



**Request for Proposals for Legal Services Retainer  
Hamilton County (Indiana) Visitor and Convention Commission  
“Tourism Commission”  
For the Period 2018-2019**

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**INQUIRIES AND PROPOSALS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:**

Betsy Ekelof, Tourism Commission Operations Support  
Hamilton County Visitor and Convention Commission  
c/o Hamilton County Tourism, Inc.  
37 E. Main Street  
Carmel, IN 46032

[bekelof@hamiltoncountytourism.com](mailto:bekelof@hamiltoncountytourism.com)

**I. GENERAL INFORMATION.**

1. **Purpose.** This request for proposal (RFP) is to contract for legal services to be provided to the Hamilton County Visitor and Convention Commission, an agency of Hamilton County organized by ordinance by Hamilton County, Indiana, pursuant to the Indiana Uniform Innkeepers Tax Statute I.C. 6-9-18-1, et seq.
2. **Who May Respond.** Only attorneys who are currently licensed to practice law in Indiana and maintain a primary office in Hamilton County or law firms including such attorneys, may respond to this RFP.
3. **Instructions on Proposal Submission.**
4. **Closing Submission Date.** Proposals must be submitted no later than October 20, 2017.
5. **Inquiries.** Inquiries concerning this RFP should be e-mailed to:  
Betsy Ekelof, Tourism Commission Operations Support  
Hamilton County Visitor and Convention Commission  
[bekelof@hamiltoncountytourism.com](mailto:bekelof@hamiltoncountytourism.com)
6. **Conditions of Proposal.** All costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal responding to this RFP will be the responsibility of the Offeror and will not be reimbursed by the Hamilton County Visitor and Convention Commission (hereinafter referred to as (Tourism Commission)).
7. **Instructions to Prospective Contractors.** Your proposal should be addressed as noted above, either in written or electronic form. Please ask for acknowledgement of receipt of the proposal from Mrs. Ekelof to affirm we received it in some fashion

8. **Right to Reject.** The Tourism Commission reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received in response to this RFP. A contract for the accepted proposal will be drafted based upon the factors described in this RFP.
9. **Small and/or Minority-Owned Businesses.** Efforts will be made by the Tourism Commission to utilize small businesses, women and/or minority owned businesses. Offeror qualifies as a small business firm if it meets the definition of "small business" as established by the Small Business Administration (13 C.F.R. § 121.201).
10. **Notification of Award.** It is expected that a decision selecting the successful Firm will be made within five (5) weeks of the closing date for the receipt of proposals. Upon conclusion of final negotiations with the successful Firm, all Offerors submitting proposals in response to this RFP will be informed, in writing electronically, of the name of the successful consultant.
11. **Description of Entity.** The Hamilton County Visitor and Convention Commission is a tourism oversight agency that serves Hamilton County in Indiana. It is a public entity whose 11 members are appointed by the County Commission and County Council as well as city appointments per the statute. The Tourism Commission serves as the government oversight agency to its appointed tourism representative, which has for 25 years been Hamilton County Tourism, Inc. (d.b.a. Hamilton County Convention and Visitors Bureau). Its annual pass-through budget in 2018 is anticipated to be \$5 million, all derived from a 5% innkeepers tax on room rentals in the county. Its mission is to support tourism economic development in Hamilton County.

**II. SCOPE OF SERVICES.** The contract for work shall extend for two years, 2018-2019, and shall encompass the following, totaling approximately 30 hours per year:

- a. Attendance at four quarterly meetings (February, May, August and November) from 5:45 - approximately 7:30 p.m. at the Hamilton County Tourism, Inc. offices wherever they may be. Usually held on the third Thursday of these months.
- b. Review of the annual proposed contract with the county's tourism agency of record, Fall of each year.
- c. Representation regarding any changes proposed to the County Commissioners regarding the ordinance establishing the tax and Tourism Commission, anticipated to be approximately up to 10 hours of review in 2018.
- d. Work with the Hamilton County Tourism, Inc. leadership team and Board of Directors regarding the sale of the existing space as well as long-term contract for the new space, which includes working with the Hamilton County Board of Commissioners as owners of the property.
- e. Reviewing and making recommendations on any other legal matters to come before the commission.

**III. PROPOSAL CONTENTS.** The Offeror, in its proposal, shall, as a minimum, include the following;

**Legal Experience.** The Offeror should describe its legal experience, including the names, addresses, contact persons, and telephone numbers of at least three clients, preferably including clients similar to the Tourism Commission. Experience should include the following categories:

1. Experience advising quasi-governmental entities and ordinances defining such entities.
2. Experience with tax structure and the ability to understand the Uniform Innkeepers Tax authorization.

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3. A general understanding of community economic development best practices.
4. An understanding of non-profit organizations, including governance-related work
5. Understanding of organizational finances including audit best practices and review

**Organization, Size, Structure, and Areas of Practice.** If the Offeror is a firm, it should describe its organization, size, structure, areas of practice, and office location(s). Indicate, if appropriate, if the firm is a small or minority/owned business. Also include copy of Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy, if the firm has one.

**Attorney Qualifications.** The Offeror in proposing the attorney of record for the organization should also address:

- a. Professional and education background of assigned attorney.
- b. Overall supervision to be exercised for assigned attorney.
- c. Prior experience of the individual attorneys with respect to the required experience listed above. Only include resumes of attorneys likely to be assigned to the representation. Education, position in firm, years and types of experience, and continuing professional education will be considered.

**Price.** The Offeror's proposed price should include information the proposed annual retainer along with the services that would be included in that retainer, what would be excluded and the hourly rate for extended services. It is assumed the services would take place over two years, and the price should be noted as an annual fee.

#### **IV. PROPOSAL EVALUATION**

1. **Evaluation Procedure and Criteria.** The Officers of the Hamilton County Visitor and Convention Commission and appropriate support staff will review proposals and make recommendations to the Commissioners for final approval. The Officers or Board of Directors will request a meeting with select qualified Offerors prior to final selection. Proposals will be reviewed in accordance with the following criteria:
  1. Proposed approach to scope of work.
  2. Level of experience of the individual(s) identified to work on this matter.
  3. The Offeror's experience with similar clients and legal matters.
  4. Response from references.
  5. Cost.
  6. Interviews.

Issued: September 27, 2017