

Request for Proposals

Website Redesign and Digital Advertising Program

for Visit Longmont

October 25, 2023



Dear Prospective Bidders,

I would like to thank you for your willingness to review this information and submit a thoughtful quote for our project.

We are seeking a trusted partner or partners to reimagine Visit Longmont's web and digital media presence. Advertising tactics may include brand enhancement, digital and social media advertising, printed collateral, video advertising and asset collection, and analysis and reporting for in-state, statewide and/or specific destination marketing campaigns. We seek to position Visit Longmont among our targeted traveler audience as a destination of choice.

Visit Longmont is the community's destination marketing and management organization – DMMO – and provides travelers information through digital and social media along with an on-site visitor center in downtown Longmont. We also collaborate regionally to achieve organizational goals and advance the profession of destination marketing and management.

The Visit Longmont team believes in accountability, transparency and using our resources efficiently for the benefit of the community. We are optimistic in ourselves and our partners. We encourage potential bidders to think of creative ideas to help us accomplish our mission. We believe in integrity in our actions and are committed to deliver results. We are ultimately driven by the success of the Colorado travel, tourism, hospitality, and outdoor recreation industries.

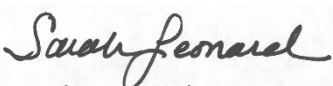
To help us deliver this success, we seek a partner or partners skilled in developing and implementing travel websites, advertising, and media campaigns. The ideal agency partner or partners will *fit* well with our organization, collaborate with other partners, understand our business, embrace our mission, share our values and act as strategic, trusted guides for the Visit Longmont team.

The Visit Longmont team values innovative, creative, and outside-the-box approaches to proposed marketing efforts. We are willing and ready to invest in new campaigns and ideas and a reimagining of our main traveler consumer website at VisitLongmont.org. Your recommended approach will be fundamental to your proposal. Your proposed direction will guide campaign deliverables and outcomes.

We are seeking all proposals to be submitted to Visit Longmont (electronically only) by 5:00pm MST, November 21, 2023. A full timeline is included in this RFP document.

On behalf of the Visit Longmont team, we look forward to receiving your proposals to help us promote Longmont and our community effectively. Thank you in advance for considering this opportunity and for your time.

Safe travels always,



Sarah Leonard

Visit Longmont

Chief Destination Stewardship Officer | Executive Director

MISSION & BRIEF PROJECT BACKGROUND

Visit Longmont (VL) is the community of Longmont, Colorado's destination marketing and management organization (DMMO), established in 2008. The mission of Visit Longmont is to manage, market, develop and enhance the image, and the historical, cultural, business, meeting, and recreational assets; to draw regional, national, and international tourism to Longmont and surrounding areas.

Visit Longmont is a private 501(c) 6 nonprofit organization, governed by a board of directors. The board of directors represents appointees by the Longmont City Council, the Longmont Downtown Development Authority, small business owners, lodging partners, a member of the City Council and a representative from the City Manager's Office. The organization receives funding from the city lodger's tax and through a contract for service with the City of Longmont, Colorado.

Visit Longmont currently has a website, but it is becoming outdated and is not delivering an online experience that fully reflects the vibrancy of Longmont's and the surrounding area's visitor offerings. We seek an updated web presence that reflects the needs of Longmont visitor personas and uses best-in-class web technology.

Visit Longmont also has a current advertising program, but it is short-term and will end this calendar year. Through this RFP and potential bidders' innovative ideas, we seek to expand our marketing and media investments to deliver creative, consistent, ongoing programs and campaigns to drive visits to Longmont year-round using current, best-in-field multi-channel efforts.

GOALS

Visit Longmont's web redesign and advertising campaign(s) are intended to increase regional and national awareness of Longmont as a dynamic Colorado destination versus other destinations. A successful campaign will achieve the following results:

- Increased brand awareness for the Community of Longmont and surrounding areas as a traveler destination;
- Increase in "visitorship" to the Community of Longmont and surrounding areas;
- Increase in overnight stays in the Community of Longmont;
- Boost visitors in off-season and shoulder seasons in the Community of Longmont and surrounding areas; and,
- Enhance and incorporate Colorado cultural tourism assets and messaging throughout Visit Longmont digital and media efforts.

AUDIENCES

Visit Longmont is evaluating existing travelers who have visited the community over the last year. We are open to potential bidders' suggestions for refining our target audiences or deepening our engagement with current audiences.

Using Visit Longmont's Zartico research and origin behavior modules, we know our current audiences include:

Top Markets using a Market Index (Source: Zartico)

- Colorado residents, drive traffic: Colorado Springs, Denver metropolitan area
- Phoenix, AZ
- Albuquerque – Santa Fe, NM
- Chicago, IL
- Los Angeles, CA
- Salt Lake City UT
- Dallas-Ft. Worth, TX
- Cheyenne, Wyoming

We also know travelers choose Longmont and the surrounding area because they have an affinity for:

- Outdoor adventure
- Sporting events at University of Colorado Boulder and Colorado State University
- Farm-to-table experiences
- Brewery tourism
- Special events with themes like, beer and music festivals
- Smaller to medium-sized groups, meetings, and events – including youth sports competitions

(Source: Near, Affinity, Google Analytics 4. Note: The Market Index looks at the relationship between website traffic, destination visitation, and visitor spending from those origin markets. All data values scaled 0-100 with 100 being the top value in any category. The individual components are averaged together (simple average) to create the Index.)

RESOURCES

Documents

Visit Longmont brand guidelines

Visit Longmont Reimagine Destinations Program Workshop Summary Report, Colorado Tourism Office (CTO)

Visit Longmont Stakeholder Survey Results (2022)

Websites:

www.visitlongmont.org

Social Media:

Facebook: @VisitLongmont

Instagram: @VisitLongmont

LinkedIn: @VisitLongmont

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Evolution of Best Practices / Artificial Intelligence (AI): Utilizing artificial intelligence (AI) in destination marketing presents both challenges and opportunities. AI has the potential to revolutionize the way destinations promote themselves and engage with travelers, but it also comes with certain limitations and considerations. Visit Longmont has not incorporated AI in current marketing efforts or involved sales and partner data and security, data quality, authentic expertise about the community. Incorporating AI strategically into destination

marketing efforts could be costly and complex. It may require significant changes to Visit Longmont's existing infrastructure. At the same time, AI presents opportunities for efficiencies, customized analytics, predictive analytics, chatbots and virtual assistants, content generation, automation, and a competitive advantage. Visit Longmont will look to prospective bidders to be part of the conversation around AI and how this might be incorporated into Longmont's destination marketing and management efforts.

Competition: Longmont is centrally located in the Front Range of Colorado, which stretches along the eastern edge of the Rocky Mountains. Longmont's neighboring communities also market to potential travelers who are seeking to enjoy the region's natural beauty, outdoor recreation opportunities, and vibrant downtown districts. Many of the Front Range communities host similar community and special events, highlighting the state's award-winning breweries, distilleries, and eateries as well as emerging music scene. Visit Longmont does collaborate with our Northern Colorado friends but also seeks to set our destination apart from other communities along the Front Range. As a destination, Visit Longmont will partner with the successful bidder(s) to differentiate itself and attract travelers who contribute to the overall economic vitality of Longmont.

Traveler Sentiment: Traveler sentiment has become increasingly challenging to monitor since the COVID19 pandemic as travel regulations, transportation and motivations seem more fluid than ever before. According to recent research, travelers are increasingly utilizing digital media platforms for trip planning, including AI. Travelers are also continually uneasy, although not outright pessimistic, about the state of the economy. This pessimism is resulting in reduced spending on entertainment and recreation along with fewer number of trips. Taking current traveler sentiment into account, Visit Longmont will work with partners to highlight the accessibility and value of Longmont accommodations, attractions, and experiences to potential travelers.

Personalization: Visit Longmont is committed to using current research and analytics to continually communicate our brand and image to target audiences. We are committed to work with successful bidder(s) to craft customized content and stories that share Longmont as a destination with our visitors. We believe leading with diversity, equity and inclusion of our cultural and heritage tourism experiences and attractions to engage potential travelers and enhance our marketing efforts. We are also committed to sustainability and responsibility as stewards of our destination. Visit Longmont will work with successful bidder(s) to promote sustainable tourism practices that align with growing traveler preferences and enhance our destination's image as a caring community. We look to our partners to invest in a robust online presence that includes a user-friendly website and active social media. We are passionate about sharing engaging content such as videos, photos, and stories showcasing Longmont's quality experiences. The successful bidder(s) will suggest strategies to emphasize Longmont's natural, cultural, and outdoor recreation assets as well as Longmont's individualized "vibe."

SCOPE OF WORK

Visit Longmont seeks to re-imagine our website and increase awareness of our community as a traveler destination among targeted audiences. To meet our goals and address our challenges and opportunities, we seek potential bidders to be Visit Longmont's marketing partners for enhancing our brand, advertising, media buying, collateral production, fulfillment services, and, last but not least, our website. We are open to creative and innovative approaches and partnerships among potential bidders to implement this work.

Potential bidders should address in their proposals how they would approach and execute the following components. Potential bidders can bid on the entire program, solely on the website redesign, and/or one or all the advertising program elements.

A. Website Redesign

Visit Longmont seeks proposals to redesign, develop and host the organization's website, visitlongmont.org, which will meet or exceed the following requirements:

- a) Conduct thorough strategy, planning, and development for the Visit Longmont website content reorganization and redesign.
- b) Understand primary Visit Longmont audiences, online user experiences, and participant needs/accessibility.
- c) Create a modern design that implements online marketing best practices while adhering to Visit Longmont's branding.
- d) Utilize responsive design that displays appropriately and loads quickly on all screen widths, devices, and browsers.
- e) Implement a user-friendly interface that is easy to navigate for multiple target audiences.
- f) Implement an easy-to-use, well-supported CMS. Visit Longmont requires access to create, edit, and archive website pages. The vendor will train Visit Longmont to maintain and update website content.
- g) Secure integration with third-party tools and platforms, such as our CRM, Constant Contact ESP, etc.
- h) Use of up-to-date security, including TLS 1.2 and industry-standard digital certificates at a minimum.
- i) Be WCAG 2.0 Level AA Compliant.
- j) Has search engine-optimized technical and UX structure.
- k) Provide ongoing hosting & support.
- l) Copywriting and on-page SEO are not a requirement of this RFP.

B. Advertising Program

Potential bidders should address Visit Longmont's goal to increase interest in Longmont as a visitor destination versus other communities in the region. Potential bidders should identify how they will position Longmont as a year-round destination versus its competition. We seek a creative and strategic partner to enhance our destination's visibility and appeal. We are open to creative and innovative approaches and partnerships between potential bidders to implement the work. The selected agency or agencies will be responsible for the following:

- a) Branding and Strategy
 - Provide a review & assessment of Visit Longmont's brand, including logo, tagline, etc. Visit Longmont participates in Advance Longmont, a broad initiative including Longmont development organizations. Visit Longmont's branding and strategies include shared opportunities for collaboration to support business retention and workforce attraction.
- b) Digital Advertising
 - Plan, execute, and optimize digital advertising campaigns across various platforms (e.g., Google Ads, Programmatic, etc.)
 - Implement targeting and segmentation strategies to reach our key demographics.
 - Create engaging ad creative and ad copy tailored to each platform & audience.
 - Provide regular performance reports and adjust campaigns accordingly.
- c) Social Media Advertising (paid)

- Develop and implement social media advertising campaigns across platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and other relevant platforms.
- Create engaging ad creative and ad copy tailored to each platform.
- Manage and monitor social media ad campaigns, optimizing for performance and engagement.
- Organic social media *is not part* of this RFP, Visit Longmont will manage internally.

d) E-newsletters

- Design new template(s) and deliver monthly and periodic electronic newsletters to target audiences.
- Recommend strategies for segmenting and increasing click-through rates and on-site engagement.
- Monitor performance and KPIs and make recommendations on improvements.

e) Collateral Production

- Develop and produce annual visitor guide.
- Produce and sell ads for the guide.
- Provide estimates on fulfillment.

f) Video Advertising and Marketing

- Create captivating video content that highlights our destination's vibe, attractions, experiences, and culture.
- Promote video content through digital channels and social media.
- Monitor video performance and adjust strategies as needed.

g) Analysis and Reporting

- Regularly analyze the overall performance of Visit Longmont's advertising campaigns, including digital ads, social media campaigns, etc.
- Provide detailed reports on key performance metrics and insights.
- Make data-driven recommendations for campaign improvements.

h) Innovative Advertising Options

- Propose and implement innovative and unconventional advertising strategies to set our destination apart.
- Detail how you keep abreast of emerging advertising trends and technologies and how you apply them to Visit Longmont's website and programs.

BUDGET

Our target maximum budget for this entire scope of work is \$300,000.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Your agency may submit a quote for the entire campaign or for separate components of the campaign. For example, you may submit a quote for only the website redesign or only for the digital and advertising marketing components.

All proposals **must** follow the format outline below, and requested information must be supplied in PDF format via email to Kristen Garland, kristen@visitlongmont.org by 5:00pm MST on November 21, 2023. The proposal **must not exceed 25 pages** in length. Incomplete proposals, proposals over the page limit and proposals arriving after the deadline will automatically be disqualified from consideration.

Please submit written quote(s) that **briefly** describes and includes:

- a) Cover letter, including your agency's qualifications and experience, project staff and team members' roles and responsibilities, and who will assist on this project.
- b) A description of your strategic approach to the website redesign and/or marketing campaign components.
- c) Budget: Include an estimated budget with breakdown of costs per component. Break out costs by the major milestones (for web) and each tactic (for marketing) and show estimated hourly rates, hard cost, and service fees. Proposals should be tailored using a cost reimbursable model. See appendix for desired pricing template.
- d) Timeline: Include a timeline that identifies major component work and milestone dates for achieving the work throughout 2024.
- e) Two Case Studies: Provide two case studies that demonstrate success for a relevant advertising effort and/or website redesign. Case studies can be included as a URL link (and not in the total page count of your proposal submission).
- f) Please include up to three client or partner references.

CONTRACT TERM

The term of the contract(s) begins no later than January 15, 2024, and ends on December 31, 2024. We anticipate annual renewals (amendments) of contracts for up to three years, depending on funding.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-DISCLOSURE

All designs, drawings, specifications, notes, databases, artwork, and all other work product, including but not limited to feature copy, photography, footage, developed in the performance of this RFP are confidential and remain the property of Visit Longmont, and may not be copyrighted by potential bidders. Potential bidders agree not to assert any rights and not to establish any claim under trademark, patent, or copyright laws. Potential bidders hereby agree, for a period of three (3) years after proposals are submitted or any subsequent contract signed with VL, to furnish and provide access to all retained materials at the request of VL.

CONTRACTOR'S COMPENSATION

Compensation to the Contractor shall be based on the following items listed below.

- *Direct Expenses* - Reimbursement by Visit Longmont of direct expenses, as identified in the Contractor's proposal, and actually incurred by the Contractor in performance of the contract. There shall be no markup or increase to direct expenses and any discounts received by the Contractor shall be passed on to the issuing agency.
- *Travel Expenses* - Travel expenses are considered direct expenses for purposes of the proposed contract and shall be reimbursed at cost with no markup or increase. Travel to Visit Longmont meetings and events shall not be included in reimbursements, unless pre-approved by Visit Longmont.

- *Services Fees* - Payment by Visit Longmont for time spent by the Contractor in performance of the Contract. This includes but is not limited to daily and hourly fees and/or rates for individuals as identified in the contractor's proposal. Visit Longmont works on a service fee basis. Proposals should be tailored on a cost reimbursable basis.
- *Other Fees and/or Rates* - Payment by Visit Longmont for other services based on specific fees and/or rates identified in the contractor's proposal.
- *Indirect Expenses* - Indirect expenses, indirect rates, and/or a markup of direct expenses are not allowable or reimbursable under a proposed contract for the successful bidder(s). Indirect expenses vary, depending on the nature of the proposed contract. Some typical examples of indirect expenses are payroll and travel for administrative personnel, office space, equipment, local telephone, and insurance.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

During the term of a Contract or Contracts, the successful bidder(s) shall not enter into a contractual agreement for any other entity or organization if such service would create a substantial conflict between the interests of Visit Longmont or the interests of the said other entity. If a successful bidder(s) employee, joint venture, subcontractor, or any individual working on the proposed contract may have a possible conflict of interest that may affect the objectivity, analysis, and/or performance of the contract, the successful bidder(s) will advise, in writing, to Visit Longmont immediately of any possible said conflicts of interest.

Conflicts may include existing contractual relationships with other tourism destinations and/or including but not limited to, competing tourism destinations or tourism business destinations and organizations. A conflict of interest also may exist when an interested party participates in a matter that has a direct and predictable effect on the interested party's personal or financial interests. A financial interest may include employment, stock ownership, a creditor or debtor relationship, or prospective employment with the organization selected or to be selected for a subaward. A conflict also may exist where there is an appearance that an interested party's objectivity in performing his or her responsibilities under the project is impaired. For example, an appearance of impairment of objectivity may result from an organizational conflict where, because of other activities or relationships with other persons or entities, an interested party is unable to render impartial assistance, services or advice to the recipient, a participant in the project. Additionally, a conflict of interest may result from non-financial gain to an interested party, such as benefit to reputation or prestige in a professional field.

An interested party includes, but is not necessarily limited to, any officer, employee, or member of the board of directors or other governing board of a non-Federal entity, including any other parties that advise, approve, recommend, or otherwise participate in the business decisions of the recipient, such as agents, advisors, consultants, attorneys, accountants, or shareholders. This also includes immediate family and other persons directly connected to the interested party by law or through a business arrangement.

If Visit Longmont determines a conflict exists, Visit Longmont may choose to modify the scope of services, or to terminate any contract(s). A significant conflict of interest shall be considered good cause for termination of any contract(s).

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be reviewed by a Visit Longmont board of directors' appointed committee. Committee members may represent board directors, key Visit Longmont leadership, and community partners. Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Experience and Expertise: This will be reviewed by the committee for potential bidders' relevant experience and expertise in web development, destination marketing and digital and social media advertising.
2. Creativity and Innovation: The appointed review committee will evaluate ideas based on creativity, innovation, diversity, and efficiency. Cost-effective, out-of-the-box strategies will receive special consideration in a potential bidder's approach to the campaign.
3. Alignment with Objectives: The appointed review committee will review potential bidder's understanding of the project requirements, components, proposed project timeline, and approach to the work. The review committee will take into consideration collaborative partnerships with other entities and the extent to which the proposal aligns with our destination's goals and objectives.
4. Budget and Cost Effectiveness: The appointed review committee will evaluate the competitiveness and cost-effectiveness of proposed budgets included in potential bidders' proposals.
5. Case Studies and References: The appointed review committee will review case studies for similarities and achievements along with references.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL(S) TIMELINE

Visit Longmont is committed to partnering with potential bidders to answer any questions about the Request for Proposal. Your 25-page maximum written quote must be received by Tuesday, November 21, 2023 (electronic only).

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| 1. OCTOBER 25, 2023: | RFP RELEASED AND ADVERTISED / Date of issue |
| 2. NOVEMBER 7, 2023: | DEADLINE from prospective bidders to submit questions (electronic) to Visit Longmont |
| 3. NOVEMBER 10, 2023: | RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS posted to website:
www.visitlongmont.org |
| 4. NOVEMBER 21, 2023, at 5:00 PM (MST) | DEADLINE to submit proposals (electronic) to Visit Longmont |
| 5. NOVEMBER 27-DEC 8, 2023: | PROPOSALS REVIEWED by Board of Directors' appointed committee.
Oral presentations may be invited (tentative / as appropriate) |
| 6. DECEMBER 11-15, 2023: | NOTIFICATION by Visit Longmont to bidders |
| 7. DECEMBER 15, 2023: | CONTRACT(S) awarded by Visit Longmont |
| 8. December 16- JANUARY 15, 2024: | WEBSITE RE-DESIGN AND ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN(S) EFFORTS BEGIN. |

CONTACT INFORMATION

For inquiries and clarifications regarding this RFP, please contact Kristen Garland at kristen@visitlongmont.org or 907-250-4454.

APPENDIX: Pricing Template

Please use the following template for your pricing and budget breakout:

Description	Price
WEBSITE	
Milestone 1	
Milestone 2	
Milestone 3	
Etc.	
Sub-total	
DIGITAL ADVERTISING	
Deliverable 1	
Deliverable 2	
Deliverable 3	
Etc.	
Sub-total	
TOTAL	