



CITY OF HOUSTON
STRATEGIC PURCHASING DIVISION
S29-Q24435
NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR INFORMATION



CITY OF HOUSTON 311 MOBILE APP MARKETING & PROMOTION CONSULTANT(S)

The City of Houston ("the City") Administration & Regulatory Affairs (ARA) Department is considering soliciting professional services from Consultant(s) via a future Request for Qualifications (RFQ) who specializes in creative marketing and communications. The objective of this Request for Information (RFI) is to retrieve information from Consultant(s) who are capable of conceptualizing a marketing strategy and supporting tactics to promote the launch of the City's new 311 Help & Information Mobile App ("the App"). Subsequently, to the future RFQ the ARA Department intends to enter into a professional services agreement with a Consultancy/Consultant(s) to provide design creative assets to be placed in selected media channels and to coordinate the purchase of advertising within those channels on the City's behalf.

The ARA Department would like to take into consideration all creative marketing and communications Consultant(s) who would be interested in participating in a future RFQ, as well as, provide a presentation on their App marketing and promotion plan suggestions, to include all possibilities and considerations that ARA should utilize in the RFQ when issued. The presentation and all other related expenses must be at **"NO COST"** to the City and will be scheduled with each respondent to this RFI after it has closed.

Please review the basic overview of the intended Scope of Services outlined below. If you believe that your consultancy/organization can provide recommendations to enhance the overall objective stated and would be interested in conducting a presentation, please indicate your interest to this RFI by submitting the following contact information: Consultancy/Organization Name, Contact Person, Address, Telephone No., Fax No. and E-mail Address to Douglas Moore, Deputy Assistant Director, via one of the following methods listed below by **November 13, 2012 at 4:00 p.m.**

Email Address douglas.moore@houstontx.gov

Mail: City of Houston
Strategic Purchasing Division
901 Bagby, Rm. B500 (Basement Level)
Houston, TX 77002

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OBJECTIVE

The ARA Department is seeking information from creative marketing and communications consultant(s) who can assist ARA in maximizing the effectiveness of the launch of the 311 App. ARA's vision for the 311 App is to:

1. Increase ease of communication with 311
2. Reduce internal expenses and staff time incurred by 311 and 911 related to processing of 311 or other non-emergency requests

ARA is exploring the possibility of issuing a professional service RFQ to manage App advertisement and promotion. ARA is extending an invitation to all interested parties, who may be available to provide information to assist in the development of the professional services RFQ.

BACKGROUND

The City of Houston 311 system was recently transformed from the "311 Call Center" to "311 Help & Information". The former 311 Call Center was built on a bloated and inflexible cost structure, founded on a former rigid and frail Customer Relationship Management System (CRM), and did not take advantage of the opportunity to leverage the provision of online information to realize efficiencies in labor productivity or to maximize Houstonians' engagement with the platform. Prior to the transformation, the 311 Call Center provided telephone Service Request (SR) and information service 18 hours a day, seven days a week. The previous 311 website indicated little understanding of how to deliver value to the user seeking information.

The redesigned City of Houston 311 Help & Information has been purpose-built on the foundation of "increasing citizen engagement". The transformation has been comprehensive. As of August 15, 2012, 311 Help & Information stood up 24 hour a day, seven day a week service. The new management and CRM systems have instituted a labor model that more closely matches the demands placed on it by Houstonians. Furthermore, the service extension was implemented at an operating cost to the City of \$600,000 less per year than the former 311 Call Center model.

The City launched www.houston311.org, a website that was conceptualized, redesigned, and implemented in a manner which reflects care and respect for site users.

Perhaps more importantly, the management and CRM systems have introduced a new capability for the City to recognize the changing nature of how Houstonians desire to communicate – on their terms. When they want, in what method they want, and with whom they want.

311 Help & Information is now able to offer SR submission and information/advisory services in a way



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that may be customized by each Houstonian, given his/her preferences for types of information request or SR submission, the time he/she would like to use to communicate the same to the City, and whether he/she prefers to communicate via phone call, email, website visit, app launch, or social media.

The City of Houston 311 Help & Information Android and iOS mobile app introduces a new option into Houstonians' set of communication avenues to the City. In addition to serving as a pure SR submission platform, the app embodies the previously stated goal of "increasing citizen engagement". 311 app users are able to:

- Upload photos from the image gallery on their mobile device
- Upload an image taken real time
- Identify the GPS location of the issue they would like addressed
- Receive email confirmation of SR submission
- View the status of SRs submitted by themselves and other users
- Utilize an app-specific social media function
- Share app usage (and engagement with City) to their own personal networks via prepopulated but customizable postings to their Facebook and Twitter accounts

INTENDED SCOPE OF WORK

It is requested that consultant(s) provide details related to the following App marketing & promotion requirements.

- Brand, reintroduce, and reposition programs such as the City's 311 program that were implemented within other organizations. For example: "Make Houston Better, Together." The desired result is to begin to educate Houstonians about:
 - The ways they can use 311
 - Times and issues when it is appropriate to use 311 vs 911
 - The optimal outcome of the items above will be increase 311 penetration from civic club power users and nudge it toward mainstream adoption, and to reduce the number of unnecessary calls to both 311 and 911
- Drive downloads of the mobile app
- Sample possibilities of developed creative design assets that were used at other organization(s) for placement and use within multiple media channels
- Examples of coordinating purchases of advertising in media channels on other organization(s) behalf
- Samples of design and coordination efforts of "earned media" aspects of initial launch, to include: media outreach, news releases, op-eds, news conferences, etc. used at other organization(s)



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- List all possibilities, effectiveness, app downloads, and expenditure that the City could attain if it were to deploy an App marketing and promotion campaign
- Potential success metric information that was experienced by other organization(s) or commercial enterprises as a result of deploying an App promotion and repositioning campaign
- Samples of developed processes, procedures, criteria, requirements, and methodologies that were deployed within other organization(s) and/or commercial enterprises on similar previous projects

ARA IS SEEKING INFORMATION FROM CREATIVE MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT(S) WHO HAVE SPECIALIZED EXPERTISE IN THE FOLLOWING KEY AREAS

- Design, implementation, and monitoring of integrated marketing campaigns
- Effective tactics to maximize adoption of mobile apps and supporting digital assets required
- Digital and mobile media advertising
- Brand repositioning and broad-reach education campaigns

Consultant(s) should be advised that the City may elect to invite all respondents to participate in a presentation for the development of requirements for an upcoming RFQ. The time allotted for the presentation may range from one to two hours, depending upon the overall number of presentations that need to be scheduled. The goal of this RFI is to guide ARA in its efforts to establish professional service RFQ to manage App advertisement and promotion. To reiterate, the City may choose to utilize information obtained from Consultants during this RFI process to develop an RFQ toward this goal.

All recommendations and comments are welcomed and will be reviewed and considered. All recommendation(s) of good merit and clear business logic and methodology may be used and incorporated into the final RFQ solicitation document.

END OF REQUEST FOR INFORMATION DOCUMENT