



## **Request for Qualifications**

### **Community Branding, Marketing Plan, and Economic Development Website**

The Rockdale Municipal Development District (RMDD) is releasing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) from interested and qualified branding and marketing firms for professional services to assist the City and RMDD in the development of a community brand, a marketing plan, and a new economic development website.

Rockdale MDD Board Authorization to Release RFQ: Monday, September 26, 2022

Request for Qualifications Due: Tuesday, November 1, 2022

Board Selection of Firm: Monday, November 21, 2022

Board Contract Approval: Monday, December 19, 2022

## **Background**

The City of Rockdale is located approximately 65 miles northeast of Austin and Milam County is adjacent to the Austin-Round Rock MSA, one of the fastest growing areas of Texas and the United States. The growth emanating from Austin is affecting the City of Rockdale in positive ways. Recent industrial announcements in the Austin MSA necessitate the Rockdale leadership to think seriously about growth issues and how the City can best capitalize on the opportunities before it.

The City of Rockdale is about to experience a growth spurt as development from the greater Austin region is starting to spill over into western Milam County. A new 660-unit subdivision is going to be constructed which will increase Rockdale's population by approximately 30%. Rockdale is also starting to get the attention of retail and industrial developers.

The City and RMDD are going to engage the services of a planning consultant to craft a community vision and then use that to refine the City's Comprehensive Plan. Using the same community vision as a starting point, the selected firm will then develop a community brand and then a marketing plan. This marketing plan will be centered on attracting talent and new residents, visitors and tourists, and small businesses to Rockdale. A new logo for the City and RMDD is also expected to be included as a deliverable.

Finally, a new RMDD website will need to be developed and deployed. The RMDD desires a turnkey service which will include, but not be limited to copy writing, professional photography, and video footage.

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS  
Rockdale Municipal Development District**

**Community Branding, Marketing Plan, and Economic Development Website**

I. INTRODUCTION

The Rockdale Municipal Development District (RMDD) seeks to enter into an agreement with a qualified Individual, Firm or Corporation (Offeror/Consultant/Firm) with substantial and relevant experience and expertise to develop a Community Brand, Marketing Plan, and Economic Development Website. This RFQ is issued in accordance with applicable laws that allow an agreement with a consultant firm that demonstrates and has proven experience and knowledge in this area that will work closely with City staff.

There is no expressed or implied obligation for the RMDD to reimburse the responding firms for any expenses incurred in the preparation in response to this request. In no event will the RMDD or any of its respective agents, representatives, consultants, directors, officers, or employees be liable for, or otherwise be obligated to reimburse, the costs incurred in preparation of any response, or any other related costs. The prospective firms shall be fully responsible for all costs incurred in the preparation and/or presentation of submittals. The submittals will become the property of the RMDD upon submission and shall be subject to the Texas Public Information Act unless the respondent clearly and prominently identifies a particular submittal item as proprietary and said item unequivocally qualifies for this exception under the Act as determined by the Texas Attorney General in accordance with the law.

The RMDD reserves the right to increase or decrease the scope of work related to this project as outlined in this RFQ after a firm is selected to accommodate changes in the needs of the RMDD and serve the best interests of the City. The RMDD further reserves the right to terminate this process and to cancel or modify this solicitation at any time. The following information is offered regarding the overall scope of work. The intent of this Request for Qualifications is to provide information so that the Offeror can define the level of expertise, experience, personnel, and approach necessary to perform the required services in a timely, cost-effective and professional manner.

## II. SCOPE OF SERVICE AND DELIVERABLES

Community Vision – It is anticipated that the City of Rockdale will use a third-party consultant (working on updating the City’s Comprehensive Plan) to develop a community vision and values statement. The selected consultant will use the adopted community vision statement as a starting point in creating a community brand.

**Community Brand** – The consultant will work with City staff, leadership, and residents to develop a community brand. This will include the graphic and visual elements of a brand - a logo and tagline - but also the brand promise that Rockdale offers the target audience which can be easily understood by community stakeholders. We desire a community logo to be one that can be easily modified to be used by multiple entities, e.g., the City, the RMDD, the Chamber, Rockdale ISD, etc. We expect the community brand to be clear, evoke emotions as Rockdale is seeking to emerge from its economic adjustment and aspire to a new economic future, be as iconic as possible, and include an element of Rockdale’s heritage. The community brand elements must be as unique as possible.

**Marketing Plan** – Using the new community brand, the consultant will create a marketing plan for Rockdale to reach the following target audiences: potential new residents, a.k.a., talent attraction; tourism/visitors; and small businesses.

**Website Development** – The consultant will also create a new website for the Rockdale MDD based on the Marketing Plan with the option of a new or revised tourism site. The consultant will create the website structure, functionality, feature integration, and coordinate the creation of all necessary content, including, but not limited to, copy writing, photography, videography, drone footage, etc.

## **Scope of Services Details and Proposal Requirements**

### Community Brand Development

#### 1. Public Input, Community Engagement and Public Outreach

The consultant will conduct a well-publicized public involvement process using various forums and media to reach Rockdale citizens. Consultant will coordinate closely with the City and RMDD to publicize and coordinate all public contact.

*The consultant will provide in the RFQ a detailed explanation of their creative and analytical process for creating a community brand, including community research and a robust public involvement process.*

- #### 2. The consultant will provide a preliminary and final presentation to the RMDD Board and/or City Council on the community brand elements.

### Marketing Plan

*Components of the Marketing Plan may or may not be limited to the following sections.*

#### 1. Community Assets

The consultant will identify Rockdale assets that can be marketed to the target audience. The consultant may also suggest ways to improve Rockdale's assets (community product) which may enhance marketing outcomes.

*The consultant will identify the methods of identifying community assets. A SWOT analysis or similar methodology is encouraged in conjunction with community involvement.*

#### 2. Community Perception Management

Rockdale does not presently have a positive perception both among residents and people who visit or drive through Rockdale. The Marketing Plan will identify strategies on how to ameliorate any deficits in the community's perceptions.

#### 3. Target Audience Analysis

The consultant will work with the City and RMDD to gain insights into the target audiences.

A. Resident/Talent Attraction – City and RMDD leadership feel that Rockdale can be uniquely positioned as a community that is in a commutable distance of the Austin market and other major industrial developments. Rockdale can offer more affordable housing options with higher quality schools than other markets. Combined, this should drive demand for residential properties.

B. Small business attraction – The City and RMDD wish to attract small businesses and entrepreneurs to the community. Initially, these will be in the retail and restaurant industries as the City wishes to be a place with a unique dining, drinking, and entertainment presence. Similarly, the City wishes to attract small entrepreneurs who can establish viable businesses that can create employment opportunities in Rockdale.

C. Visitor/Tourism - The City and RMDD also wish to embark on an effort to encourage tourism and visitor opportunities in Rockdale. Using a conceptual tourism development plan, the consultant will assist in the design and implementation of a tourism marketing plan.

D. Analysis - The consultant will analyze the viability of the target audiences with empirical market research; identify the target model new resident, entrepreneur, and visitor; their demographic and psychographic profiles; their spending and buying patterns and decision-making processes.

*The consultant will provide in the RFQ a detailed methodology for gathering and analyzing as much data as possible on the target audiences.*

### 3. Competitor Research and Analysis

Realizing that communities are in a “War” for talent, attention, and investment, the consultant will analyze other communities to determine who Rockdale’s chief competitors are for the target audiences. The consultant will create a competitive analysis including competitor assets vis-a-vis Rockdale, quantifiable benchmarks and develop marketing strategies for how to appropriately compete.

*The consultant will provide in the RFQ a detailed methodology for creating a competition analysis and how they will develop competition strategies.*

4. Unique Value/Selling Proposition

Combining all relevant information and community input, the consultant will craft a compelling Unique Value/Selling Proposition.

5. Advertising Plan and Promotion Strategies

The consultant will create a preliminary advertising and promotion campaign designed to reach the target audience with an appropriate message, at an appropriate time, in the appropriate medium. A projected advertising budget, based on funding input from the RMDD, will be a component part of the marketing plan.

6. Marketing Metrics

The consultant will recommend methods and metrics of how to measure the effectiveness of the advertising campaign. This will include marketing goals as well as community and industry benchmarks.

7. Presentations and Adoption

The consultant will also provide a preliminary and final presentation to the RMDD Board and/or City Council on the marketing plan. Preliminary marketing plan presentation may be combined with final community brand presentation.

Website Development

*The consultant will describe in the RFQ their process for working with the RMDD in developing a new website based on the marketing plan. The consultant will identify if a new tourism website needs to be created or if an existing site can be modified.*

III. PROPOSED SCHEDULE

RFQ Release Date MDD Board Authorization to Release Release Date	Monday, September 26, 2022 Tuesday, September 27, 2022
Deadline for Questions	Wednesday, October 5, 2021
Responses to Questions Posted, if necessary	Friday, October 7, 2021
Submission Due Date	Tuesday, November 1, 2022
Respondent Selection by MDD Board and Authorization to Negotiate a Contract	Monday, November 14, 2022
Contract Execution/Notice to Proceed	Monday, December 19, 2022
Anticipated Project Completion Branding Marketing Plan New Website	May 1, 2023 June 1, 2023 August 1, 2023

IV. Project Questions

Clarification questions regarding this Request for Qualifications should be directed in writing to:

James P. Gibson, CEcD MEDP  
Economic Development Director  
Rockdale Municipal Development District

At

[Jim.gibson@rockdalemdd.org](mailto:Jim.gibson@rockdalemdd.org)

The deadline to submit written clarification questions will be on October 5, 2022, and the deadline to post answers to questions is on October 7, 2022.



## V. SUBMISSION

Interested and qualified firms or teams are invited to submit FOUR (4) paper copies of an SOQ for a Community Branding, Marketing Plan, and Website (inclusive of all required documents and affirmations) that demonstrate their experience in performing a project of this scale and complexity. Provide a list of references from clients, funding agencies, governmental units or partners worked with. The SOQ shall be submitted by a lead firm but may contain services from sub consultants. Documentation should be limited to 15 single sided pages and include the items below. Statement of Interest Letter and Resumes do not count in the 15-page limit.

### Item 1: Firm(s) Information

- A. Provide a general description of the lead firm, including the firm's history, the experience and background of the firm's principals, and the conceptual approach the firm takes for projects of this nature.
- B. Identify any subcontractors the firm proposes to use to complete the project and their qualifications and proposed role(s).
- C. Firm Personnel. List all personnel that the firm will assign to this project and describe their role in the project. This will be for the lead firm and any subcontractors the firm has identified. Clearly identify the Project Manager who will be the RMDD's point of contact for this project. For all personnel, provide their experience, education, and background.
- D. Firm Track Record. List no more than five (5) projects similar to this RFQ which have been completed in the past five (5) years.
- E. Provide at least two, but no more than five, references of similar projects from the last five years. This will include relevant project information, dates completed, and contacts who can comment on the quality of the work. The results of any reference checks will be provided to the evaluation committee and used when scoring the written qualifications.
- F. Firm Availability. Firm will identify other current projects, involvement of proposed staff, current status of the project and expected completion of that project, that might create any real or perceived conflict of interest in this project.

### Item 2: Project Information

The Consultant should provide a clear and concise understanding of the project based on the information given as well as project goals and requirements. The proposer should explain their plan development process including their proposed strategy for completing the tasks identified in the scope.

The City may determine that it is necessary to interview short-listed firms prior to making a recommendation to the RMDD Board. Generally, staff may interview the top firms based on the results of the Evaluation Committee.

**Submission Format**

For the ease of the review committee and to guarantee equal consideration for all offerors, please structure your submissions based on the nine sections of the evaluation score sheet attached to this document.

**Four (4) Copies of Submittals shall be delivered to:**

James P. Gibson, CEcD MEDP  
Economic Development Director  
Rockdale Municipal Development District  
Rockdale Parks Master Plan RFQ  
134 N. Main Street  
Rockdale, TX 76567

**All submittals must be received no later than 2 p.m., Tuesday, November 1, 2022**

## VI. Selection Methodology

A committee consisting of City of Rockdale and Rockdale MDD Board and staff will rate the SOQ's using the evaluation criteria developed for this project. A draft scoring sheet is attached to this RFQ. The selection committee may interview one or more firms to further evaluate qualifications. The selection committee will present their recommendations to the Rockdale MDD Board who will select the consultant for this project. During the evaluation process, the Rockdale MDD reserves the right, where it may serve the City of Rockdale's best interest, to request additional information or clarifications from responders, or to allow corrections of errors or omissions.

### Review of SOQ's:

1. The committee will review the SOQ's at its earliest convenience after the submittal deadline date.
2. The SOQ's will be reviewed and rated relative to the evaluation criteria established for this project. Said evaluation criteria are attached to this RFQ.
3. If necessary, the committee will invite one or more responsive firms to make a presentation before the committee.
4. After completion of the evaluation process, staff will make a recommendation to the RMDD Board for firm selection and request authorization to negotiate the final scope of work and project contract.
5. The Rockdale MDD Board will consider and approve the negotiated final scope of work and project contract.

ROCKDALE MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT  
Community Branding, Marketing Plan, and Economic Development Website

Scoring Sheet

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Item	Points Available	Points Given
1. Firm Information – The Firm’s history and experience in similar projects; the conceptual approach the firm takes for projects of this nature.	5	
2. Firm Personnel – The experience and background of the proposed personnel for this project	10	
3. Firm’s Track Record – Successful completion of other similar projects for other communities	10	
4. Reference Checks – Information from provided references. General reputation of the firm	5	
5. Firm Availability – Other projects the firm is currently working on and which could present a real or perceived conflict of interest for this project.	5	
6. A Firm Located in Texas is Preferred	5	
7. Community Brand. How well will the consultant work with the RMDD and the community in creating a viable community brand.	20	
8. Marketing Plan. Will the consultant develop the kind of marketing plan as requested in this RFQ.	20	
9. Website. How well will the consultant create a quality website for the RMDD, including but not limited to website design and functionality, integration with other data sources, copy writing, photography, and videography.	20	
TOTAL	100	