



Request for Proposal

for

Baker County Visitor Services

**Due: 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time
September 24th, 2021**

**Baker County
1995 Third Street
Baker City, Oregon 97814**

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1. Invitation and General Requirements

This solicitation for proposals is made in compliance with Baker County Resolution 2005-1027, Exhibit A, Procedure for screening and selection of Persons or Firms to Perform Personal Services Contracts. This RFP will result in a contract for services that is over \$5000 but not over \$150,000, therefore the procedure for procurement may be made through Informal Procedure, as outlined in the Resolution. Baker County, as recommended by the Transient Lodging Tax Committee, has chosen to solicit proposals using this document, which it is calling a Request for Proposal. Nothing in this document should be interpreted in such a way as to assume additional requirements for solicitation beyond what is included in the Resolution and Exhibit A, outlining requirements for Contracts through Informal Procedure.

INVITATION

Baker County Administrative Services, referred to hereafter simply as Baker County, is seeking proposals for Baker County Visitor Services. Baker County is a beautiful area with rich outdoor recreation opportunities, a large agriculture community, attractive businesses and events throughout the county, and a popular historic Main Street gracing downtown Baker City. Baker County and the City of Baker City currently combine Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) funds, which are managed by the Transient Lodging Tax Committee (TLTC). This Request for Proposals (RFP) seeks to use those limited TLT monies toward the best outcome regarding tourism and visitor services.

The TLTC annual budget and contracts, including the contract resulting from this Request for Proposal (RFP), must be approved by the Baker County Board of Commissioners. Baker County will be the ultimate judge in determining award of the contract resulting from this RFP and reserves the right to reject all Proposals.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The RFP is hereby open for proposals on September 9, 2021.

All proposals are due September 24th, 2021 by the close of County business hours at 5 p.m.

No late proposals will be accepted.

Four original hard copies of each proposal, sealed in a large envelope, should be submitted either via mail or in person to Heidi Martin at the Baker County Courthouse located at 1995 3rd Street, Baker City, Oregon 97814. Proposals sent via mail, but which arrive late, will not be considered.

Proposals shall be limited to 25, 8.5x11" letter-sized pages or fewer, excluding the attached letters of reference.

Graphics such as photos and illustrations, are acceptable.

Proposals received will not be released to the public until they are discussed by the TLT Committee in a public meeting. Prior to the public meeting the TLT Committee may pose

questions to the individual proposers for clarification. Clarification questions will become part of the public record. Proposals and clarification questions, if any, will be subject to public disclosure when a recommendation for award has been sent to the Board of Commissioners for approval. Proposals will not be taken from the sealed envelope for consideration until after the submission due date/time has closed.

The inclusion of subcontractors in a submitted proposal will result in disqualification. Baker County seeks only one prime contractor to execute these duties.

Baker County is an Equal Opportunity Employer following the laws of the United States of America and the State of Oregon. The successful proposer shall comply with all federal, state and local laws, regulations, executive orders and ordinances applicable to the resulting contract, including but not limited to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended and ORS 659A.112 through 659A.139

The County's strategic marketing plan and Ordinance 2019-01 (Transient Lodging Tax Ordinance) will be attached to this RFP.

2. Clarification and Protest Process

Questions regarding this Request for Proposals can be directed to Heidi Martin at 541-523-8200 or via email to hmartin@bakercounty.org. Questions should NOT be directed to any member of the TLTC, the County's Economic Development Board, or the Board of County Commissioners. Questions are to be limited to the instructions, scope, and/or process of this RFP. Advice regarding the contents of individual proposals will not be given by the County or any representative or agent of the County.

Pre-proposal request for clarification or changes to the RFP must be made in writing by a prospective proposer and submitted by September 16th, 2021. The request must include the proposed change and the reason for the change. Protest of the award based on the scope of services or other content of this RFP will not be considered after this time. Changes to the RFP document shall only be by written addenda.

A copy of any written clarification, interpretation, changes and addenda will be posted on the County website.

A prospective proposer, and only a prospective proposer, may protest the procurement process or the solicitation document. A prospective proposer must deliver a written protest to Heidi Martin no later than September 29th, 2021. The prospective proposer shall indicate the reasons for the disagreement through a written protest and shall include a statement of the desired changes to the procurement process that the prospective proposer believes will remedy the conditions upon which the prospective proposer based its protest.

The written protest must be submitted with a certified check or cashier's check in the amount of \$500.00 to cover the cost of processing the protest.

3. General Requirements and Scope for Proposals

The awardee of this contract will work collaboratively with the many parties who support tourism and marketing in Baker County. Those parties include the Economic Development Director, Marketing Director, as well as the many event managers throughout Baker County. The Visitor Services Contract will ask the awardee to complete the following primary functions:

- Provide an attractive visitor information area within Baker City accessible to the public. All contracted information materials will be displayed within a designated visitor information area. Space will also be provided for the Regional and State Visitors Association materials. Brochures and materials from local restaurants, events, and lodging partners will be displayed, including information and materials related to outlying communities in Baker County.
- Provide onsite information specialists who will assist visitors in the visitor center, giving them individually tailored advice.
- Provide a facility and demonstrate accessibility of parking for RVs, trailers and other large vehicles, which pull into the city from the interstate daily.
- Provide clear and visible signage to direct visitors to the center.
- Answer incoming calls for visitor information on a designated County tourism number. Respond to emails.
- Work closely at an equal level of authority with the contracted County Marketing Director.
- Fulfill welcome packet requests. Packet materials will be selected in coordination with the County Marketing Director.
- Select a representative to attend TLTC meetings to remain informed regarding events and promotions related to Baker County tourism, and report back on visitor's services to the TLTC.
- Maintain a centralized events calendar, not to be duplicated by other City or County entities, as a one-stop point of information for all local events.
- Coordinate with external event sponsors who are hosting events in Baker County and maintain a calendar of events.
- Adhere to reporting requirements specified in this RFP and in the resulting Personal Services Contract.

- Manage a solitary, robust and innovative web site that combines both the aspects of the visitor's center and Travel Baker County.
- Maintain open hours May 1 through September 30, Monday-Sunday (7 days a week) 9 am to 5 pm; October 1 through April 30, Wednesday-Sunday (5 days a week) 9 am to 5 pm. Work with TLTC to adjust hours of operation to meet needs of visitors and show operational efficiency.
- Work with appropriate parties to help implement Baker County's strategic marketing plan as it relates to Visitor Services.
- Maintain a comprehensive social media presence for Baker County Visitor Services

4. Organization of Proposal and Scoring of Proposal

Each proposal shall contain the following:

Cover letter (5 POINTS)

A professional cover letter must be submitted to introduce the proposal. This letter should be limited to one page, and must include a statement ensuring no existing conflict of interest. The letter should contain the name of the proposing entity as well as all contact information and appropriate signature.

Introductory Statement and Proposed Plan of Execution (25 POINTS)

The proposer's previous experience executing visitor services, and operating a visitor's center, and why this contract should be awarded to them should be highlighted in the introduction. This section should then continue on to clearly outline how the proposer plans to accomplish all of the requirements outlined in section 3, and state what experience makes them uniquely qualified to do so. The proposer may, alternately, give reasons why requirements outlined in Section 3 are unnecessary or incompatible with the delivery of visitor services, best practices or industry standards. The proposer may substitute or add primary functions to their proposal that the proposer believes would benefit or improve visitor services and tourism in Baker County.

Location (15 POINTS)

This section should clarify the location proposed to house the visitor's center, and its attributes that will best serve the scope of services outlined in Section 3.

Staff (15 POINTS)

Submittals should include a staffing plan, hours and resources committed, including resume for lead staff, with a focus on skills that directly relate to this RFP.

Timeline for Delivery (10 POINTS)

A submittal showing ability to hit the ground running, fully staffed with a fully open location, immediately upon signing the Personal Services Contract will receive full points. Two points will be deducted for each week of anticipated delay as outlined in the proposal.

Budget (10 POINTS)

A clear and reasonable budget with proposed line item expenditures is expected in this section.

Performance Measures *and Reporting Requirements* (10 POINTS)

The County has several ongoing performance measures in mind following the award of the contract. A visitor's log or guest book will be available at the visitor center. Statistics including number of visitors, phone calls from visitors, and requests for information shall be provided, as requested, to the TLTC. Visitor information and website statistics will also be presented semi-annually, at a minimum, to the TLTC for review. Please describe your experience in achieving and responding to such measures, as well as your plan for reporting performance indicators and budget tracking on this contract.

References (5 POINTS)

Three letters of reference should be submitted complete with full names and contact information. Higher points will be given if those references have directly worked with the proposer, having experienced their expertise providing visitor services. The County may choose to contact these references.

Conclusion (5 POINTS)

The proposal shall contain a brief summation of the strongpoints previously outlined in the submission, highlighting why the proposal should be selected.

5. Evaluation and Selection

Proposals will be evaluated based on the scoring system outlined in the previous section, with a maximum total of 100 possible points. Failure to include all organizational categories outlined in Section 4 may be considered unresponsive by the County and cause the proposal to be rejected.

Although cost of services is important, the County will not necessarily select the lowest cost proposal for the award.

A Proposal Evaluation Committee will be comprised of members of TLTC in addition to tourism professionals outside of Baker County designated by the Board of Commissioners for the purposes of advising the TLTC in its evaluation. The TLTC will consider all proposals in a public meeting and make a recommendation for award to the Board of Commissioners. All members of the TLTC are subject to Oregon Government Ethics laws under ORS Chapter 244.

The Board of Commissioners is not required to accept the recommendation of the TLTC in its award of the contract.

The members of the TLTC may submit questions to the proposer for the purpose of clarifying the submittal. Those questions and responses will not be scored, however the clarifying information may be used to adjust the proposer's score in any category. The TLTC and the Board of Commissioners may use any information that it is aware of, independent of the submitted proposals, in considering the contract award.

Entities submitting unsuccessful proposals will be notified in writing within two weeks of the decision. Evaluation scores and placement number will be included.

The entity submitting the successful proposal will be given notice of intent to award in person or via phone by the County, and will receive a written notice within one week of the decision. Evaluation scores will be included.

The Personal Services Contract as identified in section 1.0 will then be entered into by both parties.

6. Information and Instructions to Proposers

Once a proposal has been selected, a Personal Services Contract (PSC), funded by Transient Lodging Tax funds, shall be entered into between the County and the successful entity, defining specific contract conditions, which will include, but is not limited to, the following: The County and its duly authorized representatives shall have access to the books, documents, papers and records, which are directly pertinent to the specific agreement for the purpose of making audits, examinations and the like. The proposer shall agree to an indemnity clause to hold harmless the County, its officers, agents, and employees, from all claims, suits, or actions of whatever nature resulting from or arising out of the activities of the consultant or its agents or employees under this agreement. The successful proposer will carry insurance adequate to cover any potential loss or injury.

The awarded PSC will terminate on January 1, 2024.

The contract may be terminated by mutual consent of both parties, or by both party upon 60 days' notice, in writing and delivered by certified mail or in person.

If funding from TLT is not adequate to allow for the purchase of the described services, the agreement may be modified to accommodate a reduction in funds or the agreement may be terminated. Notice of modification shall be given to all parties 60 days prior to the commencement of such modification. Any modification will be approved by the Baker County Board of Commissioners.

Anticipated Schedule

September 9th, 2021—Begin RFP Solicitation

September 16th, 2021—Questions/Clarifications from Potential Proposers Due

September 24th, 2021—RFP Closing Date

September 29th, 20201—Protest Period Closing Date

October 14th, 2021—Notice of Intent to Award Contract

November 3rd, 2021—Contract Signed in Commission Session (anticipated date)

This RFP does not commit the County to award or enter into a Personal Services Contract. Under no circumstances will the County pay the costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this RFP. The County reserves the right to:

- Delay any portion of the RFP process if it is in the County's best interest to do so.
- Accept or reject any or all proposals, or any portion received as a result of this RFP.
- Negotiate with any proposer.
- Accept a proposal, and/or subsequent offers due to negotiation, from other than the lowest cost proposal.
- Determine the most responsive proposer, taking into consideration any or all information supplied by the proposer in the proposal and the County's investigation into the experience of the Proposer. In addition, the County may accept or reject proposals based

on minor variations from the stated scope of services when such action is deemed to be in the County's best interest.

- Negotiate a final scope and price with the selected proposer that may differ in some respects from this RFP.
- Seek clarifications of each proposal.
- Consider proposal modifications received at any time before the award is made, if such action is in the best interest of the County.
- To negotiate a final contract that is in the best interest of the County.

Public records and confidentiality of proposals: This RFP and one copy of each original response received, together with copies of all documents pertaining to the selection of the successful Proposer and execution of a copy of the executed contract, will be kept by the County in accordance with Oregon Public Records Retention statutes. By submitting a proposal, the Proposer acknowledges that information submitted in response to this RFP is open to public inspection under Oregon Public Records Law.

NOTE: Proposal information will not be disclosed by the Board of Commissioners, the TLT Committee or individuals appointed to advise on the evaluation of the proposals, prior to receiving a written recommendation to award from the TLT Committee.