



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FOR
CONSULTING SERVICES**

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN

**CITY OF LAKELAND
10001 U.S. HIGHWAY 70
LAKELAND, TN 38002**

July 2021

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN
CITY OF LAKELAND, TENNESSEE**

I. Purpose

The City of Lakeland requests proposals from qualified communication consultants to develop a strategic communications and engagement plan to help it achieve its strategic priorities, solidify support for its focused proactive approach, and reinforce its brand. The plan will use communications strategies for conveying relevant messages to key audiences across multiple platforms, and engagement activities that involve and inform key stakeholders. The communications and engagement plan is envisioned as a framework for the implementation of work by current City of Lakeland staff as well as identify the potential need of addition staff to address this strategic priority.

II. Organizational Background

The City of Lakeland, Tennessee was incorporated in 1977 and is located in the northeast corner of Shelby County in the southwest corner of the State of Tennessee. The City of Lakeland with a current population of approximately 13,000 residents, retains a focus on quality of life and a commitment toward preserving the environment. The City offers 124 acres of parks. Our largest park is home io a bustling senior center and a beautiful amphitheater, which hosts an annual outdoor concert and movie series. Lakeland protects its rolling hills and beautiful trees with strict design guidelines, a tree management ordinance, generous conservation easements, and sheltered scenic corridors. Some of the developments devote as much as 40% of their acreage to conservation areas, and integrated pathways allow residents to run, walk, and bike throughout the neighborhoods. Lakeland is proud to be certified by Tree City USA and is committed affiliate of Keep America Beautiful.

Lakeland School System

The Lakeland School System (LSS) is a point of pride in Lakeland. Many young families are drawn to Lakeland due to the high performance of the school system across the state. In 2015, LSS was named an Exemplary District, a designation given to only 12 of 142 school systems in the state of Tennessee. The same year, the state of Tennessee awarded Lakeland Elementary School as a Reward School, finishing in the top 5% of academic achievement. Our students' TCAP scores ranked #1 in Math #1 in Reading and Language Arts, and #2 in Science, making LSS the highest ranked school system in the state of Tennessee. This tradition continues to expand with the recent addition of Lakeland Middle Preparatory School and the construction of a new High School estimated to open for the 2022-2023 school year.

Community

In the 1980 US Census, the population of Lakeland was 612. This number has now grown to an estimated 13,000 and continues to grow due to the City's natural amenities and focus on quality as a way of life. Median household income in Lakeland is \$103,074. Of those 25 and older, 42.9% are college graduates. Over 88% of Lakeland residents are homeowners, with the median home value exceeding \$300,000 – a growth of 25% in the past 20 years.

Growth and Development

The City of Lakeland is growing, with numerous housing units added each year. In fiscal year 2021 and 2022, Lakeland expects the completion of seven residential developments, two mixed-use developments (in various phases of completion), four commercial developments, and Phase 1 of a City-owned athletic complex.

Vision Statements

The vision statements presented herein are those statements adopted by the City. This document serves as a road map for the City's leadership regarding the definition and achievement of a high quality of life for Lakeland's citizens. As many of the factors contained herein are subjective, elements and details of this vision are expected to evolve as the City evolves and are analyzed and evaluated annually as part of the Annual Budget process. The vision statements are meant to provide direction and priority for the ongoing development of operational and capital budgeting considerations, and ultimately action items, for the City of Lakeland's stakeholders.

Vision Statement 1: Create a positive business climate to encourage business development

Vision Statement 2: Create a positive residential environment to encourage residential development

Vision Statement 3: Provide an excellent quality of life for our citizens

Vision Statement 4: Plan and provide adequate infrastructure to accommodate and encourage business and residential growth

Vision Statement 5: Encourage a greater sense of community for Lakeland citizens and businesses

Priorities and Goals

In February 2021, the Board of Commissioners met in a strategic planning workshop that identified the Board's short- and long-term goals for the City of Lakeland. This strategic planning session resulted in the following five priorities:

1. Update Lakeland's land development regulations and comprehensive plan

2. Create and expand Parks and Recreation facilities and services
3. Focus upon economic development
4. Develop a communications strategy for consistent and timely distribution of information to citizens
5. Focus upon infrastructure improvements, including roads and wastewater systems

Priority 1 – Land Development Regulations and Comprehensive Plan

Goal

- Updated comprehensive plan and land development regulations to clarify and facilitate smart growth

Strategy and Implementation

- Identify a local oversight team to review and select qualified consultant(s) to perform review and update of the land development regulations and comprehensive plan
- Appropriate funds in the Annual Budget for fiscal years 2022 and 2023 for related consultant expenditures

Priority 2 – Parks and Recreation Facilities and Services

Goals

- Complete the Memphis-Arlington recreation complex phase 1
- Update City-wide parks and recreation master plan

Strategy and Implementation

- Empower Parks and Recreation Board to complete and update a five-year capital improvement projects plan
- Appropriate funds in the Annual Budget for fiscal year 2022 for the completion of phase 1
- Include estimated expenditures for five-year capital improvement projects plan related to parks and recreation in the long-term financial plan of the General Fund
- Appropriate funds for the City-wide Parks and Recreation master plan

Priority 3 – Economic Development

Goals

- Increase retail and commercial development in the City of Lakeland
- Improve marketing and branding of the City of Lakeland as a sought-after municipality for potential retail and commercial development

Strategy and Implementation

- Continue to partner and collaborate with the Lakeland Chamber of Commerce
- .. Partner with established development brokers to effectively market the City to potential investors
- Review and update the Economic Development Commission marketing plan
- Research existing and potential data-driven metrics for use in the overall marketing plan

Priority 4 – Communications Strategy

Goal

- Provide consistent and timely information to residents and businesses

Strategy and Implementation

- .. Update our existing communications channels in conjunction with a communications and marketing consultant
- Appropriate funds in the Annual Budget for fiscal year 2022 for the consultant referenced above
- Utilize the Community Advisory Board to further the communications strategy of the City

Priority 5 – Infrastructure Improvements

Goals

- Protect scenic corridors within the City of Lakeland
- Improve transportation and the quality of roadways within Lakeland
- Invest in continued sewer improvements to further sustain and promote economic growth

Strategy and Implementation

- Undertake transportation plan update and appropriate funds in the Annual Budget for fiscal year 2022 to cover related project expenditures
- Ensure appropriate sewer plant staffing related to the acquisition of additional sewer assets in fiscal year 2021
- Appropriate additional paving and related costs in the Street Aid fund for fiscal year 2022
- Continue to fund the design and initial construction costs of the New Canada Road capital project

III. Scope of Services

Research

The consultant will need to fully understand the challenges and opportunities the City of Lakeland faces in pursuing its strategic priorities. This work will include the following:

- Review City of Lakeland guiding documents
- Assess City of Lakeland current perceptions and needs
- External audiences (Board of Commissioners, Board and Commission members, developers)
- Internal audiences (City staff)

Planning

After initial research, the consultant will spend time with the City Manager and staff to build the plan. The plan will be presented for approval to the Lakeland Board of Commissioners.

The planning process will result in a strategic communications and engagement plan that includes goals, measurable objectives, strategies and tactics, key messages, a timeline, evaluation methods and estimated staff and financial resources for implementation.

IV. Proposal Requirements

The proposal should demonstrate that the Consultant understands the intent and scope of the project, the character of the deliverables, the services required for their delivery and the specific tasks that must be performed in the course of supplying these services. In addition, consultant qualifications necessary to successfully complete this project should be demonstrated. Proposals should be less than 20 pages. In order to assist in the evaluation process, please include the following information in the proposal:

1. Introduction

Proposal shall include basic information relative to the firm.

2. Qualifications and Experience

Proposal shall detail the Consultant's experience relating specifically to strategic communications and past projects that are similar in scope. This listing shall include a description of the work, project budget, and the approximate date the work was completed.

3. Qualifications and Experience of Key Staff

Proposal shall identify key individuals assigned to this contract and include the function and/or responsibility of each of the identified individuals. Experience summaries of the key individuals must be provided, with emphasis on previous experience on similar projects in similar roles. Resumes of these key individuals should be included as an appendix to the proposal.

4. Proposed Scope of Work

- Recommended approach for developing the plan, including methodology of coordinating with internal and external audiences.
- Cost/fee structure

V. Consultant Selection Procedure

1. Project understanding
2. Knowledge of proposal requirements
3. Responsiveness to project description
4. Quality and availability of staff assigned to the project
5. Specific experience of the proposed staff
6. Overall experience of the firm
7. Performance on similar projects

Selection of the consultants may be based solely on the submittal of the proposal. If the committee wishes to conduct interviews, City staff will contact each firm to set up a date for the interview. The interview process will allow the firms to better educate city staff about their experience and qualifications. Interviews will be limited to 30 minutes. The Consultants deemed most qualified to provide the required services will be selected and the contracts will be presented to the Board of Commissioners for their approval of the contract.

The City of Lakeland reserves the right to seek clarification of any proposal submitted and to select the proposals considered to best promote the public interest of Lakeland.

All proposals become the property of the City of Lakeland upon submission. The cost of preparing, submitting and presenting a proposal is the sole expense of the Consultant. Lakeland reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received as a result of this solicitation, to negotiate with any qualified source, to waive any formality and any technicalities or to cancel the RFP in part or in its entirety if it is in the best interest of City of Lakeland. This solicitation of proposals in no way obligates Lakeland to award a contract.

The City of Lakeland will not discriminate against any individual for any reason and will provide services to all citizens and contractors, both potential and current, in a nondiscriminatory fashion. It is the intent of the city to fully comply with the provision of Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The City is committed to a moral, ethical, and legal responsibility to ensure equitable employment practices and the

delivery of city services regardless of an individual's race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, gender or political affiliation. Interested certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) firms as well as other minority-owned and women-owned firms are encouraged to respond to all advertisements.

VI. Proposal Submittal

All consultants who wish to be considered for construction engineering and inspection services shall submit a proposal by **Friday July 30, 2021 at 2:00pm** to:

Lakeland City Hall
10001 U.S. Highway 70
Lakeland, TN 38002
Attn: Shane Horn, City Manager

Proposals shall be presented in a sealed envelope and clearly marked "Proposal for Consulting Services – Communications and Engagement Plan". Include three (3) copies of the proposal.

If any of the above requirements are not met, the proposal may not be considered. Proposals received after the deadline will not be accepted. Faxed or emailed proposals will not be accepted.

Questions regarding the RFP should be directed to:

Shane Horn
City Manager
(901) 867-5405
shorn@lakelandtn.org