

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Developing a Brand Implementation and Marketing Strategy for Visit Fort Collins

April 26, 2023

Due Date & Time: June 7, 2023; 4: 00 PM MST

Purchasing Contact: Katy Schneider - katy@ftcollins.com

1.1 Project Overview

Visit Fort Collins, the city's destination marketing organization, guided a process to create a shared brand for the area. MMGY Global has developed a brand architecture for the destination based on research and curation of the city's brand promise. The brand architecture and accompanying brand promise and positioning statements will be unveiled to the community on May 11, 2023.

With the shared brand architecture for the area in place, Visit Fort Collins is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify a full-service advertising agency to provide comprehensive brand strategy/logo design, campaign development, and integrated advertising and destination marketing services to build brand awareness and drive destination visitation to Fort Collins, Colorado.

1.	RFP ISSUED:	April 28 2023
2.	INTENT TO RESPOND DUE:	May 12, 2023
3.	QUESTIONS DUE:	May 17, 2023
4.	QUESTION ANSWERS PROVIDED	May 25, 2023
5.	RESPONSES DUE:	June 7, 2023
6.	FINALISTS INTERVIEW/PRESENTATION (if needed):	Week of June 27 th
7.	BEGIN CONTRACT:	Week of July 18 th

1.2 Background

In 2019, the City of Fort Collins and Visit Fort Collins partnered to develop a Destination Master Plan which identified opportunities to drive greater levels of visitation and increase visitor spending. The Plan sought to leverage the activity and draw of Colorado State University, the city's dynamic corporate base, its proximity to Rocky Mountains National Park, the Cache la Poudre Canyon, Horsetooth Reservoir, its role as a craft beverage leader, and the signature events and burgeoning music, arts, creative, and entertainment scene that make the area special and unique.

The Plan also identified the naturally authentic disposition of the city's residents and businesses for sharing their love of the community. The planning process determined that the deep love of place among the city's residents and businesses serves as differentiator to set Fort Collins apart from other communities.

Concurrent with the Destination Master Plan's development, Visit Fort Collins worked to lay the groundwork for and create enabling legislation to establish a Tourism Improvement District (TID) in Fort Collins. The process was underway in early 2020, and Visit Fort Collins made the strategic decision to continue work to establish the TID throughout the closures and radical changes to travel due to the pandemic. The City of Fort Collins passed the ordinance to create the District and the lodging properties that are within the District approved its creation in July 2021.

As implementation of the Destination Master Plan commenced, Visit Fort Collins and other place-making organizations in the city recognized the need to translate the city's brand promise. Visit Fort Collins chose MMGY Global to assist with this effort.

Through the course of the nine-month process, MMGY Global conducted more than sixty-five listening sessions and surveyed more than 350 residents. The research and stakeholder engagement validated the strong pride of place within the community and recognized that Fort Collins is a unique and special place. It also uncovered resident and stakeholder acknowledgement that growth is changing the city. The below brand promise for Fort Collins emerged from the work:

"In Fort Collins, open spaces inspire open minds. And open minds create more space for everyone to connect, thrive, and grow."

The resulting brand architecture will serve as the foundation for the work detailed in this RFP to activate the brand.

Visit Fort Collins Goals & Structure

Visit Fort Collins is an independent organization funded in part by lodging tax collected by the City of Fort Collins. Visit Fort Collins is also contracted to carry out the operating plan of the Fort Collins Tourism Improvement District. Visit Fort Collins provides marketing, PR, special events promotion, group sales and guest services to support its destination stakeholders to raise awareness of the city. The Fort Collins Tourism Improvement District funds and provides specific tourism services and improvements for the benefit of the feepayers' lodging businesses and to optimize the visitor economy in the city.

Visit Fort Collins also has a long-standing active partnership and collaboration with the City of Fort Collins' Economic Health Office and the Northern Colorado Economic Alliance to raise the visibility of the city to potential businesses and talent looking to relocate to the area.

Current Marketing and Sales program:

Visit Fort Collins' sales, marketing, & communications program is focused on promoting the destination as a desirable place for overnight visits and working to increase overnight visitation and room sales. Activities include:

- Digital marketing
- Advertising which could include print, television and radio
- Attendance at trade shows, conferences or participating in targeted sales missions
- Bids or/fees associated with securing contracted business
- Familiarization tours
- Collateral to support the Tourism Improvement District needs; and
- Lead generation

The Visit Fort Collins marketing team includes:

- Katy Schneider, Vice President of Marketing
- Laura Smith, Marketing Manager
- Abby Davidson, Partnership Manager

In-house marketing initiatives include collateral, local marketing campaigns, website management, social media, public relations, photography, email marketing, stakeholder relations, and group sales marketing support.

Group Sales Support

Visit Fort Collins employs a group sales team who drive that side of the business. The goal of the group sales efforts is to drive demand for meetings and conferences in Fort Collins through qualified lead distribution. The group also works to uncover lead opportunities through targeted prospecting and business development, industry event and trade show participation, strategic meetings marketing, partnerships, and enhanced presence in online RFP platforms. The marketing team supports group business by running targeted campaigns to drive leads.

Current Marketing Strategy

The key marketing goal of Visit Fort Collins is to create awareness about Fort Collins as a sought-after and unique destination for individual and group travelers through positive publicity, innovative advertising, outstanding marketing and sales collateral, robust digital and social media campaigns and differentiating brand strategy.

One measure of the impact of these marketing efforts is an increase in visitation and visitor spending in the city. Visit Fort Collins tracks occupancy, ADR and RevPAR through STR; lodging tax collections and collecting the TID assessment from members is handled by the City of Fort Collins.

Occupancy is significantly impacted by visitation to Fort Collins by activity within the city's dynamic corporate base and Colorado State University. The destination also serves as a home base to visitors that leverage the city's proximity to Rocky Mountains National Park, the Cache la Poudre Canyon, and Horsetooth Reservoir.

1.3 Project Goals

The goals of this project include:

- **Brand Strategy and Rebranding:** Building on the new shared brand architecture, provide Visit Fort Collins with a suggestion for a new logo, brand platform and activation strategy. Launch no later than 4th quarter 2023

The brand architecture and brand promise development process considered industry research, competitive analysis, social listening, and stakeholder input. Final deliverables of this project should include a style guide that can be shared with Visit Fort Collins stakeholders, and a brand brochure concept/design.

- **Advertising Campaign and Media Planning:** Develop an overarching ad campaign that can be applied to seasonal/year-round messages. Create a strategic media plan to include both traditional and new media elements, including traditional advertising, digital marketing, and paid search.

In campaign development, consider creative concepts that can apply to each seasons' messages/products, and can run/evolve over a 2–3-year period. Messages must be developed that apply to the groups market.

Quoted fees must include all production required to implement campaign concepts (photography, video production, etc). Visit Fort Collins currently has a comprehensive library of destination photos and b-roll that may be used.

- Media Planning (includes production, tracking and distribution).
- Ad channels may include, but are not limited to print, television, out of home, digital display, online video, digital native content, mobile, paid search, paid social, programmatic, strategic marketing partnerships, and experiential marketing.

Website development, public relations, local marketing, and day-to-day social media management are NOT within the scope of this contract.

- **Agency Services:** Act as an ongoing partner to Visit Fort Collins, providing ongoing account support, campaign stewardship, competitive intelligence, campaign evolution and thought leadership.

Consider analytics and ROI, attribution reporting, ongoing analysis and optimization, testing, industry insights and trends, and tools/resources that would contribute to informed decision making by both Visit Fort Collins and the Tourism Improvement District Board.

1.7 Submission Requirements

Respondents must adhere to the following guidelines to be considered:

1. Notify Katy Schneider via email (Katy@ftcollins.com) of the intent to submit a proposal by May 12, 2023, so that the firm/agency will be placed on a proposer's list for any addenda and/or possible changes to this submittal process.
2. Proposals must be submitted in electronic format to the attention of Katy Schneider at Katy@ftcollins.com by the submittal due date of June 7, 2023, by no later than 4:00 pm MST.
3. Proposals must include fees and an estimated timeline.
4. The Response shall be in written format. Failure to include all of the elements specified below may be cause for rejection. Additional information may be provided but shall be succinct and relevant to this RFP.
5. Submittals shall be limited to **30** pages, 15 double-sided pages 8-1/2 inches by 11 inches in size or folded to such a size (11-inch x 17-inch pages are acceptable for graphical representations and will be counted as a single page).
6. The page limit applies to Sections 2 through 7 described below. The cover letter and documentation required as attachments shall not be considered in the page count.
7. The Response shall be provided in one (1) Adobe PDF format submitted electronically to katy@ftcollins.com.

8. The responding firm should acknowledge all addenda on the attached form; failure to do so may cause the Response to be considered non-responsive.
9. If the Respondent is a joint venture firm or partnership, the Respondent must provide all identification information for all parties and all requirements for all parties (i.e., licenses, insurance, etc.) as requested. As part of the proposal submission, the Respondent must identify the responsibilities of each joint venture or partnership party with respect to the scope of services/work inclusive of the requirements for each entity based on such services as described in this RFP document. All joint venture/partnership parties will be held responsible for the contract obligations.
10. Questions regarding this RFP can be directed to Katy Schneider at katy@ftcollins.com by May 17, 2023. All responses to the questions received will be sent to the full intended proposers list by May 25, 2023.

1.8 Proposal Components & Evaluation Metrics

The submitted proposals must include the following sections and details:

- **Cover Letter**
The cover letter should include the name and contact information of the individual who will serve as project manager, as well as a summary of the firm's qualifications.
- **Firm Overview and Background**
This section should include a brief overview of the firm's origin, background and size, an organizational chart, the overall capabilities of the organization, appropriate credentials, licenses, certifications, and proximity of company's resources to Fort Collins.

The following information must be included in this section :

- Name of proposer
- Proposer address
- Proposer telephone number
- Proposer federal tax identification number
- Name, title address, telephone number, fax number and email address of contact person authorized to contractually obligate the proposer
- Name of the person assigned and accountable for the delivery of project goals

- **Brand Activation Expertise, Implementation, and Results**

Proposals should include a description of the company's expertise related to the services described and examples of the last three completed, similar projects demonstrating the firm's current brand activation and implementation experience working with municipalities and other public agencies similar in size, scope, and purpose.

- Provide examples of integrated brand strategy and marketing/advertising campaigns that you have completed in the past, as well as their outcomes.
- Provide examples of your tools/resources, attribution methodologies and tracking dashboards/reports.
- Identify additional skill sets and unique resources that you can provide to enhance the overall promotion of Fort Collins.

Special emphasis should be given to those examples that worked to bring community partnerships together under an aligned and emotionally compelling appeal.

- **Project Team and Organizational Capabilities:**

Profile the individual team members that will be assigned to the project. Present how each member is relevant to the Fort Collins brand opportunity and their individual understanding and commitment to this brand activation engagement. Establish and communicate their experience and qualification for accomplishing the project goals.

Provide an overview of all services provided by your organization. Also, provide significant details regarding your capabilities as they relate to the scope of work as described above, with examples of your prior work and outcomes on similar projects. Include areas where you are able to fulfill project needs within your organization and any areas in which you would need to partner with other agencies for added support or capabilities.

- **Fort Collins Integration**

Fort Collins is a uniquely appealing community that is committed to understanding and building its brand promise. This brand activation must deeply connect to the essence of the community pride that defines this community. The agency must be able to convey a knowledge of Fort Collins, an adherence to being focused on the developed brand promise, and a system for successfully involving the community in the adoption and use of the developed brand platform.

- **Project Approach and Schedule**

Please describe, in detail, the strategic and tactical approach your organization would take to achieve the desired goals of this project: Specifically describe how your organization will work together with Visit Fort Collins over the course of the project to develop media plans, creative assets, strategic shifts and reporting Outline the anticipated schedule of the project, ideally broken down by each major step of the process. Suggestions for how to keep the project on track and efficient are welcome.

- **Projected Costs and Account Service & Fee Structure:**

The proposal should contain all pricing information relative to performing project expectations as described in this RFP, including but not limited to the number of meetings with stakeholders, travel expenses and document production costs. If applicable, provide fee/retainer/commission structure for creative services and media placement. If the price excludes certain fees or charges, please provide a complete explanation of the nature of those fees. Visit Fort Collins is anticipating an investment of up to \$250,000 for this project. The budget includes a Federal EDA grant that includes funds for paid search.

RESOURCES

Email katy@ftcollins.com to gain access to Visit Fort Collins' current assets, including a summary of the brand promise/concept work, current style guide, annual reports, past campaign creative, access to photo/video assets, and press kits.

Questions may be submitted directly to katy@ftcollins.com. The deadline for posing questions is Wednesday, May 17, 2023, at 4:00 PM MT. Answers will be made available by end of day, Thursday, May 25, 2023