VILLAGE OF
McFarland

# Request For Proposals

## *Communications & Engagement Plan*

RFP Issuance Date: December 15, 2022

RFP Due Date: January 6, 2023

*Please Submit to:*

Village of McFarland – Communications RFP
Attn: Communications and Technology Director
5915 Milwaukee Street, PO Box 110
McFarland, WI 53558

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## SECTION 1 Purpose

A. **Executive Summary** – The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to receive competitive proposals from qualified Consultants who are interested in assisting the Village in planning for and preparing a Communications and Engagement Plan (herein after "Plan"). The Village government is comprised of seven Village Board members, (one President and six-trustees), all elected at large, and staggered two-year terms. Village Staff is led by a full-time Administrator that reports directly to the Village Board and oversees the day-to-day operations of its many Departments and Employees. Through its Communications and Technology Department the Village provides engagement through its cable channel, online streaming, social media (Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube), website, print/digital newsletter, digital message boards, and other mailers/flyers. The Village wishes to review its communications tools in order to enhance engagement and create improved identifies for these platforms.

B. **General Purpose** – The purpose of the Request for Proposal is to obtain proposals from qualified consultants to assist the Village in preparing this Plan. The Village shall review proposals to identify the proposal most advantageous to the Village. We are looking for a qualified provider to provide consultation, and support on the items contained within the scope of work.

## SECTION 2 History and Background

A. **General** – The Village is located adjacent to the southeast side of the City of Madison in Dane County. The current population of McFarland is estimated at 9,331 residents. The Village is serviced by US Highway 51 serving as the main connection point between the cities of Madison and Stoughton. The Village's primary departments include Administration, Community and Economic Development, Communications and Technology, Fire and Rescue, Library, Public Works (including Parks and Utilities), Police, and Senior Outreach Services. More information about the Village is available at www.mcfarland.wi.us.

## SECTION 3 Plan Objectives

The work of the Consultant will meet the following objectives in order to partner with the Village to plan for communications and engagement:

i. Creative solutions to enhance engagement with citizenry.

ii. Cost effective and realistic platforms tailored to local government.

iii. Interconnected communications between the public, elected officials, and staff.

iv. Meeting the community's expectations for communication from a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable standpoint.

v. Consideration for past planning, goals, and objectives as it relates to message conveyance.

## SECTION 4 Scope of Work

A. The selected Consultant will be able to provide communication and media relations consulting services to assist the Village in developing the Plan. The desired services and work include but are not specifically limited to the following:

1. Analyze the Village's existing public communication platforms and tools. Identify and recommend opportunities for improvement and propose metrics for measuring success.

2. Evaluate leadership communications structure and make recommendations to improve hierarchy to disseminate information.

3. Review existing Communications Plan, Comprehensive Plan, Strategic Plan, past surveys/research, and/or other related documents as background on the Village.

4. Recommend technologies, solutions, and services to keep the Village in line with best practices of comparable communities.

5. Develop a Plan for the Village that will increase community outreach and engagement that includes our ability to establish metrics for measuring success.

6. Plan would account for communications support for:

    i. Emergency/Crisis – e.g., Police or health/safety emergency, pandemic measures.

    ii. Special Event – e.g., ribbon cutting.

    iii. Project – e.g., Economic Development Plan.

7. Provide recommendations on staffing resources and structure to support the Plan.

8. Identify and create a mission statement to align with the Department and Village.

9. Conduct an environmental scan of community-based social media pages and local news outlets that are commonly used to share Village information. Including by not limited to “McFarland Community” Facebook page, “McFarland Moms and Dads” Facebook page, and McFarland Thistle newspaper.

10. Review and provide recommendations regarding the Village's relationship with the School District of McFarland as it relates to Village communication and engagement efforts. Outline opportunities where the Village can partner with the School District to support and advance this Plan.

11. Develop Plan in line with best practices for creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive platform for communications and engagement.

## SECTION 5 Deliverables

A. In carrying out the Scope of Work detailed within Section 4, the Communications & Media Relationship Consultant must prepare or provide to the Village various Deliverables. "Deliverables" are work products including but not limited to written reviews, recommendations, reports, analysis, and any other task needed by the Provider to fulfill Section 4 of this RFP for the Village. The provider is also responsible for ensuring that work products delivered are successfully completed to the sole satisfaction of the Village. Provider will further agree they have the capabilities to fulfill these deliverables and demonstrate their ability to provide for the Scope of Services.

B. **Public Input**. The Consultant will be responsible for developing a plan to gather public input on current and planning communications and engagement efforts. This work will help to support the Scope of Work and shape the framework of the Plan to be developed. The Consultant will prepare a Public Input Plan for this project subject to approval of the Village Board. The Public Input Plan may include but is not limited to surveys, focus groups, and/or other platforms as recommended by the Consultant. Feedback gathered should target access or lack thereof as well as quality and quantity of communications provided.

C. **Interviews**. Consultant will conduct at least one interview with each Village Board member and Department Head on an individual basis to gather input to gather input on current and past communications and engagement efforts. Consultant shall develop questions consistent for all interviews and submit to the Village for approval prior to utilization.

## SECTION 6 RFP Submittal Requirements

A. Qualification Details consisting of:

i. **Cover Letter** – Including, but not limited to a statement of understanding and approach to this project.

ii. **Experience** – A summary of three to five similar or relevant projects that the applicant has executed within the last ten years. Electronic links to full copies of similar or relevant plans are encouraged. Hard copies of similar or relevant plans are not desired and can be provided electronically.

iii. **References** – Provide three municipal client references for which the applicant has provided similar services within the last ten years, and which assigned staff member(s) they worked with. Include the name, email, and telephone number of the contact person and a description of services provided to that contact.

B. Technical Proposal consisting of:

i. **Scope of Work** – A description of the approach to be taken toward completion of each item listed under Section 4 of this RFP, including any draft and final deliverables. An explanation of any variances to the proposed Scope of Work as outlined in the RFP, and any insights into the project gained as a result of developing the proposal or from past project experiences.

C. Project Management Plan Proposal consisting of:

i. **Key Personnel** – A list or organizational chart of personnel directly assigned to the project, along with responsibilities on this project and resumes. Clearly illustrate the responsibilities and lines of communication and authority relative to your project management team. Describe your plan to interface with the Village. The Village reserves the right to approve Consultant's project manager, any requested personnel, and/or subcontractor changes during contract.

ii. **Quality Control** – Describe quality control measures and processes to ensure the Services rendered are acceptable.

iii. **180 Day Onboarding plan** – Provide overview of the plan/roadmap for onboarding your firm's services into day-to-day operations of the Village. Please include an overview of your change management and communication processes and plan for the transition.

iv. **Supplemental Information** – Any other information deemed necessary to address the requests of this RFP.

D. Cost and Labor Hours Proposal consisting of:

i. **Cost** – Outline any/all fixed costs and hourly rates your firm would propose for specific services outlined in the Scope of Services above. Proposal should differentiate from one-time expenditures to review and create plans versus possible ongoing obligations.

ii. **Estimated Labor Hours** – A summary of estimated labor hours by task, or phase, that clearly identifies the project team members, their hourly rate, and the number of hours performed by each participant organized by task or phase.

iii. **Additional Scope/Fees** – Total fee, hours per employee, and hourly rates by employees, for any additional services not identified as included in the Consultant's base Scope of Work.

E. General requirements consisting of:

i. **Due Date** – *Responses to the RFP must be received by 4:30 PM CST on Friday, January 6, 2023*. Proposals received late, for any reason, shall not be accepted.

ii. **Format & Location** – Prospective consultants shall provide one (1) electronic PDF copy. RFP submittals shall be emailed to Communications and Technology Director at stephanie.miller@mcfarland.wi.us, subject: Communications RFP. Alternatively, consultants may submit an electronic PDF copy via a USB flash drive to the Village of McFarland-Communications RFP, Attn: Communications and Technology Director, 5915 Milwaukee Street, PO Box 110, McFarland, WI 53558.

## SECTION 7 Evaluation Criteria

A. The following criteria will be used to evaluate each proposal submitted:

i. **Key Personnel (15 points)** – Experience and qualifications relevant to key personnel and their associated project roles and estimated labor hours.

ii. **Project Experience (15 points)** – Level of experience completing similar work with local government entities of similar size, structure, and complexity.

iii. **Scope of Work (25 points)** – Level of responsiveness and technical approaches to the scope of work outlined within the RFP. Demonstration of knowledge and innovative approaches particular to the desired Scope of Work and Plan Objectives.

iv. **Cost Effectiveness (25 points)** – Ability to meet budget/value as related to proposed and additional costs. Hourly rates of key personnel. Estimated total labor hours.

v. **Project Schedule (10 points)** – Ability to be responsive in meeting schedule required to complete the plan and deliverables. Quality, clarity and creativity of proposed planning process and public engagement.

vi. **Quality of Submittal (10 points)** – Quality, clarity and completeness of submittal package, including identification of draft and final deliverables. Consultants shall not submit verbatim sections of this RFP as their proposal.

## SECTION 8 Method & Timeline of Selection

A. The Village Administrator, Deputy Administrator/Clerk, and Communications/Technology Director will conduct the evaluation of proposals submitted. This will comprise the RFP Evaluation Team. They will make a recommendation to the Village Board for action. The following method and timeline will be utilized in order to select the desired proposal:

i. **December 15, 2022** – RFP Issuance Date.

ii. **January 6, 2023** – RFP Due Date.

iii. **January 9-13, 2023** – During this week, the Evaluation Team will review the proposals and decide which, in its sole discretion, it chooses to further consider via an in-person or virtual interview.

iv. **January 16-19, 2023** – During this week, the Evaluation Team may host interviews of perspective consultants in order to make a selection. Please identify in your proposal if there are any dates to avoid scheduling an interview should your proposal be selected for further consideration.

v. **January 19, 2023** – The Evaluation Team will make its recommendation to the Village Board for their consideration to award a proposal.

vi. **January 24, 2023** – The Village Board will take final action to consider acceptance of the recommended proposal and entera contract for this purpose.

vii. **March 1, 2023** – Estimated anticipated start date for proposed work..

## SECTION 9 Terms and Conditions

Each proposal will be reviewed to determine if it meets the submittal requirements contained within this RFP. Failure to meet the requirements for the RFP can be cause for rejection of the proposal. The Village may reject any proposal if it is conditional, incomplete, contains irregularities, or if in the sole discretion of the Village not considered in our best interest. The Village may waive an immaterial deviation in a proposal, but this shall in no way modify the proposal document or excuse the Consultant from compliance with the contract requirements if the Consultant is awarded a contract. A prospective Consultant may be requested for an interview at the sole discretion of the Village. The recommended Consultant will be selected and approved by the Village Board.

The Village uses a standard template contract (Exhibit A) for such services and will require its utilization for this project. A copy of the standard template can be provided for review upon request and will be updated to adapt to the proposal ultimately selected.

There is no expressed or implied obligation for the Village to reimburse firms for any expenses incurred in preparing proposals in response to this request. Materials submitted by respondents are subject to public inspection under Wisconsin law. Any language purporting to render the entire proposal confidential or proprietary will be ineffective and will be disregarded.

The Village will not discriminate against individuals due to sex, race, religion, creed, color, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, ancestry, marital status, arrest or conviction record, military service, or any other characteristics protected by law. This applies to all Consultants submitting proposals to this project and their sub-consultants.

The Village reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted, and to use any idea in a proposal, regardless of whether the proposal was selected. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the firm of the conditions contained in the RFP, unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between the Village and the Consultant.

All property rights, including publication rights of all reports produced by the selected firm in connection with services performed under this agreement shall be vested in the Village.

The Village reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted.

## SECTION 10 RFP Exhibits

Exhibit A: Standard Contract Template