

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

### Strategic Communications & Engagement Plan

Date: April 7, 2023

Proposals Due: April 23, 2023

The City of Alameda ("City") will accept bids for a Strategic Communications and Engagement Plan by or before April 23, 2023, at 11:59pm. Proposals shall be emailed to Sarah Henry at [shenry@alamedaca.gov](mailto:shenry@alamedaca.gov).

#### Statement of Purpose

The City of Alameda invites proposals from qualified communications consultants to develop a Citywide Strategic Communications and Engagement Plan that:

- 1) Establishes communication and engagement standards and best practices across the organization
- 2) Identifies communications gaps and resources needed
- 3) Creates template communication plans for City projects and programs (i.e. key messages and outreach strategies for events, projects, crisis communications),
- 4) Outlines tools, including translation services, that allow the City to reach a diverse audience
- 5) Provides strategies and best practices for inclusive internal communications

#### Background

The City of Alameda communicates with residents, businesses, and community stakeholders about a variety of City matters, including:

- Department programs, projects, and campaigns
- News and events
- Key issues and areas of interest
- Traffic, public safety, and alerts
- City policies
- Disaster preparedness

Communications are initiated at the department level and out of the City Manager's Office. The City communicates daily using the following platforms:

- City website
- Press releases, news media outreach
- Social media: Facebook, Nextdoor, Twitter, Instagram
- Alert notifications: AC Alert (Everbridge)
- Engagement tools: Govdelivery emails, OpenGov budget, Surveys, SeeClickFix
- Events
- Publications including the Recreation & Park Departments Activity Guide

The City of Alameda's communication goals are to:

- Communicate key messages to residents, businesses, and other stakeholders and organizations
- Ensure residents and businesses have access to emergency alerts

- Ensure residents have access to up-to-date traffic and road closure information
- Establish plans and procedures for communicating about emergency issues and disasters
- Increase awareness and engagement of City projects and programs
- Increase overall civic engagement and participation
- Broaden the reach of City communications
- Establish trust with residents and businesses
- Communicate with all audiences, including youth, older adults, people with disabilities, and people who are unhoused, and in multiple languages
- Encourage City departments to increase overall communications

### Scope of Work

The City is looking for a highly qualified Consultant to work closely with the City's Communications Director to create a Citywide Strategic Communications and Engagement Plan. The Consultant can be part of a firm or a consultant and is expected to review the City's existing communications materials, media coverage, internal communications, and seek staff and community feedback to identify the strengths/opportunities and weaknesses/barriers to achieving our communications goals. The plan will:

1) Establish communication and engagement standards and best practices across the organization:

- Review and update style guide
- Develop best practices for social media, alert messages, surveys
- Create ideas for planned social media posts and campaigns
- Establish a greater City presence on TikTok and YouTube
- Document how to be most effective with advertising, provide guidance on advertising outlets, best practices
- Create best practices for establishing a Citywide photo database and photo release policy

2) Identify communications gaps and resources needed:

- Provide recommendations for maintaining and enhancing citywide communications
- Guidance on establishing citywide newsletter, annual report, annual community survey
- Media training opportunities
- Budget and staffing to implement and maintain communications plan
- Develop analytic reports to evaluate success, create performance measures

3) Create template communication plans for City projects and programs (i.e. key messages and outreach strategies for events, projects, and crisis communications):

- Develop boilerplate language for press releases and emergency messaging
- Share case studies about disaster preparedness and effective social media and other messaging from municipalities and other organizations

- Streamline communication templates across organization, including PowerPoint, flyers, and email newsletters.

4) Outlines tools, including translation services, which allow the City to reach a diverse audience:

- Establish audience profiles and methods to reach different audiences, including harder to reach Alamedans and ensure input is received by a broad cross section of the community
- Provide direction on where to publish translated materials

5) Provide strategies and best practices for inclusive internal communications:

- Create opportunities to share information with City employees over an Intranet
- Staff engagement activities
- Annual staff survey
- Staff newsletter

#### Submittal Requirements

The City is requesting a PDF copy of the proposal, which must contain the following information:

Letter of Interest and Approach: Please include a letter expressing the Consultant's interest in being considered for the project. As part of the letter, please describe your approach for establishing a Strategic Communications Plan for the City of Alameda.

Strategic Advisor/Project Manager Experience: Please include information about the specific relevant experience of the Consultant or team who will draft the Communications Plan and serve as the principal contact for the scope of work.

Scope and Budget: Provide a Scope of Work, proposed budget, billing rates, and schedule for the project.

#### Submittal Instructions

Responses should be submitted by email or mail by 11:59pm on April 23, 2023 to:

Sarah Henry  
Communications Director  
City of Alameda  
[shenry@alamedaca.gov](mailto:shenry@alamedaca.gov)  
2263 Santa Clara Avenue  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Alameda, CA 94501

#### Selection Process

Based upon the qualifications of the submitted proposals, informational interviews will be conducted by the Communications Director, who following the interviews, will meet

with a selection team to review proposals, discuss interviews, and select a preferred Consultant.

The final selection will be based upon the following criteria:

- The Consultant's experience and results with similar projects and demonstrated expertise.
- The Consultant's demonstrated understanding of the proposed scope and the approach to create a Strategic Communications and Engagement Plan for the City.
- The Consultant's proposed budget for this one-time project.
- Interview
- The Consultant's ability to meet the City's standard contract requirements.

The City will not discriminate against any interested firm or individual on the grounds of race, creed, color, sex, age, disability, or national origin in the contract award. The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals at its discretion, including not awarding the contract to any firm.

#### Questions

Contact Sarah Henry, Communications Director, at [shenry@alamedaca.gov](mailto:shenry@alamedaca.gov), with questions or requests for additional information. All questions must be submitted in writing.