



**(RFP) REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR
CITY OF MONROE, WASHINGTON
BRANDING, POSITIONING, AND DESTINATION MARKETING**

Proposals must be received no later than:

May 27, 2022 at 3:30pm

Deliver proposals to Monroe City Clerk:
Jodi Wycoff, City Clerk
jwycoff@monroewa.gov

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
2.	NEEDS STATEMENT.....	2
3.	REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP).....	2
4.	TIMELINE/DUE DATES.....	2
5.	INQUIRIES.....	2
6.	SUBMITTING PROPOSALS.....	3
7.	INFORMATION REQUIRED WITH PROPOSAL.....	3
8.	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES.....	3
9.	AWARD OF CONTRACT.....	5
10.	EVALUATION CRITERIA.....	5
11.	REJECTION OF PROPOSALS.....	5
12.	PROJECT DELIVERABLES.....	5
13.	COST OF PROPOSAL.....	6
14.	DISCLOSURES & RESERVATIONS.....	6

Exhibits:

Exhibit A – City of Monroe Professional Services Agreement – EXAMPLE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) CITY BRANDING, POSITIONING, AND DESTINATION MARKETING

1. INTRODUCTION

The City of Monroe, Washington is soliciting proposals for Branding, Positioning, and Destination Marketing services. This effort will utilize extensive community engagement to develop a comprehensive brand update for the City. This new brand will represent the City's unique strengths, assets, and vision statement; be transferrable across City departments, operations, and economic development efforts; and be effective in multiple media applications.

The City of Monroe is seeking a consultant, firm, or partnership, to work collaboratively with the City, its residents, and its business community, to pinpoint the community's most identifiable attributes, and to develop an effective, professional brand to give the City a stronger, viable, and relatable image and unified message.

Branding is more than just the logo; it touches every aspect of the City's visual representation and the ways in which the City describes itself. Inconsistent use of the existing logo, including misuse of design elements such as color palette, not only weaken the City's brand identity, but it can also create doubt around official documents and City representatives. Presently, there are numerous pre-existing graphic and textual representations of the City of Monroe in official use that incorporate inconsistent design elements.

The City's current brand, including its logo and slogan, "The Adventure Starts Here", was adopted in 2007 following a branding effort focused on developing Monroe as an adventure sports destination. The logo and tag line do not resonate with residents.

A clear, consistent brand should support the City's strategic priorities and vision statement, entitled *Imagine Monroe*. *Imagine Monroe* was developed through extensive community engagement and adopted by the City Council in December 2022. *Imagine Monroe* is an aspirational vision statement that describes the community our residents desire today and in the future. The City will use *Imagine Monroe* to guide all City operational decisions, such as budget prioritization, strategic planning, and comprehensive planning.

BACKGROUND

The City of Monroe is a community of approximately 19,800 residents. Located at the confluence of three major highways (US-2, and State Routes 203 and 522), Monroe is uniquely situated as the economic hub of commerce for the more than 90,000 people residing in the Skykomish Valley, between the City of Snohomish and Stevens Pass.

In developing the *Imagine Monroe* vision statement, the City conducted a community survey which received more than 1,000 responses. Asked what makes Monroe special, respondents identified the following key attributes:

- Small town feel (size, character, quiet, safety/security)
- Caring, accepting, close knit, neighborly, supportive community
- Family-friendly environment
- Beautiful location/scenic
- Access to nature (river, forests, parks, designated wilderness areas)

- Rural living with urban conveniences
- Diversity of people/anti-racism
- Activities & amenities (retail, dining, fairgrounds, parks, recreation, community gathering spaces)
- Affordability
- History/family legacy
- Opportunity for growth and change
- Environmental stewardship, conservation, sustainable and green community

As described above, the City’s current brand does not resonate with residents due to a highly visitor-centric nature. However, the importance of visitation cannot be overlooked. Retail, hospitality, and tourism are critical to the vitality of Monroe, Snohomish County, and Washington State, bringing billions of dollars into the local economy and employing tens of thousands of workers. Monroe’s new brand should acknowledge, incorporate, and strike a balance between the local features identified in the *Imagine Monroe* survey and the importance of tourism to Monroe’s economic vitality; it should identify and promote what makes the City of Monroe distinct and appealing in a competitive market for investors, businesses, retailers, residents, and visitors.

2. NEEDS STATEMENT

As the City seeks to fully implement *Imagine Monroe* and further develop a corresponding mission statement, we need a new logo and overall branding that is reflective of the core values of the community. Monroe’s current logo and slogan are very visitor-centric and do not resonate with residents.

Community identity and pride are important aspects to the community. Our updated brand should be reflective of the core values and key themes identified in the *Imagine Monroe* survey, as well as other strengths and assets identified through community engagement, and be a point of pride for the residents of Monroe.

3. REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

The City of Monroe is accepting proposals from qualified consultants, firms, or partnerships to render professional services to the City to provide branding, positioning, and a plan for destination marketing. The goal of this work is to develop a brand that will represent the City’s unique strengths, assets, and vision statement; be transferrable across City departments, operations, and economic development efforts; and be effective in multiple media applications.

4. TIMELINE/DUE DATES

RFP Release Date: April 29, 2022

Consultant Proposal Due to City: May 27, 2022 at 3:30 p.m.

Interviews/presentations as needed: June 2022

Selection/Notice of Award: June 17, 2022

5. INQUIRIES

Questions regarding this RFP are to be submitted to Rich Huebner, Management Analyst, with “Monroe Branding” in the subject line, at RHuebner@MonroeWA.gov. Questions regarding this RFP will be accepted by email only.

6. SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

An electronic copy of the proposal shall be submitted by email to Jodi Wycoff, City Clerk, with “Monroe Branding” in the subject line at JWycoff@MonroeWA.gov.

All proposals must be received on or before 3:30 p.m., May 6, 2022. Proposals received after the due date may be rejected. The proposal offer acknowledges the right of the City to accept or reject any or all proposals and to waive any informality in any proposal received.

7. INFORMATION REQUIRED WITH PROPOSAL

Proposals must include:

1. Introduction of respondent, summarizing the consultant, firm, or partnership’s background, resources, and relevant experience
2. Examples of past projects, preferably of a similar size and scope
3. References from at least three (3) past projects, preferably matching those projects used as examples in #2 above
4. Proposed budget for the project; budget shall include a suggested work plan and a breakdown of fees for professional services, hours, and administrative services
5. Proposed schedule for the project, including project stages, milestones, and payments
6. A list of personnel on the project team and any possible sub-consultants and sub-contractors, their professional experience/CV, and their roles
7. Identify the Project Leader as the main point of contact: name, title, phone, and email address must be included
8. The proposal must be submitted as an electronic copy by email to the City Clerk; each page shall be numbered and have the name of the respondent (consultant, firm, or partnership) on it
9. Consultants and/or sub-consultants who have bilingual and cultural competency may be given preference

8. DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

The qualified Consultant will be responsible for the coordination of a fully completed brand and position development, including a recommended plan for destination marketing. This work is to include project management, research, strategic planning, brand creative development, and an implementation plan:

1. **Project Coordination and Management** – The consultant will lead all aspects of the City’s branding, positioning, and destination marketing initiative, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. Coordination with City staff regarding schedule, deliverables, and scope of work
 - b. Facilitating one or more community meetings/focus groups with City staff, business partners, and residents to determine existing attitudes, perceptions, strengths, and assets
2. **Research** – the basis for development of a brand concept, creative elements, messaging/positioning, and the overall brand initiative.
 - a. Create and implement a brand research plan
 - b. Utilize qualitative and quantitative research and community engagement to identify the key elements of Monroe
 - c. Analyze competitor branding/marketing strategies
 - d. Identify measures that can be used to determine if the branding effort is successful

3. **Destination Marketing Plan**
 - a. Develop a destination marketing plan, including specific strategies for travel, tourism, and hospitality marketing
4. **Strategic Plan** – Develop strategic objectives that will help better inform the City of Monroe on implementation, management, and ongoing promotion of the brand, including but not limited to:
 - a. Promotion of the use of the brand among City departments
 - b. Maintenance and consistency of the brand image and messaging, while providing suitable flexibility for the target audiences
 - c. Recommendations of ways to articulate the brand; define markets and promotional avenues; and advise on strategies to better promote and create brand awareness
5. **Brand Values** – *Imagine Monroe* will help guide all City operational decisions, such as budget prioritization, strategic planning, and comprehensive planning.
 - a. Develop a brand values statement that translates *Imagine Monroe* into the new brand
6. **Brand Implementation** – Develop creative elements that include slogan/tagline, logo, typeface, voice/tone, market positioning, personality, and other deliverables to support overall brand initiative. A minimum of three distinct options must be delivered; the final option, as selected by the City, to be delivered with a style manual and guidelines for use in the following:
 - a. Print and electronic advertising
 - b. Website
 - c. Media placement (TV/radio/outdoor/digital)
 - d. Public relations
 - e. Events
 - f. Collateral (letterhead, business cards, memos, etc.)
 - g. Signage (building, street, welcome, vehicles, etc.)
7. **Presentations**
 - a. Boards and Commissions – Up to four (4) reports to City Boards and Commissions
 - b. Community Groups – Up to two (2) reports to community/focus groups
 - c. City Council – A brief report of the brand and the development process to the City Council upon completion; consultant shall be prepared to answer questions and provide clarification.
8. **Goals/Objectives** – The primary goals/objectives to be achieved by the brand development include but are not limited to:
 - a. Consistency – the brand should convey a consistent message and image to the audiences both within and outside the City of Monroe, and be a defined message that reflects community values and will market Monroe locally, statewide, nationally and internationally
 - b. Community Identity/Pride – the current brand is visitor-centric and does not resonate with Monroe residents; the new brand should identify and promote what makes the City of Monroe distinct and appealing in a competitive market for investors, businesses, retailers, visitors, and residents.
 - c. Community and Economic Development – the new brand should promote a healthy economy, and support the City with tourism promotion, and business recruitment, retention, and expansion.
 - d. Flexibility – the brand must be flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of a variety of departments and municipal functions, as well as groups and business within the City.
 - e. Endorsement – The brand must be authentic and original, and resonate with residents and community members.

9. **Ongoing Services** – An estimate for ongoing/on-call services to support implementation should be a part of the response, and it will be at the City’s discretion whether to include in the final contract.

9. PROJECT DELIVERABLES

1. An executive summary report with findings
2. A detailed report, separated sections and addressing items in Section 8, Description of Services (above)
3. Focus group(s) and other community meetings as mutually deemed necessary
4. A minimum of three distinct options, and a style manual and guidelines for the final option, as selected by the City
5. Presentation(s) to the Mayor, Monroe City Council, and City Boards/Commissions/Committees

10. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals received shall be judged by the City solely on the following selection criteria:

1. Respondent’s understanding of brand development, the Monroe community, and the scope of this project (20%)
2. Respondent’s demonstrated experience with similar projects (20%)
3. Skill and experience of Project Leader and Project Team (20%)
4. Proposed price of the entire project (15%)
5. Expected timeline for completing the project (15%)
6. Previous project references (10%)

11. AWARD OF CONTRACT

Award of the contract resulting from this RFP will be based upon the most responsive respondent whose offer will be the most advantageous to the City in terms of cost, functionality, experience, quality of past work, and other factors as specified elsewhere in this RFP.

The City reserves the right to:

1. Consider proposals based on their relative merit, risk, and value to the City
2. Negotiate with all respondents
3. Reject any or all offers and discontinue this RFP process without obligation or liability to any respondent, when it is in the City’s best interest
4. Accept other than the lowest priced submission

Consultants and/or sub-consultants who have bilingual and cultural competency may be given preference.

Proposals will be evaluated upon the respondent’s responsiveness to the RFP and the total price quoted for all items covered by the RFP. The successful respondent may be asked to participate in negotiations and may be asked to revise their proposal based on such negotiations. In submitting a proposal, each respondent acknowledges that they have read and understand these requirements. Competitive proposals will be considered and will result in a fixed price contract.

12. REJECTION OF PROPOSALS

The City reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals, and to waive any minor discrepancies

or technicalities in the proposal or specifications, which are required to complete this project, or when deemed to be in the best interest of the City of Monroe.

13. COST OF PROPOSAL

The respondent shall bear all costs associated with the proposal meeting(s), interview(s), preparation and submission of the bid. The City of Monroe shall in no case be responsible or liable for those costs, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the solicitation.

14. DISCLOSURES & RESERVATIONS

1. It is the obligation and responsibility of the respondent to learn of addenda, responses, or notices issued by the City. Some third-party services independently post City solicitations on their websites. The City does not guarantee that such services have accurately provided all the information published by the City.
2. All submittals sent to the City may be considered compliant with or without specific confirmation from the Consultant that any and all addenda was received and incorporated into your response. However, the City reserves the right to reject any submittal that does not fully incorporate Addenda that is critical to the project.
3. The City reserves the right to select the proposal which, in its sole judgment, best meets the needs of the City. The lowest proposed cost will not be the sole criterion for recommending the contract award. The recommended selection of the evaluation committee is final and subject only to review and final approval by the Mayor and the City Council.
4. The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive technicalities and informalities when such waiver is determined by the City to be in the City's best interest.
5. The City reserves the right to retain all accepted proposals, including proprietary documentation, regardless of which proposal is selected. No proposals will be returned to proposers.
6. The City reserves the right to request any supplementary information it deems necessary to evaluate proposer's experience or qualifications. This may include supplemental financial information, additional interview(s), and/or additional presentation by the proposer.
7. The City reserves the right to reconsider any proposal submitted at any stage of the procurement. It also reserves the right to meet with select proposers at any time to gather additional information.
8. The reserves the right to delete or add functionality (i.e., modules and components) until the final contract signing.
9. The City reserves the right to cancel, in part or in its entirety, this RFP, including, but not limited to: selection schedule, submittal date, and submittal requirements.
10. The City reserves the right to revise the RFP prior to the date that proposals are due. The City reserves the right to extend the date by which the proposals are due.
11. The City reserves the right to split the award from this RFP between multiple proposals when such split award is determined to be in the best interests of the City.
12. The City reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject any and all proposals and to waive informalities and minor irregularities in any proposals received. Failure to furnish all information

requested or to follow the format requested herein may disqualify the respondent, in the sole discretion of the City. False, incomplete, misleading or unresponsive statements in a proposal may also be sufficient cause for a proposal's rejection.

13. This RFP does not commit the City to award a contract. All proposals submitted in response to this RFP become the property of the City and public records, and as such, may be subject to public review.
14. The City shall not be liable for any pre-contractual expenses incurred by prospective vendors or selected Consultants, including but not limited to costs incurred in the preparation or submission of proposals.
15. The City shall be held harmless and free from any and all liability, claims, or expenses whatsoever incurred by, or on behalf of, any person or organization responding to this RFP.

END OF RFP