

ELIZABETH CITY &
PASQUOTANK COUNTY REGION

Request for Proposal:

Wayfinding Plan, Sign Design, Sign Fabrication

Letter of Intent to Bid Due by 5:00pm EST on August 20, 2019

Proposals Due by 3:00pm EST on September 19, 2019

RFP OVERVIEW

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to obtain the services of a qualified firm with proven experience, resources and expertise to develop a wayfinding strategy and plan inclusive of sign design from concept to fabrication. The Elizabeth City region seeks a wayfinding master plan and to establish universal and cohesive design standards for locational signage that is locally unique, attractive, and evocative of the character of Elizabeth City to guide residents and visitors to key destinations throughout the region. It is the intent of this RFP to establish a contract with a single firm, however collaborations between multiple firms and/or individuals will also be considered as long as there is one clearly defined point of contact and responsible party.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Corrina Ferguson

Executive Director

Visit Elizabeth City

501 S Water Street

Elizabeth City, NC 27909

Corrina@VisitElizabethCity.com

****PLEASE DIRECT ANY AND ALL CORRESPONDENCE AND QUESTIONS IN WRITING TO CORRINA FERGUSON ONLY.****

DEADLINES

- Letter of Intent to Bid due by 5:00pm EST on August 20, 2019
- Questions regarding the proposal due by 5:00pm EST on August 20, 2019
- Responses to Questions posted for all participants by 5:00pm EST on August 27, 2019
- Proposals due by 3:00pm EST on September 19, 2019

OVERVIEW OF ELIZABETH CITY & PASQUOTANK COUNTY

Just 50 minutes from Norfolk, Virginia and 50 minutes from the Outer Banks, North Carolina Elizabeth City is the economic, educational, health care and cultural hub for 16 counties in northeastern North Carolina. The city has a unique geographic location on the banks of the picturesque Pasquotank River, which connects to Albemarle Sound and the Atlantic Ocean. Elizabeth City is steeped in history, charming and intriguing—giving both residents and visitors plenty to love about it.

A primary stop on the Intracoastal Waterway, Elizabeth City offers boaters a walkable downtown to visit, free 48-hours of docking and the Rose Buddies welcome reception – a hometown pride program that was started by two EC residents where visiting boaters are given roses and greeted with wine and cheese parties.

Known as the Harbor of Hospitality®, Elizabeth City is on the cusp of a revival. The United States Coast Guard calls the city home and the North Carolina Potato Festival is held here annually. The community features the most antebellum homes in the state as well as six National Register Historic Districts.

Major attractions / places in Elizabeth City & Pasquotank County:

The **Museum of the Albemarle** is part of the state’s suite of history museums and has exhibits that share the story of the founding of northeastern North Carolina. With a beautiful 7,000 square foot main gallery plus constantly changing exhibit and special events, the Museum of the Albemarle is a must-see attraction in Elizabeth City.

On the North Carolina-Virginia border and open year-round, **Dismal Swamp State Park** offers outdoor recreation opportunities like canoeing, hiking, kayaking and mountain biking. Bird watchers also flock to the park to get a glimpse of more than 200 species of birds.

The Lowry-Chesson Building was a hive for entertainment, arts, and culture at the turn of the 20th century during its era as the “Academy of Music” opera house. Now restored, it fills a similar role today as the **Arts of the Albemarle** including the second floor Maguire Theater, one of the few vaudeville theaters left in the state and the first-floor galleries are home to artwork from more than 220 local and regional artists.

Historic Downtown Elizabeth City welcomes residents and visitors alike with walkable shopping, dining and entertainment options all within a block of the harbor. Frequent events including First Friday Art Walks and Third Thursday Jazz plus regular live music at local restaurants and Ghost Harbor Brewery offer even more reasons to enjoy the downtown.

Elizabeth City’s **Waterfront** is the heart of the city, and home to events large and small throughout the year. Full of green space and free parking, and with views of the Pasquotank River, the waterfront provides opportunities for all to enjoy.

The region is home to **three institutions of higher education**: Elizabeth City State University, the College of The Albemarle and Mid-Atlantic Christian University, all within close walking distance of downtown.

One of the U.S. **Coast Guard's** busiest bases, **Support Center Elizabeth City** is home to five commands: Air Station Elizabeth City, Support Center, Aircraft Logistics Center, Aviation Technical Training Center and a small-boat station. The base is the Coast Guard's largest aviation facility and it is the largest employer in Northeastern North Carolina.

The **Elizabeth City Regional Airport** is full service, including competitive fuel prices, a mechanic on the field, 7200 foot runway and control tower. There are no commercial flights, but the airport is available for charter and private.

OBJECTIVE

Though some existing wayfinding signage can be found throughout the community, current signage was completed piece-meal over the years and developed by varying organizations.

The purpose of this RFP is to have the successful proponent complete a Wayfinding Strategy and Master Plan for an attractive system of signage and wayfinding elements that establishes unified design standards for a region-wide wayfinding program that can be implemented in phases over multiple years as budget becomes available.

The primary objective is to build on the existing signage infrastructure, existing programs such as the historic walking tours, and existing sign assessment by Kimley Horn to establish a functional system of community signage and wayfinding elements that embodies Elizabeth City's unique character and effectively directs people around the region.

We are seeking a comprehensive plan to include directional signage from main entry points to the region, and also commercial signs such as interstate signs, Foreign Trade Zone signs and more.

The approximate budget to fund the master plan development and phase one fabrication and installation is \$250,000. Anticipated phase one completion should be within six months of contract agreement.

Specific project goals include:

- Use the existing signage and reports to develop a wayfinding master plan that will allow people to comfortably navigate their way around the community
- Eliminating sign redundancy and reducing visual clutter created by unneeded signs
- Designing for a range of modes of transport including vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian
- Establishing an implementation plan with short, medium and long-term priorities
- Fabricating and installation of short term priority elements
- Planning for future growth

Your proposal will form an integral part of the contract.

SCOPE OF WORK

The successful proponent shall furnish all equipment, labor, materials, supplies, licensing, transportation, and other components necessary to provide a Wayfinding plan and signage as described that will meet the requirements of the region. The proposed scope of work is intended to be a general outline of the work we anticipate to be included in the process. It is not an all-inclusive description of the elements to be included in the plan or associated activities. The services should include but not be limited to:

- Prepare a final Wayfinding Strategy and Master Plan
 - Survey of existing wayfinding infrastructure
 - Analysis of traffic and pedestrian circulation patterns
 - Analysis of current and proposed redevelopment plans
 - Identify policies, criteria, and graphics for wayfinding
 - Consider wayfinding needs for all modes of travel including motorized vehicles, bicycle and pedestrians
 - Include plans to clearly identify public parking opportunities
 - Assess and recommend signage for approaching boat traffic
 - Identify ways that wayfinding can enhance and reflect the distinctive and historic character of the region's downtown
 - Anticipate the continued evolution of each area, traffic pattern changes, new destinations and increasing pedestrian and bicycle traffic
 - Identify short, medium and long-term priorities for new signage
- Recommend signage types and elements that should be added, replaced or consolidated.
 - As outlined, there are many different located around the region, but they may not be in the best location or there are gaps.
 - Create a process for the consolidation and reduction of current clutter of signage
 - Identify short, medium and long-term priorities areas for removal and replacement
 - If appropriate, include recommendations for digital aspects to the plan
- Recommend design standards for wayfinding elements that reflect the region's identity.
 - Currently there is no cohesive or unifying theme for the signs and elements distributed around the region
 - Develop aesthetic themes and branding for the wayfinding system
 - Present for review by the leadership team, three (3) schematic design concepts of wayfinding signs, identification signs, parking signage, and/or other wayfinding elements that could be constructed and installed
 - Prepare detailed sign designs including sign types, sizes, text, poles and hardware

- Facilitate all necessary compliance measures with local, state and federal codes
- Work with property owners and/or governmental agencies for site locations and encroachment agreements
- Provide full cost analysis of all-
 - Construction and manufacturing costs
 - Installation costs
 - Long term maintenance costs
- The wayfinding program should include, but not be limited to:
 - General information for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists
 - Consider necessary elements for boaters arriving via the waterways
 - Arts and culture destinations
 - Historical venues, landmarks and walking tours
 - Public parking
 - Visitor information and amenities
 - Popular destinations for visitors
 - Major institutions like educational, healthcare, military
 - Commercial business district and business clusters
- Sign Production
 - Prepare detailed specifications and drawings to include sign dimensions, letter heights, color schemes, materials and mounting details
 - Prepare sign location plans
 - Fabricate and install signs approved in the short-term priority plan
- Engagement
 - The leadership team will act as advisors to staff and consultants on development of the strategy. The team anticipates an initial meeting for an overview of the project and to gather information. This will include a tour of the region.
 - One engagement event is to be held to consult with the community to present an overview of the project, and receive input on items to include in the master plan and possibly receive input on short-term priorities

EXPECTED DELIVERABLES:

- A summary of the research and findings that led to the final recommendations of the plan.
- An electronic copy of the plan which includes specifics of each sign design including specifications for fabrication, dimensions, materials colors and installation requirements.
- A detailed location map that includes position and type of sign at each location.
- A recommended phase plan and signage policy for implementation.

PROPOSAL PACKAGE

Proposals must be clear and succinct. All proposals and attachments will become part of public record. Proposal content must in the following, in the following order:

- 1) Cover Letter
- 2) Bidder Certification form
- 3) Business Profile- location of main office and any branch offices, year established,
- 4) Brief summary of company background / history; firm's area of expertise; type of organization, number of employees and any other information that would be helpful in characterizing your business
- 5) Wayfinding experience. Provide digital copies of two example work products that most closely match the product desired in this RFP.
- 6) Project Team. Identify the names and qualifications of personnel in the firm who have worked on similar projects and would work on this one. Identify lead and support roles. Identify any partners or sub-contractors (if proposed) and describe their role in the project.
- 7) Scope of work. Provide a description of the process and products that would be delivered based on the SOW section of this RFP.
- 8) Timeline of Work
- 9) Total Cost (including a breakdown of services)
- 10) References. Include three references for similar projects, including current contact information.

Additional Questions

- i. What does your firm bring to the table that others do not?
- ii. How can your expertise and recommendations help us accomplish our objectives on a tight budget?

GEOGRAPHY

There are no geographic restrictions upon the location of service providers allowed to submit responses. All service providers however, must demonstrate their ability, recommended plan and commitment to serve the account, regardless of location. Any costs associated with travel to complete the project should be included in the cost proposal.

SELECTION PROCESS & CRITERIA

The proposal selection team will consist of leadership from regional economic development agencies (tourism, downtown, chamber, economic development) as well as representatives from the City and the County. The proposal will be evaluated on a matrix of criteria including but not limited to the firm’s and team qualifications and experience, the budget and value to the region, completeness of the proposal and creativity and innovation. During the evaluation process, the team reserves the right to request additional information or clarifications from those submitting proposals.

Based on the number of responses, a short-list may be selected for telephone or in-person interviews. The selection team may interview none, one or all firms who submitted proposals. Any costs associated with interviews shall be the responsibility of the respondent. The final selection decision rests with the selection team.

The selection team reserves the right to negotiate modifications to proposals that it deems acceptable, reject any and all proposals, and to waive minor irregularities in the procedures.

The contract will be awarded based on the following selection criteria:

| | |
|--|------------|
| Overall proposal: Unique proposal, experienced firm, and thoroughness of submittal | 25 |
| Previous performance with similar projects, including installation | 15 |
| Quality and experience of the personnel to be assigned to our project | 15 |
| Cost | 25 |
| Creativity, innovation and technical approach | 20 |
| TOTAL | 100 |

RESPONSE GUIDELINES

- Written proposals must be submitted on or before September 19, 2019 before 3:00 pm Eastern Standard Time for consideration. **Late proposals cannot be accepted.**
- Only complete submittals will be considered for evaluation.
- Supporting materials including USBs are welcome and should be referenced within the written presentation.
- Response must be dated and signed by principal of firm.
- Team must be available to present in-person, if required.

Please submit 7 printed copies of your proposal (including any USBs) to:

Corrina Ferguson, Executive Director
Visit Elizabeth City
501 S Water Street
Elizabeth City, NC 27909
252.335.5330

Please also submit one electronic version of your proposal via Dropbox or other file-sharing means to:

Corrina@VisitElizabethCity.com

BIDDER CERTIFICATION

(Bidder must sign and return with proposal)

I certify that this information is complete and correct to the best of my understanding and that I am authorized to submit this information on behalf of the company.

Authorized Signature

Date

Title

Print/Type Name

Print/Type Company Name