



**BROCKVILLE**  
CITY OF THE 1000 ISLANDS

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

2020-RFP-05

**Tourism Marketing and  
Promotion Services**

**City of Brockville**

**June 19, 2020**

# Tourism Marketing and Promotion Services

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **1. Introduction**

Known as the 'City of the 1000 Islands', the city of Brockville is strategically located approximately halfway between Cornwall and Kingston on the St. Lawrence River. It is 115 kilometres from the city of Ottawa and 213 kilometres from the city of Montreal. It benefits from access to the United States at both the Ogdensburg-Prescott and 1000 Islands International Bridges.

The St. Lawrence River has long shaped the city's physical and cultural landscape. Brockville was first settled in 1785 by displaced Loyalists from the United States, who were granted land along the St Lawrence. Many of these early settlers are responsible for the stone buildings along the waterfront and King Street that contribute to the city's unique and attractive downtown. As the city grew it emerged as an important route for ships travelling to and from the Great Lakes and with this saw the industrialization of the city's waterfront. Over time these shoreline industries have given way to waterfront parks, trails and recreation amenities.

Today Brockville is a vibrant riverside community and a significant access point to the 1000 Islands tourist region providing opportunities for scuba diving, boating, fishing, cruising, and sailing, as well as major festivals and events and cultural experiences.

The St Lawrence River remains an important part of the City's visitor economy. Brockville has a total of 3 marinas with almost 350 boat slips, with the municipal marina alone having 644 visitors in 2018. There are also daily river cruises operating from Blockhouse Island throughout the summer months and the City's maritime heritage is also celebrated every 3 years with a visiting Tall Ship Festival. Brockville also offers some of the best scuba diving in Canada with an abundance of shipwrecks and clear water, as well as walk in dive site with an underwater sculpture park. With an abundance of trails, bike routes, paddle areas, parks and golf courses, in 2018, Expedia ranked Brockville as the 7th Most Active Cities in Canada.

While the St Lawrence River is the main draw for many tourists, Brockville

also has a wide range of attractions and assets to offer visitors.

The City of Brockville has continued to invest in new visitor attractions and has opened two new anchor attractions in the past four years. The Aquatarium is a 33,000 sq. ft. discovery centre offering educational programming and experiences on the history and ecology of the St. Lawrence River. The Aquatarium attracted over 53,000 visitors in 2019. The Brockville Railway Tunnel, Canada's first railway tunnel, attracted approximately 23,000 trips per month in its peak months of July and August 2018.

Brockville also offers several other heritage and cultural attractions including the Brockville Museum, which had 5,715 visitors in 2018, and Fulford Place Museum who attracted 5,350 total visitors in 2018. The Brockville Arts Centre is a 710-seat venue with seasonal live entertainment offerings and an art gallery. Productions include dance shows and theatrical productions.

There are also a range of accommodation available for visitors, including 10 commercial and suites hotels, 4 Bed and Breakfasts providers and a number of AirBnB accommodations, as well as campsites at St Lawrence Park and on the City-owned islands.

Supporting the tourism industry is a diverse group of stakeholders that have helped to guide and develop the sector in the city. This includes the City of Brockville, Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Brockville Business Improvement Area, accommodation providers, attraction operators, and festival organizers. In addition, there are strong links to the tourism groups in the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville as well as the Regional Tourism Organization.

The tourism industry is an important part of the Brockville economy. The 5 Year Tourism Strategy and Action Plan, completed in 2019, estimates Brockville's tourism GDP to be \$58 million in 2016 accounting for almost 12 percent of the City's economic base (export base) GDP and just over 4 percent of the City's total GDP (economic base plus community base). In all, Brockville's tourism industry overall (including the direct, indirect and induced impacts) gives rise to \$201 million of output, \$82 million of GDP, \$58 million of labour income and 1,563 jobs.

With an estimated 450,000 visitors annually, the City of Brockville is looking for a qualified organization to manage its tourism marketing services to promote Brockville to a wide audience as a visitor destination.

## **1.1. Municipal Accommodation Tax**

On May 17, 2017, in response to municipalities' request, the Province enacted Bill 127 Stronger, Healthier Ontario Act, 2017, providing single and lower-tier municipalities the authority to levy a transient accommodation tax. Under the Municipal Act, 2001 Ontario Regulation 435/17 Transient Accommodation Tax, provides municipalities with authority to collect a tax in respect of the purchase of transient accommodation in their municipality.

The legislation provides that municipalities allocate at least 50% of the net transient accommodation tax revenue to one or more eligible tourism entities to "be used by the tourism entity for the exclusive purpose of promoting tourism". An eligible tourism entity is defined in the legislation as a "non-profit entity whose mandate includes the promotion of tourism in Ontario or in a municipality".

On January 30, 2018 Brockville City Council approved a 4 percent Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) on all Brockville transient accommodations, with the tax coming into effect on May 1, 2018. In 2018, \$238,699 of MAT was collected for the period of May 1st to December 31st, with \$144,349 given to eligible tourism entities. In 2019, total MAT collected was \$397,471 and \$198,735 was disbursed to eligible tourism entities for tourism marketing and promotion.

The City will be utilizing the Municipal Accommodation Tax collected in one year to fund the deliverables in the Tourism Marketing and Promotion Services contract for the following year. The City is aware that some of the marketing and promotional campaigns may need to be booked early and funds can be made available during the year the tax is collected to allow for early bookings and lower rates.

The variability of the amount of MAT collected requires that the successful proponent will need to work with the City and other tourism stakeholders to develop an annual work plan with the MAT funds collected. This will require an approach which provides flexibility of services delivered based on the funding available.

## **2. Description of Project**

### **2.1. Project Overview**

The City invites Proposals from qualified eligible tourism entities to provide Tourism Marketing and Promotion Services that are focused on positioning Brockville as a destination for visitors and attracting tourists from farther afield.

### **2.2. Intended Term of Agreement**

The term of the Agreement will be for five (5) years from January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2025.

### **2.3. Value of the Projects**

The funding for this service will come from the Municipal Accommodation Taxes collected in the City of Brockville. The taxes are collected throughout the year and are used to fund marketing activities in the following year. As the MAT funds collected are based on guests staying in local accommodations and this will vary year to year. **The successful proponent will need to work with the City and other tourism stakeholders to develop an annual marketing and promotion plan based on the funding available.**

### **2.4. Intention of Award**

The intention of the City maybe to award to one Proponent. In keeping with the Municipal Accommodation Tax legislation, the successful proponent must be an eligible tourism entity which is defined as a **“non-profit entity whose mandate includes the promotion of tourism in Ontario or in a municipality”**.

Proponents should be aware that the City of Brockville is also concurrently issuing an RFP for Tourism Information and Stakeholders Services. This RFP will include requirements for social media services that are focused on daily information and stories. The successful proponents of both tourism RFPs will be expected to work closely together to ensure consistent messaging, promotion and service delivery.

### **2.5. Background Documents and Resources**

Proponents may find the following documents and resources helpful in preparing their proposals (click title to link to the documents).

City of Brockville

[Brockville Tourism \(website\)](#)

[Brockville Tourism 2020 Visitor Guide \(2020\)](#)

[City of Brockville 5 Year Tourism Strategy and Action Plan \(2019\)](#)

[Brockville First Impressions Report \(2016\)](#)

[Brockville Economic Development Strategic Directions Updated Report \(2015\)](#)

[Brockville Economic Development Strategy \(2010\)](#)

Regional Tourism Organization (RTO 9)

[RTO 9 \(website\)](#)

[RTO 9 South Eastern Ontario Marketing Plan 2019-2020](#)

[RTO 9 South Eastern Ontario Product Development Strategy \(2019\)](#)

[RTO 9 South Eastern Ontario State of Tourism \(2019\)](#)

[RTO 9 Consumer & Business Research Tourism Talk Portal](#)

Destination Ontario

[Ontario Travel \(website\)](#)

[Destination Ontario \(website\)](#)

[Strategic Playbook A Plan for 2018 - 2021](#)

[Summer 2017 Brand Tracking Ontario](#)

Thousand Islands International

[Thousand Islands International \(website\)](#)

[1000 Islands International Visitor Guide](#)

### **3. Services to be Provided**

Set out below are the key areas of service that the City anticipates proponents to deliver over the term of the contract. These service areas are based on the delivery of previous tourism marketing and promotion campaigns and are to be considered as a guide to the services that proponents may want to provide. **The City is interested in receiving innovative proposals for how the Municipal Accommodation Tax can be used to promote and market the City as a visitor destination to a wider audience and proponents are encouraged to demonstrate how this can be achieved in their response.**

#### **3.1. Production and Distribution of an Annual Visitor Guide**

The Brockville Tourism organization has produced and distributed a hard copy visitor guide for many years. Over the past few years this guide has improved both in content and quality and has also benefitted from more targeted distribution. The Guide has typically been about 40 pages in length and is filled with high quality photos. The Guide typically includes an events calendar, local accommodation and attraction information, as well as fold out or pull out map of attractions and accommodations. Proponents may want to consider the use and production of maps as part of the marketing material produced.

While paid advertisement has been used in previous guide and maps, proponents are encouraged to consider the benefits and viability of a visitor guide with no advertising. Distribution of the guide is important, and the proponents should outline how they intend to reach target audiences and the best channels to utilize.

While previous Visitor Guides have focused on hard copy guide with mailed distribution, the City is aware that digital guides with online distribution are increasingly important in tourism marketing. The City would encourage proponents to consider the use of a digital version of the Visitor Guide with distribution through online channels.

#### **3.2. Digital Campaign**

Proponents should include opportunities for the development and delivery of an annual programmatic advertising program, including mobile, desktop, tablet, audio, digital outdoor and connected TV. Proponents should outline the delivery mechanisms they would recommend and the expected outcomes

from using these methods. Proponents may also wish to emphasize other digital asset development such as apps, beacons, maps, which will assist in marketing and promoting the City to visitors. Proponents should identify the reporting mechanisms and frequency they would provide to demonstrate the effectiveness of their digital campaigns.

### **3.3. Other Advertising and Promotional Opportunities**

There are a range of other advertising opportunities through other travel and tourism related publications and digital media. Proponents may want to demonstrate how this could be achieved through coordinated purchases with other area tourism partners. These activities may include the use of travel writers, bloggers and or photographers to produce promotional content. Proponents may wish to demonstrate how these would be utilised to achieve the objectives of increasing visitors to the city.

### **3.4. Leveraging Funding**

There are several tourism marketing grants and match funding opportunities which could be accessed to supplement the activities under this contract. Proponents should be able to demonstrate knowledge of and experience in leveraging funding from other sources.

### **3.5. Reporting**

To better understand the tourism marketing and promotion campaigns and the impact that they are having the proponent will be expected to report annually on metrics such as:

- Number of Visitors Guides produced
- Number of Visitors Guides distributed by region
- Analytics for Digital Visitor Guides
- Digital campaign with analytics on reach and effectiveness
- Number of advertisements placed with analytics on reach and effectiveness
- Number of writers, bloggers and social media influencers hosted with analytics on reach and effectiveness
- Number of grants applied for and funding leveraged

#### **4. RFP Requirements**

It is the sole responsibility of the Proponent to submit their Proposal at or before the established Closing Date and Time.

##### **4.1. Schedule**

The Request for Proposal process shall follow the dates identified unless formally adjusted by addendum:

Task	Date
RFP issued	June 19, 2020
Question Deadline	June 26, 2020
Closing Date	July 17, 2020
Recommendation Report to Council	August 18, 2020

**Note:** Although every attempt will be made to meet all dates, the City reserves the right to modify any or all dates at its sole discretion at any time.

##### **4.2. Inquiries**

All inquiries for this Request for Proposal must be in written form and directed to Rob Nolan, Director of Economic and Development Services, via email at [rnolan@brockville.com](mailto:rnolan@brockville.com). The deadline for inquiries is 12:00 noon on June 26, 2020.

Information obtained from any other source is not official and no verbal communication will modify the terms of this RFP.

Questions for clarification that alter the method and pricing of the submission will be posted in the form of an Addenda and are required to be signed and included with the submission.

Questions for clarification that do not alter the method and pricing of the submission will be posted in the form of a Question and Answer document and will not require to be signed and returned with the submission.

Proponents are encouraged to check the City website for Questions and Answers received to the RFP after the inquiries deadline.

##### **4.3. Submission Requirements**

The proposal submission shall not exceed 20 pages including schedules, illustrations, and charts (excluding resumes). Three (3) copies of the

proposal shall be submitted.

The proposal shall be submitted in an envelope and be clearly marked with the Proponent name and referencing the proposal. The proposal will be received at:

(courier address)

City of Brockville  
1 King Street West  
Brockville, ON  
K6V 5V1

Attention: Rob Nolan

(general mailing address)

City of Brockville  
P.O. Box 5000  
Brockville, ON  
K6V 7A5

Attention: Rob Nolan

**Before 12:00 noon, local time, July 17, 2020**

**Proposals received after this time will not be accepted.**

#### **4.4. Opening of Proposals**

There will not be a public opening. Proposals will be received at the address listed above and shall be opened as soon as practical and evaluated.

#### **4.5. Addenda**

If the City determines that an Addendum is necessary, the City will post an Addendum on the City website and shall become part in parcel part of the RFP Document(s). Upon submitting a Proposal, Proponents are required to sign each of the Addenda and include them with the submission.

It is the responsibility of the Proponent to ensure that it has retrieved any and/or all Addenda and or questions and answers as issued prior to the Closing Date and Time.

#### **4.6. Withdrawal of Proposals**

Proponents may withdraw their Proposal at any time prior to the Proposal Closing Date and Time by submitting a written withdrawal request to Rob Nolan, Director, Economic and Development Services, [rnolan@brockville.com](mailto:rnolan@brockville.com).

#### **4.7. Examination of RFP Proposal Documents and Facilities**

It is the responsibility of each Proponent to examine the RFP Document(s)

thoroughly. The Proponent may not claim, after the submission of a Proposal, that there was any misunderstanding with respect to the Services or Work and conditions imposed by the City.

There will be no opportunity to make any additional claim for compensation or invoice for additional charges that were not considered and included in the Proposal Fee submitted, unless the City, at its sole discretion, deems that it would be unreasonable to do so, or there are additional Work requirements due to unforeseen circumstances and as approved by the City.

**4.8. Liability for Errors**

While the City has taken considerable effort to ensure an accurate representation of information in this RFP, the information contained is supplied solely as a guideline for Proponent. The information is not guaranteed or warranted accurate by the City, nor is it necessarily comprehensive or exhaustive. Nothing in this RFP is intended to relieve the Proponent from forming their opinions and or conclusions with respect to the Work as described in this RFP.

**4.9. Litigation Clause**

The City may, in its sole discretion reject a Proposal submitted by Proponents if the Proponent, or any officer or director of the Proponent is or has been engaged either directly or indirectly through another corporation in a legal action against the City, its elected or appointed officers and employees in relation to:

- a. Any other Agreement and or contract for works or Services; or
- b. Any matter arising from the City's exercise of its powers, duties or functions under the Municipal Act for another enactment

Within five years of the date of this Request for Proposal.

In determining whether to reject a Proposal under this clause, the City will consider whether the litigation is likely to affect the Proponent's ability to work with the City, its consultants or representatives. In addition, whether the City's experience with the Proponent indicates that the City is likely to incur increased staff and legal costs in the administration of this Agreement if it is awarded to the Proponent.

#### **4.10. Proponent Expenses**

The City is not liable for any costs incurred by interested parties in the preparation of their response to this request or subsequent interviews. Furthermore, the City shall not be responsible for any liabilities, cost, loss or damages, sustained or suffered by any interested party, prior or subsequent to, or by reason of the acceptance or non-acceptance by the City of any response, or by reason of any delay in the acceptance of the response.

#### **4.11. Amendment to Agreement Documents**

Both the City's designated project manager and the Successful Proponent shall not amend the RFP Documents except as specifically agreed upon in writing and signed.

#### **4.12. Changes to the Proposal Wording and Content**

The Proponent is not allowed the opportunity to change the wording or content of its Proposal after the closing date and time, and no words will be added to the Proposal, including changing the intent or content of the presentation of the Proposal, unless requested by the City (e.g. minor clarifications).

#### **4.13. Acceptance and Rejection of Proposals**

This RFP does not commit the City, in any way to select any Proponent or accept any Proposal and the City reserves the right in its sole discretion to postpone or cancel this RFP at any time for any reason whatsoever and to proceed with the Services in some other manner separate from this RFP process.

The City may accept a proposal in whole or in part, whether the submitted price is lowest or not, and may reject any or all proposals. There will be no requirements of the RFP, implied or otherwise, that the proposal representing the lowest submitted price would be selected or preferred. The RFP process is used as a means of evaluating a number of criteria (one of which is submitted price).

If any Proposal contains a deficiency or fails in some way to comply with any requirement of the RFP, which in the opinion of the City is not material, the City may waive the defect and accept the Proposal. The determination of whether or not to disqualify or otherwise remove any Proposal from the evaluation process will be made in the sole discretion of the City.

In the event that a favourable proposal does not exactly meet with the City's requirements, the City reserves the right to enter into negotiations with the Consultant to arrive at mutual satisfactory arrangements with respect to any modification to the proposal.

Revised proposal will not be called for if only minor changes are contemplated.

#### **4.14. Ownership of Proposals**

All Proposals submitted, other than any Proposal withdrawn prior to the Closing Date and Time of Proposals or any late Proposals, become the property of the City and will not be returned to Proponents.

#### **4.15. Not a Binding Agreement**

Issuance of this RFP, the Proponent's preparation of a Proposal, and the subsequent receipt and evaluation of the Proposal by the City does not obligate the City in any manner whatsoever, including awarding an Agreement to any Proponent. Only the full execution and delivery of the final Form of Agreement between all parties will obligate the City in accordance with the Agreement terms and conditions.

#### **4.16. Debriefing**

Proponents may request a debriefing which may be made available at the City's convenience and must be made within fifteen (15) calendar days of notification of award. The intent of the debriefing is to aid the Proponent in presenting a stronger Proposal in subsequent procurement opportunities. Any debriefing provided is not for the purpose of providing an opportunity to challenge the procurement process. The City will provide a debriefing upon request, after an Agreement award has been completed.

### **5. Evaluation Criteria**

Evaluation of each proposal relative to the others shall give due consideration to:

- A. Company and Key Personnel (20%)
  - Company/organizational experience of delivering tourism marketing services

- Key staff and relevant qualifications and experience in delivering similar services
- References and description for two contracts of similar scale. References may be contacted
- Experience in writing grant applications and reporting

B. Understanding of the tourism industry and marketing (20%)

- Understanding of current issues and opportunities in tourism sector in Ontario and locally
- Specific experience delivering tourism marketing programs with examples of successful outcomes
- Experience and track record working in collaboration with industry leaders and stakeholders
- Understanding of available tourism marketing grants and match-funding opportunities

C. Technical Approach (45%)

- Description of a flexible approach to tourism marketing and promotion for Brockville
- Quality of overall approach, work methodology and identification of project constraints
- Demonstration of an innovative approach to delivery of tourism marketing and promotion

D. Cost (15%)

- Estimates for annual cost of delivery of services
- Demonstration of flexible cost model to account for variability in funding

**The City may invite selected Proponent to present their proposal to an evaluation panel.**

## **6. General Terms of Reference**

### **6.1. Acceptance of Terms**

All the terms and conditions of this RFP are assumed to be accepted by the Proponent and incorporated in its Proposal, except those revisions that are proposed or requested in the Proposal and accepted by the City.

## **6.2. RFP Terms and Conditions**

The terms and conditions of the Proposal offer shall remain firm and open for acceptance by the City for a period of ninety (90) days from the date of closing.

Final acceptance of the Proposal will be subject to the successful negotiation and execution of a written contract meeting the expenditure limits and required terms and conditions acceptable to the City. The acceptance or rejection of any Proposal will be made pursuant to the policies of the City.

## **6.3. The City Reserve Rights**

The City reserves the right to:

- a. Waive any irregularity or insufficiency in any Proposal;
- b. Accept the Proposal which is deemed most favourable to the interest of the City;
- c. Accept any Proposal in whole or in part;
- d. Seek Proposal clarification with the any or all of the Proponents to assist in the evaluation;
- e. To request clarification from one or more than one Proponent with regard to pricing that is obviously unbalanced;
- f. Negotiate with the selected Proponent;
- g. Reject any or all Proposals;
- h. Contact references other than, and or in addition to, those furnished by the Proponent;
- i. Modify the terms of the RFP at any time in its sole discretion; up to the Closing Date and Time; and
- j. Internally publish the names of Proponents and any summary cost information deemed appropriate by the City.

## **6.4. Notification of Award**

The Successful Proponent will be notified in writing and required agreeable obligations will need to be fulfilled before the Work can begin. All Proponents are directed to regularly check the City's website for results of the

opportunity as unsuccessful Proponents will not be notified in writing.

**6.5. Form of Agreement**

Prior to commencing work on the project, the successful Consultant will enter into an Agreement with the City based on the City's Request for Proposal information package the Proponent's submission.

**6.6. Indemnification**

The successful Consultant shall at all times hereafter hold harmless and shall fully indemnify the City from and against all claims and demands which may be brought against or made upon the City and against all loss, liabilities, judgements, costs, damages or expenses which the City may sustain, suffer or be put unto resulting from, arising from, or in any way incidental to the performance of this work by the proponent in the performance of services pursuant to the Agreement referenced in Clause 6.5.

**6.7. Insurance**

The successful proponent must, prior to commencement of the services, provide evidence of Errors and Omissions Liability coverage for an inclusive limit not less than \$5,000,000 liability for any one occurrence and General Liability coverage for an inclusive limit of not less than \$5,000,000 liability for any one occurrence or accident for all claims arising from bodily injury, property damage, personal injury, and non-owned automobile. The Corporation of the City of Brockville shall be added as an additional insured with a cross liability clause on each policy of comprehensive liability insurance with an undertaking from the insurance company that such insurance will not be cancelled or reduced in coverage without thirty (30) days Notice of Cancellation or material change.

**6.8. Force Majeure**

Neither party will be liable for any failure or delay to perform that party's obligations resulting from any cause beyond that party's reasonable control. This will include but not be limited to fires, explosions, floods, strikes, Work stoppages, slowdowns, or other industrial disputes, accidents, riots or civil disturbances, acts of civil or military authorities.

**6.9. Gifts and Donations**

The Successful Proponent will ensure that no representative of the Successful Proponent will offer or extend any entertainment, gift, gratuity, discount, or

special service, regardless of value, to any employee of the City. The Successful Proponent will report any attempt by any employee of The City to obtain such favours to the City of Brockville's City Manager or designate.

**6.10. Independent Contractor**

The Successful Proponent, it's Sub-Contractors, the officers, directors, shareholders, partners, personnel, affiliates and agents of the Successful Proponent and Sub-Contractors are not, nor are they to be deemed to be partners, appointees, employees or agents of the City.