



CITY OF FORT BRAGG
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
To Provide Strategic and Creative Marketing
Services for Visit Fort Bragg

The City of Fort Bragg issues this Request for Proposals to seek and retain a qualified firm to promote the Visit Fort Bragg brand and position Fort Bragg as a premier destination on California's North Coast. The results of these efforts will benefit Fort Bragg's lodging, retail, restaurants, and other businesses, residents, and visitors to the city.

Background & Project Understanding

The City of Fort Bragg has been transitioning from a lumber town to a tourism destination for the past 23 years. This community of 7,000 residents is perched on the bluff tops overlooking the ocean in Mendocino County. The community offers many visitor-serving activities and facilities including:

- Beachcombing, bicycling, walking, hiking, fishing, horseback riding, ocean and river kayaking, small-town events and festivals, towering redwood forests and, of course, pristine accessible coastline;
- Visitor attractions include the world-renowned Glass Beach, Skunk Train, Coastal Trail & Noyo Headlands Park, MacKerricher State Park, Noyo Harbor, the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens, highly rated restaurants and breweries and dozens of soft outdoor adventure opportunities;
- A quaint downtown with a variety of specialty shops located in historic buildings;
- Countless opportunities to unplug and enjoy the unspoiled landscape with family and friends or on your own without the crowds; and hotels, motels, and bed and breakfasts for visitors with a variety of price points.

Year-round tourism is part of Fort Bragg's economy; however, tourism peaks from June through September with many visitors from California's Central Valley and San Francisco Bay Area.

The City of Fort Bragg passed a Transient Occupancy Tax increase in 2016. A portion of the funds has been dedicated to marketing and promotions. Over the last couple of years, this increase has given Visit Fort Bragg a great opportunity to enhance, grow, and improve its destination marketing efforts. The chosen firm will have a unique opportunity to continue to help conceptualize and maintain the Visit Fort Bragg identity as a premier tourism destination. The promotional efforts for the last several years have established a destination-marketing program that has included increased advertising, a new public relations program, a new leisure

sales program, an enhanced website, and improved infrastructure and management to support a highly successful effort.

Since 2019, the City Manager's office has been overseeing the project management in collaboration with the Administrative Analyst. Together, they work with the Visit Fort Bragg Committee (VFBC) to advance these plans. The City Manager's office collaborates with the VFBC, which serves in an advisory capacity. Staff will manage the components of this RFP on a day-to-day basis.

Goals

Ultimately, the goal is to increase local sales and transient tax revenues, and the overall success of our visitor-serving businesses, retailers, and restaurants.

1. Increase overall visitation to Fort Bragg, specifically the shoulder seasons of Winter and Spring
2. Increase length of stay per visit
3. Increase visitor spending per day

The Scope of Work attached will outline individual goals and objectives.

Objectives

The branding and story of Fort Bragg were initially based on an informational survey from 2017. These ongoing efforts are aimed at raising awareness of the destination and attracting more visitors, particularly during off-peak seasons.

These efforts are also intended to support the initiatives of Visit Mendocino (Mendocino County Tourism Commission) and Visit California.

Key Metrics for success will be measured by:

1. Increased tourism spending
2. Increased gross lodging tax revenues
3. Increased gross sales tax revenues
4. Increased volume of first-time visitors
5. Growth of off-season visitation
6. Increased website and social traffic
7. Increased overall visitor engagement throughout all outreach channels
8. Increased stakeholder engagement throughout the Visit Fort Bragg program

Format for Responses

Respondents will present a single proposal that includes the full scope of work expressed in Visit Fort Bragg RFP.

The ideal consulting firm will have expertise in the field of destination marketing and a successful record of accomplishment with the complexities of multiple public and private stakeholders. Additionally, ideal firms will have the energy, creativity and overall desire to work

with the City Manager’s office to create a comprehensive, unified, highly engaging and successful destination-marketing program.

The scope of services will include the tasks described, as well as additional elements or modifications, which are recommended by the consultant to develop a promotional plan for Visit Fort Bragg.

RFP Schedule

RFP Release	May 29, 2024
Deadline for Written Questions	June 7, 2024
Proposals Due	June 26, 2024
Interviews	July 9 and 10, 2024
Selection	Mid-July 2024

PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Proposers should send two (2) hard copies and one electronic copy of the completed proposals and cost bid so that it is received by the City no later than 2:00 p.m. on June 26, 2024, to:

City of Fort Bragg
Attention: Diana Sanchez, City Clerk, email: dsanchez@fortbragg.com
416 North Franklin Street
Fort Bragg, CA 95437

2. Contents: Proposal shall contain the following information:
 - A. Firm Description
Provide a description of your firm and list relevant information about capabilities, size rate of services, and length of time in existence.
 - B. Relevant Experience
Describe relevant experience working with other rural destinations in building and maintaining successful relevant promotional programs with proven results (i.e. return on investment). Also, include any relevant experience working with other firms/partners resulting in a unified destination marketing effort.
 - C. Key Personnel Qualifications
Identify key personnel who would work on the project, as assigned their respective roles, and a synopsis of relevant experience and what specific attributes they will bring to the overall program.
 - D. References
List of destinations or clients for whom similar work has been performed, with the name, title, and phone number of a contact person. The City may request a copy of a similar report prepared previously by the firm for another agency.
 - E. Scope of Work
Provide an explanation of tasks associated with the project, including how you propose to complete each task and how you propose to evaluate results (i.e. return on investment).
 - F. Budget and Schedule of Charges
Provide a “Not to Exceed” amount and a list of Personnel Rates, Equipment Charges, Travel Reimbursement Costs, and Job Descriptions for Personnel.

Please provide examples of invoices and other relevant reports in relation to overall costs.

G. Work Schedule

Provide a time schedule for completion of work.

H. Insurance

The individual or firm receiving the contract shall procure and maintain for the duration of the contract, insurance against claims for injuries to persons or damages to property that may arise from or in connection with the performance of the work hereunder by the Consultant, his agents, representatives, employees or subcontracts as set forth in Section 13 of Exhibit A which is attached hereto and incorporated by reference herein. Any requests for a reduction in the insurance amount shall be included in the proposal. **The cost of such insurance shall be included in the consultant's proposal.**

I. Consultant Agreement

The City's standard consultant services agreement is attached as Exhibit A. Please identify if your firm would have any issues with the provisions of the City's standard consulting services agreement. All requests for amendments to language in the agreement **must** be included in the proposal.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Capabilities and resources of the firm.
- Qualifications and experience of key individuals.
- Qualifications and experience of past destination marketing programs with a focus on partnership and establishment of successful program(s).
- Schedule for completion of work.

The above selection criteria are provided to assist proposers and are not meant to limit other considerations that may become apparent during the selection process.

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by the City of Fort Bragg and a recommendation for the award of the contract will be presented to the VFBC and/or the Fort Bragg City Council.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The City of Fort Bragg reserves the right to reject any proposals. This Request for Proposals does not commit the City to award contracts, pay any costs incurred in the preparation of proposals, or to procure or contract for supplies or services.

The City of Fort Bragg reserves the right to negotiate with any qualified source or to cancel, in part of or in its entirety, this Request for Proposals, if it is in the best interest of the City to do so. The City may require the selected consultant to participate in negotiations and submit such price, technical, or other revisions of the proposal that may result from negotiations.

QUESTIONS

Questions should be directed to:

Cristal Munoz
Administrative Analyst
416 North Franklin Street
Fort Bragg, CA 95437

(707) 964-2823 ext. 103
E-mail:cmunoz@fortbragg.com

ATTACHMENTS

Scopes of Work – Marketing and Advertising Services; Design/Creative Services; Public Relations; Social Media Content Creation and Website Design, Development and Deployment for FortBragg.com

Exhibit A – City’s Standard Professional Services Agreement

SCOPE OF WORK & PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Provide Strategic and Creative Marketing Services for Visit Fort Bragg

Scope of Work

The scope of services shall include tasks described below, as well as additional elements or modifications, which are recommended by the consultant to promote Fort Bragg.

Plan, develop, execute and track results for Visit Fort Bragg's brand advertising program.

- **Marketing and Advertising Planning:** Develop recommendations for a marketing and ad plan that includes strategic direction, development and execution of the media plan as well as appropriate methods to measure the return on investment of the advertising and marketing program.
- **Media Buy:** Draft and execute the media plan including placement and optimization of placements including "add-ons" and other bonus placements through successful negotiation of the ad buys.

Advertising Objectives

Advertising should significantly increase awareness of the Fort Bragg brand to our target markets and drive increased traffic to the website to encourage and inspire visitors to Fort Bragg.

- Utilizing past research, further define appropriate target markets
- Drive increased traffic to the website to inspire visitation to Fort Bragg
- Encourage visitation year-round, but specifically in shoulder seasons
- Inspire people to extend their length of stay in Fort Bragg
- Collaborate with Visit Mendocino, North Coast Tourism Council, Visit California and others to maximize marketing opportunities including cooperative opportunities
- Determine efficient and effective media mix, recommending appropriate media
- Implementation of ROI programs to track progress and measure the effectiveness of the marketing program

Advertising Goals: Media Planning and Buying

- Leverage ad buys and increase exposure for Fort Bragg with publications featuring Fort Bragg
- Increase Fort Bragg's voice in travel pieces among its direct competitive destinations
- Strategic research based integrated marketing, media planning and buying recommendations
- Evaluate new media opportunities
- Monthly reporting, analysis and optimization recommendations including return on investment matrix

Competitive Benchmarking

- Define parameters for and provide reports on how Visit Fort Bragg compares to its competitors (such as Monterey, Santa Cruz, etc.)

Creative Services Objectives

Advertising should significantly increase awareness of the Fort Bragg brand to our target markets and drive increased traffic to the website to encourage and inspire visitors to Fort Bragg.

- Provide creative assistance with audio and video scripts
- Maintain electronic records of all pieces produced
- Provide creative assistance on attaining strategic goals
- Drive increased traffic to the website to inspire visitation to Fort Bragg
- Encourage visitation year-round, but specifically in shoulder seasons
- Inspire people to extend their length of stay in Fort Bragg
- Determine efficient and effective media mix, recommending appropriate media

Creative Services Goals

Develop and execute a multi-media advertising plan with a focus on the wider Fort Bragg area, representing all area attractions and activities.

- Develop and implement a media plan for specific markets
- Negotiate plan and execute creative/conception/production of ads
- Develop marketing campaigns (concept, information architecture, creative design, graphic design)
- Develop creative briefs as needed
- Define the overarching marketing communications strategy

Public Relations Objectives

- Inspire people to visit and spend their time in Fort Bragg by promoting it as a premier destination on the coast of California
- Develop partnerships and co-marketing opportunities that drive a positive perception of Fort Bragg
- Help to increase Fort Bragg's overall voice in the tourism community
- Promote Fort Bragg as a year-round destination
- Build the overall Fort Bragg message in key target publics including:
 - Media (includes editors and producers in print, broadcast and online)
 - VIP travel opinion leaders
 - Out of county marketing partners to reach a broader audience including international markets when possible

Public Relations Goals

- Execute targeted public relations campaigns to generate feature articles, event listings and related publicity
- Leverage earned media
- Write and distribute press releases
- Create and execute special events designed for public outreach and media relations
- Monitor, collect, catalog, and report media results
- Create an official press kit and support materials

- Develop media familiarization tours
 - Facilitate and execute media familiarization trips. Provide advance press kits and follow up information to journalists. Document all media visitation for follow-up, reporting, and future outreach. Provide public relations training for local stakeholders as requested. Create and maintain an internal database of visiting press in a digital format accessible by both agency and staff.
- Assist in the development of the annual marketing plan and year-end report
- Create a comprehensive editorial calendar
- Use media relations, public relations, and marketing tactics to recruit consumers to book rooms and attend Fort Bragg activities
- Build partnerships and alliances to achieve these goals
- Assist in the development of marketing promotions and in-market stunts in support of overall marketing calendar and key messaging and goals
- Extend the social media strategy by supporting communications messages through outreach to key influencers in the online sphere
- Create and maintain strong relationships with Visit Mendocino County and Visit California's public relations firms and efforts
- Establish and cultivate Visit Fort Bragg's image library for use with media

Social Media Objectives

Visit Fort Bragg currently has a Facebook page, Instagram account, and YouTube.

Currently, there are 69,000 followers on Facebook and 23,000 on Instagram, 128 subscribers on YouTube.

The ultimate goal of our social media accounts is to inspire people to visit and engage with Fort Bragg. This can be accomplished by:

- Continuing optimization of social media accounts through brand-building
- Continuing to develop Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube followers (or other tools, as appropriate)
- Inspiring people to visit and spend their precious time and money in Fort Bragg
- Encouraging people to engage with Fort Bragg through promotions and posts
- Inspiring people to extend their length of stay in Fort Bragg
- Inspiring and assisting visitors to reach out to friends and family to share their Fort Bragg experience

Content development should focus on the wider Fort Bragg area and represent all area attractions and activities. Content creation will consist of photography, short videos and written content to tell the story of Fort Bragg to the traveling public.

Specific content to be developed includes, but is not limited to, the following activities and locations: Glass Beach, the redwoods, downtown, recreation (land and water), cycle touring, beer tasting, the range of dining, farm to table dining, interesting people, arts and culture, area history, local events, etc.

Content may be used for website, collateral materials, press kits, ads, etc. and thus should be transferable to these different media with sufficient resolution.

Social Media Goals

- Use social media accounts to build VFB mailing list
- Increase social media outreach – conversion rates, audience engagement, etc.
- Increase Fort Bragg brand awareness and engagement with the brand as well as other Visit Fort Bragg initiatives
- Identify and engage with social media influencers who will enhance our brand and deliver our message to a broader audience
- Drive increasing traffic to the website including longer length of time on site and increased unique visitors
- Ongoing development of key emerging platforms – analysis of new and upcoming platforms, and keeping ahead of trends as necessary
- Suggest alternative or additional platforms to keep Visit Fort Bragg relevant in today's environment
- Create and maintain a central database of content
- Engage with other social media efforts that will help Visit Fort Bragg meet its goals and accomplish its mission.

Website Functionalities

The City would like to continue the following functionalities on our website.

- Dynamic blog feeds throughout the website
- Interactive map of City
- Advanced SEO work
- Interactive or static trip itineraries
- A calendar of City events
- We would like advice on whether to list lodging partners and/or a shopping and dining directory
- We would like recommendations on how to approach booking lodging.

Meetings and Presentations to Key Stakeholders

- Provide in-person updates and monthly reports. Meetings are intended to serve as opportunities to receive updates on social media efforts, seek client feedback on ways to improve efforts and meet goals, and to engage with key stakeholders.
- Will be expected to work directly with the City Manager's office.
- May be expected to meet with staff and attend stakeholder meetings.

Budget Details

The budget for this project is \$180,000.00

All proposals that fall within 20% +/- of this range will be considered and weighed based on their merits. Proposals that offer flexibility in billing for non-required elements that can be added to the website after initial launch will also be considered.