the Scope of Work (SOW) at any time during the resultant contract period. Such performance may alter the amount of overall funds administered by the contract and will be determined on a month-to-month basis.

In responding to this RFP, vendors should follow the prescribed format and use the forms included, thus providing Jefferson County with data that is easily compared with data submitted by other vendors in order to fairly and objectively evaluate the proposal.

The bidding agency assumes no responsibility for conclusion or interpretations derived from the information presented in this RFP, or otherwise distributed or made available during this procurement process. In addition, the bidding agency will not be bound by or be responsible for any explanation, interpretation, or conclusions of the RFP or any documents provided by the

bidding agency other than those given in writing by the bidding agency through the issuance of addenda. In no event may a vendor rely on any oral statement by the bidding agency or its agents, advisors, or consultants. It is the full responsibility of the vendor to thoroughly investigate the needs and requirements of the bidding agency not necessarily assumed in this RFP and to submit a bid for: *Communications & Public Relations Services*.

Bidders are encouraged to contact County Administrator, John Nissel, to set an appointment to discuss the project to ensure that the appropriate bid is submitted.

The Jefferson County Government, County Commission, in their judgment, reserves the right to qualify, disqualify and award the bid to the contractor they see most meets the qualifications of the bid spec.

**I. Scope of Work, Instructions, Requirements, and Details**

**A. VENDOR PROPOSALS DUE BACK**

All proposals offered under this RFP are due back to the JCC office before Friday, June 24, 2022 at 3:00PM, at which time each proposal will be opened and the review process started. Proposals may be mailed, emailed or hand delivered to:

Jefferson County Commission  
Commission Office  
124 E Washington St  
Charles Town, WV 25414  
Attn: Jessica Carroll  
jcarroll@jeffersoncountywv.org

Proposals should be clearly marked "Communication & Public Relations Services".

**\*\*Is this paragraph understood? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Bidder's initials: \_\_\_\_\_**

## **B. INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDER**

1. Bidders shall also indicate in the "yes/no" column if their bid complies on each item and section specified. Exceptions shall be allowed if they are equal to or superior to that specified and provided they are listed and fully explained on a separate page titled "exceptions". This page shall reference the exact section and letter of the RFP that is subject of the variance.
2. Bids will not be accepted after the date and time stated in the invitation to bid.
3. Bidder shall include comprehensive pricing and/or rate sheet for all potential services you might provide under this RFP should you be selected as the service provider.
4. Bids received shall be evaluated by the Purchaser. This evaluation will be based on, but not limited to, completeness of proposal, exceptions, price, and deliverable schedule.
5. Any exception to the provisions in the scope of work must be marked in the body of this document and itemized on a separate attached page(s) titled EXCEPTIONS.
6. Referenced by section number and paragraph, a detailed explanation of the exception shall be provided along with by the bidder's alternative proposal.
7. Bids not following this format shall be rejected without consideration. NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS REQUIREMENT.
8. The contractor shall indemnify and save the Purchaser harmless from any and all claims, liability, losses, and causes of actions which may arise out of the fulfillment of this agreement. The Bidder shall pay all claims and losses of any nature whatsoever in connection therewith, and shall defend all suits, in the name of the Purchaser when applicable, and shall pay all costs and judgments which may ensue thereafter.
9. Failure to deliver any part of the scope of work to the terms required may be considered by the purchaser as a breach of contract.
10. Bidder's proposal shall include an Executive Summary (limited to two (2) pages) and shall include a statement of: Firm's understanding of the scope of work to be accomplished; Firm's proposal to accomplish and perform the identified services; Description of Firm's strategic process on how they might best market the project; and, Description of the Firm's process and staffing capacity to serve the needs of JCC. Bidder's proposal shall include responses to all attachments and a signature page.

11. When submitting their Bid Proposal, bidders must return all pages of this scope of work as part of the Bid Proposal as it will form the contract between the contractor and the purchaser. Caution should be taken by the bidder that all questions are answered in the spaces provided and that all information requested is provided.

12. It is the bidder's responsibility to be familiar with all federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, codes, and regulations concerning the submission of this bid and the work it effects. Ignorance of said enactments shall not relieve the bidder of responsibility to comply or complete the bid work.

13. In the event a clarification is requested on the contents of this scope of work, the question shall be addressed to:

Michelle Gordon, Finance Director  
Jefferson County Commission  
124 E Washington St  
Charles Town, WV 25414  
304-724-8425  
304-728-5611 (fax)

14. When a bidder requests clarification, a copy of the request and this agency's reply will be forwarded to all bidders.

15. This purchaser is seeking quality public relations services.

16. By signing this document, the bidder agrees that this bid is made without any understanding, agreement, or connection with any other person, firm, or corporations making a bid for the same purpose, and that this bid is in all respects fair and without collusion or fraud.

17. It is the intent of this agency to enter into a contract with the successful bidder and to allow that contract to be extended for the duration of the project implementation.

**\*\*Is this section understood and agreed to? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Bidder's initials: \_\_\_\_\_**

## C. SCOPE OF WORK

The following provides a general overview of the specific work assignments JCC will expect the selected firm to complete. These should not be considered an exhaustive listing of services to be employed to meet the goal stated previously. JCC welcomes the bidder's recommendations to add strategies and tactics to this list that can further enhance JCC's ability to create awareness of this project. The bidder will need to complete a comprehensive action plan for how the PR agency would approach each category below. The budget page should itemize anticipated costs for fulfilling expectations.

The SOW includes **three** major components: Media Relations; Web and Interactive Media; and Reputation and Branding.

### 1. **Media Relations: The anticipated SOW will include:**

- a) Propose and implement a regional media-relations strategy that elevates exposure of the project to identified audiences via regional news and media organizations.
- b) Proactively identify opportunities for media coverage, both locally and regionally, and work to facilitate that coverage.
- c) Schedule media interviews for identified elected officials, staff, and supporters to promote the project.
- d) Develop relevant messaging that can take advantage of current opportunities and events.
- e) Propose and facilitate approved media events to promote the project and its benefits to stakeholders.
- f) Draft news releases, advisories and backgrounders (such as a project fact sheet, electronic presentations, direct mail, etc) to promote the project, staff and research behind the project, and generate placement of the same with regional and local news and media organizations.
- g) Track and respond to stories in the media that might benefit from a response from JCC.
- h) Monitor, poll and report on the effectiveness of press releases, story pitches and activities.
- i) Generate measurable increases in media coverage of the project and its impact on stakeholders.
- j) Create coordinated marketing campaigns (print, broadcast, digital, online, email, etc) to include a written plan addressing objectives, audience/market description, strategies, tactics, and budgets.

- k) Develop a concrete social media strategy using tools like Facebook Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

**Is this section understood and agreed to? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Bidder's initials: \_\_\_\_**

**2. Website Usage/Visitation**

- a) Evaluate and recommend enhancements to the JCC and related web pages associated with the project and promote those pages appropriately to relevant audiences.
- b) Assist JCC in optimizing relevant pages for search engine viability.
- c) Develop and implement in close cooperation with JCC a robust social media outreach targeting appropriate audiences on multiple social media platforms in a strategized communications flow that emphasizes engagement.

**Is this section understood and agreed to? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Bidder's initials: \_\_\_\_**



**3. Reputation and Branding**

Jefferson County is well known for its historic, character-rich communities, on-trend amenities, natural splendor, and hometown friendliness. General perception of the County is positive. However, its recent public announcement of the EMS system project remains relatively controversial among prospective stakeholders. The project is a deliberate strategy for moving the County onto an alternate EMS system that provides stakeholders with improved services while effectively managing cost during difficult economic times.

The selected bidder should include a thorough discussion of the ways in which the consultant can augment the County’s reputation and use the County’s brand to generate awareness of and preference for the project. Anticipated outcomes might include encouraging/facilitating stakeholder support of the project; pursuing partners for informational, in-person events to engage stakeholders and grassroots supporters; attendance at community events such as fairs, public education opportunities and other outlets; developing strategic alliances with major players identified as possessing areas of strength most closely associated with the project.

- a) Develop branding ideas, including slogans, to promote the project and to effectively and successfully raise awareness and connect with the target audiences.

**Is this section understood and agreed to? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Bidder’s initials: \_\_\_\_\_**

**D. LIABILITY INSURANCE**

1. Proof of current liability insurance shall be supplied. The proof of insurance shall bear the insurance carrier's name, address, and phone number. The proof shall also bear the name and address of the insured. This document shall contain the coverage schedule, explaining the type of insurance, the policy number, the effective date of coverage, the policy expiration date, and the individual limits. The minimum amount of coverage shall be as follows.

- 2. Commercial General Liability – Annual aggregate policy limit of two million dollars.
- 3. Combined Single Limits of one million dollars.

The following coverages shall be included:

4. Premises and Operations Bodily Injury and Property Damage
5. Personal and Advertising Injury
6. Blanket Contractual Liability
7. Products and Completed Operations Liability
8. Workers Compensation and Unemployment
9. The Jefferson County Commission and the Jefferson County Emergency Services Agency shall be named as an additional insured.
10. Bidders failing to submit proof of the above requirement cannot be accepted and their Bid Proposal will be rejected.

**Do you meet requirements of this section? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Bidder's initials: \_\_\_**

**E. STATE AND LOCAL LICENSES**

1. All bidders must have any and all current licenses required by state law to do business in the state in which this agency resides.

**Do you meet requirements of this section? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Bidder's initials: \_\_\_**

**II. ATTACHMENTS**

**A. REFERENCES**

Provide three (3) references that the firm has provided services to within the past three (3) years. The contact person named should be familiar with the day-to-day management of the contract and be willing to respond to questions regarding the type, level, and quality of service provided:

**Reference No. 1:**

Firm/Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference No. 2:**

Firm/Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference No. 3:**

Firm/Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**B. RFP CRITERIA**

**RFP Attachment C-1**

RFP ATTACHMENT C-1 (Limit to two pages, Active Client List excluded from page count)

BACKGROUND & QUALIFICATIONS Prepare and submit responses to the following items. Firm Facts – Please provide the following basic facts about your firm:

1. Identify your firm’s departments and specify whether the functions are performed in-house or outsourced. Also, include the number of full-time personnel and breakdown according to function.
2. Describe your firm’s unique point-of-difference within the following:
  - a. Position in the marketplace.
  - b. Strongest capabilities or service niches
3. Active client list (not included in page count).
4. Outline the process through which firm resources are drawn upon and coordinated to create integrated marketing, branding, and public relation campaigns.
5. List any third-party resources utilized to develop client reporting or measure engagement.
6. Identify any additional skills, experience, qualifications, and other relevant information about the firm’s qualifications.

Other – Please provide information regarding your firm’s accounting and billing procedures:

1. Describe your accounting and internal auditing procedures.
2. What is your firm’s billing policy regarding:
  - a. Frequency of client billing,
  - b. Account for proof of performance,
  - c. Billing cost per hour for various marketing services,
  - d. Billing time increments for less than one hour (e.g., 15 minutes, 30 minutes)?

### **RFP Attachment C-2**

RFP ATTACHMENT C-2 (Limit to two pages)

#### STRATEGIC PLANNING & EVALUATION

1. Describe your firm’s approach to strategic planning and the evaluation measures that are imposed during the process to ensure that the thinking generated, and the solutions presented, best serve the interests of the client.
2. Provide an explanation of how your firm measures/determines the effectiveness of advertising/marketing strategies and campaigns, including return on investment.

### **RFP Attachment C-3**

RFP ATTACHMENT C-3 (Limit to three pages)

#### RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

1. Describe 2-3 examples of your firm’s experience in marketing and branding/rebranding a community or project as an ideal market. For each listing, highlight your firm’s ability to generate relevant strategy and effective communications that speak to relevant audiences, particularly as it relates to your understanding of the “sweet spot” of various offerings in terms of target markets.
2. Provide samples of the following work completed by your firm. You may provide samples in electronic format (e.g. flash drive, cd, shared folder, website).
  - a. Rack cards
  - b. Trade print
  - c. Business welcome packets
  - d. Digital/Online advertising/Website
  - e. Video
  - f. Other

### **RFP Attachment C-4**

RFP ATTACHMENT C-4 (Limit to two pages)

#### CREATIVITY

1. Describe your creative process to include providing several examples of work that best exemplifies your firm’s branding skills.

- 2 Prepare examples of your firm's creative work that cover an integration of communication efforts across a spectrum of disciplines and consumer touch points. You may provide samples in electronic format (e.g. flash drive, cd, shared folder, website).

### **RFP Attachment C-5**

RFP ATTACHMENT C-5 (Limit to two pages)

#### MEDIA

- 1 Detail your firm's approach for identifying key or target markets/audiences and the process for determining and buying the appropriate media to reach those audiences.
- 2 Briefly outline your firm's overall media capabilities (traditional and non-traditional).
- 3 Describe your firm's historical success in value-added media and how your firm measures the effectiveness.

### **RFP Attachment C-6**

RFP ATTACHMENT C-6 (Limit to two pages)

#### PUBLIC RELATIONS

- 1 Describe your firm's in-house division to handle non-traditional programs, if any, including media and public relations (PR).
- 2 Provide a list of your firm's most current list receiving said services.
- 3 Outline a successful PR campaign your firm has implemented.
- 4 Describe your approach in utilizing PR to draw positive attention to the project.

### **RFP Attachment C-7**

RFP ATTACHMENT C-7 (Limit to three pages)

#### COST/PRICING

- 1 Pricing may be provided in the most suitable format and may be presented in either:
  - a. Monthly retainer breakdown
  - b. Hourly rates based on the work performed.
- 2 Pricing should include, but not limited to, the following categories:
  - a. Strategic Planning
  - b. Media Planning
  - c. Public Relations
  - d. Social Media
  - e. Content Creation
  - f. Creative Development
  - g. Digital Management
  - h. Production
  - i. Branding

- 3 The prices quoted should be inclusive.
- 4 If your pricing excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.
- 5 If the execution of work to be performed by your company requires the hiring of subcontractors, you must clearly state this in your proposal. Subcontractors must be identified and the work they will perform must be defined.

**RFP Attachment C-8**

RFP ATTACHMENT C-8

By submitting a proposal, whether electronically or by paper, the firm(s) represents that:

If awarded a contract in response to this RFP, the firm(s) will be able and willing to execute a contract in the form shown in the RFP, as attached and set out in RFP Scope of Work, with the understanding that the scope and compensation provisions will be negotiated and included in the final document.

If firm(s) is a corporation, firm(s) will be required to provide a certified copy of the resolution evidencing authority to enter into the contract, if other than an officer will be signing the contract.

If awarded a contract in response to this RFP, firm(s) will be able and willing to comply with the insurance requirements set out in RFP Section D.

If awarded a contract in response to this RFP, firm(s) will be able and willing to comply with all representations made by the firm(s) in the proposal and during the proposal process.

Firm(s) agrees to fully and truthfully submit the responses and understands that failure to fully disclose requested information may result in disqualification of proposal from consideration or termination of contract, once awarded.

(S)he is authorized to submit this proposal on behalf of the entity.

Firm Entity Name Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

(NOTE: if proposal is submitted by co-respondents, an authorized signature from a representative of each co-respondent is required).