

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT

The Council of the City of New Orleans is soliciting proposals from communications professionals to provide advice and assistance to the Council and to its committees on more effective ways to get important information to the public. The consultant may provide assistance to individual Councilmembers on issues or projects as long as each individual councilmember is provided such assistance in a uniform and non-discriminatory manner. A contract for twelve months is anticipated; assuming mutual satisfaction, the contract may be renewed for additional periods.

I. Duties of communications consultant

The contractor selected will assist the Council in development and execution of a strategy for effective, timely communication with the public. At the direction and under the supervision of the Council's Chief of Staff, the contractor will provide services to the Council as a whole, to its Committees and to individual councilmembers. Duties are expected to include but not be limited to the following:

1) Develop strategy for consistent, informative communication from the Council to the public regarding issues coming before the Council and its committees and actions regarding such issues. The consultant must initiate ideas on when and how to inform the public.

2) Arrange for and coordinate media coverage of issues before the Council as a whole and its committees, including organizing press conferences and interviews and arranging appearances on appropriate media outlets.

3) Assist in development of educational materials, news stories, and briefing

documents on long term concerns, as well as current issues, to ensure the quality and consistency of information provided to the public. This will include writing technical information in easily readable and understandable form and issuing press releases prior to and following meetings.

4) Coordinate Council use of the government services access cable tv channel with the government services access provider.

5) Make recommendations to the Council on more effective and informative presentation of Council meetings on cable television.

6) Advise Councilmembers and Council staff on public notices and similar communications intended for the press and general public.

7) Maintain the Council=s web site and ensure that items of public interest are consistently posted in a timely manner.

II. Qualifications/experience

A Bachelor's Degree in Communications, Journalism, Public Administration, English, or Political Science is preferred.

A minimum of five years of professional experience in communications is required, including experience in the New Orleans area.

The proposal must include an indication that there will be sufficient depth of personnel that work load, absences or illness will not interfere with provision of services.

Joint ventures are eligible.

III. Contents of proposal

The Council will provide an allocation of up to \$95,000 for communications services

during the 12 month period. This is to include all fees and expenses of the consultant, including support staff. The proposal should include the following components:

1. A concise but detailed narrative indicating the proposed approach to providing the required services, including a description of the types and quantities of services which would be provided and a budget for a "typical" month showing estimated number of hours and hourly billing rate for each professional and an estimate of reimbursable costs, if any. Assume that the typical month includes two 6-hour Council meetings, four 3-hour committee meetings, and one press conference. The length of the narrative should not exceed two 8.5" x 11" typed pages, exclusive of the budget.

2. A completed "Consulting Services Questionnaire" using the format which is attached. Any subconsultants proposed to be used must also submit a completed Questionnaire which must be attached to the prime firm's questionnaire. If an association or joint venture is contemplated, the expertise of each individual firm should be clearly defined as well as the level of involvement of each individual firm and the proposed means of coordination between firms. A joint venture will be considered a "firm".

3. Not more than five samples of work done by the professionals who would be assigned to this contract, including printed public information materials and related work plan(s) for typical project(s). Not more than two of the samples may be prospective documents which the consultant would suggest to the Council, rather than work completed in the past.

4. This Request for Proposals states that "assuming mutual satisfaction, the contract may be renewed for additional periods". Please include as a section of the proposed budget the terms under which the consultant would be willing to renew for each of

two subsequent 12 month periods.

5. The consultant's proposed budget should assume that the printing and distribution of printed documents will be performed in the City's print shop; those costs need not be included.

Funds are not provided in the Council's budget for paid media except for the standard "public notice" type advertising which is placed and paid for by Council staff. Costs of paid media advertising should not be included in the consultant's proposed budget. In addition, those individuals/firms which are certified as disadvantaged business enterprises must submit proof of such certification.

IV. Evaluation criteria

1. Experience of the professional personnel in the New Orleans area, particularly with public officials/agencies or issues similar to those addressed by the City Council.

2. Quality of work samples presented.

3. Scope and appropriateness of services proposed; clear understanding by the applicant of work to be performed.

4. Capability of providing consistent, timely responses, as determined by the availability of "back up" staff if principals are unavailable and by information requested from references.

5. Involvement in the proposal at the professional level, within the firm, of minorities, women, and New Orleans domiciliaries and/or involvement of certified disadvantaged business enterprises.

6. Billing rate.

7. Work performed for political candidates, public officials, and/or public agencies, especially in Louisiana, since July 1, 2003.

V. Proposal process

A preproposal conference will be conducted by the Council staff committee on Wednesday, May 30, 2007, at 10:30 a.m. in Room 2W16, City Hall; all questions of potential proposers will be addressed at that time. **No other written or oral communications from potential applicants regarding this proposal shall be made to any Councilmember or Council staff person during this Request for Proposal process.**

Fifteen (15) copies of the final proposal, including samples of work products, must be submitted by 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 20, 2007 to the City Council Chief of Staff, Room 1E06 City Hall, 1300 Perdido St., New Orleans, La. 70112.

An evaluation committee composed of the Chief of Staff, the Research Officer, and the Utilities Regulatory Officer will review and evaluate the proposals, selecting up to five for referral to the Council Competitive Selection Committee. For each proposal selected for referral, the staff committee will contact one or more of the persons suggested as references.

The report of the evaluation committee will be provided to the Council's Competitive Selection Committee, comprised of three (3) Councilmembers and an alternate member. The Competitive Selection Committee may interview one or more of the respondents selected by the evaluation committee. The Council Committee may make a recommendation to the City Council. The contractor must be selected by Motion of the

Council. It is anticipated that the selection process will be completed during the summer, 2007.

VI. Additional information

The City of New Orleans is not liable for any costs incurred prior to entering into a formal written contract. Any costs incurred in the preparation of the proposal, interview, or other precontract activity are the responsibility of the proposer.

All proposals submitted become the property of the City and as such are public information.

The contractor will invoice the City Council on a monthly basis during the term of the contract.