



Rock Region
METRO

Solicitation No. 15-010

SOCIAL MEDIA SERVICES

IMPORTANT DATES:

Date Issued:	December 11, 2015
Inquiries and/or Requests for Clarification Due to METRO:	December 18, 2015, 2:00 PM
METRO Responses to Inquiries and/or Requests for Clarifications:	December 21, 2015, 2:00 PM
Proposals Due:	December 23, 2015, 11:00 PM

GENERAL GUIDELINES

FOR COMPLETING METRO's SOLICITATION PACKAGE

This document is intended as a guideline to assist Proposers in successfully completing the necessary paperwork. You are strongly encouraged to read the document very carefully. This document is NOT intended to replace the more detailed instructions that are included in the solicitation.

- Please remember that it is your primary responsibility to make yourself aware of any addenda.
- Be sure to regularly check the Rock Region METRO procurement website at www.ebidexchange.com/rrmetro for any changes or updates to the solicitation.
- It is extremely important that all required forms be completed. **Failure to complete all required forms may result in your Proposal being ruled non-responsive. Non-Responsive Proposals will not be evaluated.**
- Please read the document to make sure that you have returned your bid or proposal in the correct format.
- **Restrictions on Communications with METRO during Solicitation, Offer & Award Period.** All requests for clarification or modification of the RFP shall be made using the question submittal process in the eBid system.

From the date of issuance of this solicitation through the date of contract award by METRO, all official communications to and from METRO will be transmitted in writing and shall only be with METRO's Procurement Manager. Oral communications regarding this solicitation shall not be considered official communications. METRO is not responsible for any oral statements made by its employees regarding this solicitation.

- Make sure the Proposal is uploaded into the eBid system by the designated date and time. **Late proposals will not be accepted.**



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PART I – SOLICITATION, OFFER & AWARD

1. GENERAL INFORMATION TO THE PROPOSER

- 1.1 Purpose of Procurement.** The purpose of this Request for Proposals (“RFP”) is to contract with a qualified public relations firm to assist our staff with social media content planning and creation.
- 1.2 Type of Procurement.** This solicitation is a “Best Value” procurement utilizing a RFP process; therefore, METRO may choose to award a contract to a Contractor who does not submit the lowest price proposal in response to the RFP. METRO intends to award a contract to the Contractor whose proposal conforms to the solicitation and is determined to be the most advantageous to METRO, taking into consideration price and other evaluation factors set forth in this RFP.
- 1.3 Type of Contract.** METRO intends to negotiate a cost-reimbursable contract, subject to a not-to-exceed amount, with the successful proposer (“Contractor”).
- 1.4 Solicitation Schedule.** This solicitation will be governed by the following schedule:

Solicitation Date:	December 11, 2015
Deadline for Written Inquiries and/or Requests for Clarifications:	December 18, 2015 2:00 PM
Deadline for METRO Responses to Written Inquiries and/or Requests for Clarifications:	December 21, 2015 2:00 PM
Proposals Due:	December 23, 2015 11:00 PM

- 1.5 Restrictions on Communications with METRO during Solicitation, Offer & Award Period.** From the date of issuance of this solicitation through the date of contract award by METRO, all official communications to and from METRO will be transmitted in writing and shall only be with METRO’s Procurement Manager. Oral communications regarding this solicitation shall not be considered official communications. METRO is not responsible for any oral statements made by its employees regarding this solicitation.

2. SOLICITATION TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- 2.1 Deadline for Submission of Proposals/Late Proposals.** Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation must be received by METRO no later than the date and time specified in Part I, Section 1.4 above. Without exception, proposals received after the submission deadline will not be evaluated.
- 2.2 Method of Delivery/Location for Submission of Proposals.** Make sure that the proposal is uploaded into the eBid system by the time and date specified in Part I, Section 1.4 above.
- 2.3 Inquiries and/or Requests for Clarifications.** Inquiries and/or Requests for Clarifications regarding this solicitation shall be made using the question submittal process in the eBid system. Written inquiries/clarifications must be in the form of questions. There is no additional prescribed format for the submission of written inquiries/clarifications.

METRO staff will review and evaluate all written inquiries and/or requests for clarifications that are received by the submission deadline and will post METRO’s responses in the eBid system. If applicable, an addendum to the RFP that incorporates the changes necessitated by METRO’s responses to written inquiries will be issued in accordance with Part I, Section 2.4 below. It is the

sole responsibility of the Proposer to make itself aware of METRO's responses to written inquiries/clarifications and their impact on the RFP.

2.4 Amendments to Solicitation (Addenda)/Postponement of Proposal Submission Deadline.

METRO reserves the right to revise or amend the RFP up to the time set for the submission of proposals. Such revisions and amendments, if any, shall be announced by written addenda to the RFP. If an addendum significantly changes the RFP, the date set for the submission of proposals may be postponed by such number of days as in the opinion of METRO shall enable potential Proposers to revise their proposals. In any case, the proposal submission deadline shall be at least five (5) business days after the last addendum, and the addendum shall include an announcement of the new date, if applicable, for the submission of proposals.

Upon issuance, addenda will be considered part of the RFP and will prevail over inconsistent or conflicting provisions contained in the original RFP. All addenda will be made available in the eBid system.

Proposer shall acknowledge receipt of all addenda by completing and submitting the Certifications Form, included in Part IV of this RFP as part of its proposal. As with other required documentation, proposals that fail to reference receipt of addenda by inclusion of the Certifications Form may be excluded from consideration of a contract award.

2.5 Pre-Proposal Conference. No conference is scheduled for this procurement.

2.6 Proposal Price Validity. Proposal pricing shall remain valid for a period of 90 calendar days after the deadline for proposal submission.

2.7 Modification of Proposals. Except at the written request of METRO, no proposal may be modified after the deadline for proposal submission.

2.8 Conditional Proposals. Conditional proposals and any proposal taking exception to these instructions, the Scope of Services or to other METRO requirements may be considered non-responsive and shall be rejected.

2.9 Withdrawal of Proposals. Proposals previously submitted to METRO may be withdrawn upon request by the Proposer prior to the time fixed for the receipt of proposals. No proposal may be withdrawn for a period of 90 days after the time set herein for the receipt of proposals.

2.10 Single Response to Solicitation. If only one proposal is received in response to this solicitation, a detailed cost analysis of the single proposal may be requested of the single Proposer. A cost analysis, evaluation, and/or audit of the proposal may also be performed by METRO in order to determine if the proposal price is fair and reasonable. If METRO determines that a cost analysis is required, the single Proposer must be prepared to provide, upon request, detailed summaries of estimated costs (i.e., labor, equipment, supplies, overhead costs, profit, etc.) and documentation supporting all cost elements.

2.11 Confidential/Proprietary Information. Pursuant to Arkansas statute, all information contained in any bid, request for proposal, or request for qualifications document submitted to METRO will be available for public review upon FOIA request. If any Respondent is submitting any information that they may consider to be confidential or proprietary and would give a competitive advantage if disclosed, they should identify the specific information and include a statement as to whether or not a claim of confidential or proprietary privilege is being asserted. If such information is later sought by a FOIA request, the Respondent will be allowed to justify its claim of privilege and METRO will assess the validity of said claim in advance of any release.

2.12 Reserved Rights. METRO reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or any portion of a specific proposal for any reason. METRO also reserves the right to award a single or multiple

contracts as a result of this solicitation; however, issuance of this RFP and receipt of proposals does not commit METRO to award a contract or contracts.

METRO has the sole right to select the successful proposal(s) for contract award; to reject any proposal as unsatisfactory or non-responsive due to non-conformance with the requirements of this RFP; to cancel the solicitation and to advertise for new proposals; to award a contract or contracts to other than the Proposer submitting the lowest price proposal; or not to award a contract as a result of this RFP.

METRO reserves the right to accept any proposal deemed to be in the best interest of METRO and to waive any irregularities in any proposal that does not prejudice other Proposers. METRO further reserves the right to negotiate with any source whatsoever. A contract will be negotiated with the Proposer(s) whose proposal(s) is considered by METRO in its sole discretion to be most advantageous to METRO.

METRO further reserves the rights to retain all proposals submitted and to use any ideas or concepts in any proposal for any purpose regardless of whether the proposal is selected for contract award.

Proposals shall be submitted to METRO on the most favorable of terms possible from the standpoint of cost, quality, and technical capability. No Proposer shall have any cause of action against METRO arising out of the methods by which proposals are evaluated.

- 2.13 Personnel.** The Contractor represents that he/she has, or will secure at his/her own expense, all personnel required in providing the services under the contract. Such personnel shall not be employees of or have any contractual relationship with METRO. All the services required hereunder will be performed by the Contractor or under his/her supervision, and all personnel engaged in the work shall be fully qualified and shall be trained, authorized and/or licensed, if applicable, under state and local law to perform such services. None of the work or services covered by the contract shall be sub-contracted without prior written approval by METRO.
- 2.14 Knowledge of Conditions.** Each Proposer shall thoroughly examine and be familiar with the contract documents, scope of services and all conditions and requirements that may in any manner affect the work to be performed under the contract. The submission of a proposal shall constitute an acknowledgement that the Proposer has thoroughly examined and is familiar with the contract documents, scope of services, conditions and requirements in every detail. Failure to use the opportunity of the site visit to gain familiarity with the specifics of each location may result in inaccurate pricing. METRO will not adjust the contract value on the basis of Proposer's lack of knowledge of conditions.
- 2.15 Prime Contractor Responsibilities.** The Contractor will be required to assume responsibility for all services offered in its proposal regardless of who provides them. Further, METRO will consider the Contractor to be the sole point of contact with regard to contractual matters, including payment of any and all charges resulting from the contract.
- 2.16 No Geographic Preference.** This procurement will be conducted in a manner that prohibits the use of statutorily or administratively imposed in-State or local geographic preferences in evaluation of proposals or award of contracts, except where Federal statutes expressly mandate or encourage geographic preference. This does not preempt State licensing laws.
- 2.17 Conflicts of Interest.** METRO employees engaged in the award and administration of contracts, or any person acting on their behalf, are prohibited from accepting, directly or indirectly, any gifts whatsoever, from any person with whom the employee interacts on official METRO business. Therefore, the Contractor, or its subcontractors or suppliers, may not make gifts or favors to any METRO employee.

2.18 Contractual Relationships. METRO intends to execute the Pro-Forma contract, attached as Part III of this RFP, for the provision of the required services with the Contractor. The Contractor's contractual responsibility must solely rest with one firm or legal entity, which shall not be a subsidiary or affiliate with limited resources.

METRO will not be a party to agreements between the Contractor and/or any subcontractors it may choose to employ during fulfillment of the contract; however, the Contractor shall execute fair and reasonable agreements with its subcontractors (if any) and shall provide METRO with copies of said agreements not later than five (5) business days prior to their execution.

2.19 Responsibility for Compliance with Legal Requirements. Proposer's products, services, and facilities shall be in full compliance with any and all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, ordinances, and standards and any standards adopted by nationally recognized testing facilities regardless of whether or not they are referred to in this RFP.

2.20 Materials and Equipment. The selected Contractor shall at its own expense furnish all labor, supplies, materials, equipment and machinery necessary to provide the services required by the contract, except as indicated in the Scope of Services.

2.21 Protests. Protests related to this RFP or resulting contract award must be submitted in writing to METRO's Executive Director. Protest procedures may be found on METRO's website.

3. CONTENTS OF A COMPLETE PROPOSAL

3.1 Information Required from the Proposer. The proposer shall submit one (1) PDF copy of their proposal to the eBid system. Proposals shall be written using standard 8 ½" x 11" letter-sized paper.

Each proposer shall submit a detailed response to the RFP. The response shall include sufficient information to enable METRO to fully evaluate the capabilities of the Proposer and its approach to providing the specified services. Each proposer should outline the phases and tasks it will undertake to deliver the System.

It is the responsibility of the proposer to examine the entire RFP package and seek clarification of any item or requirement that may not be clear and to check all responses for accuracy before submitting a proposal.

To be eligible for evaluation by METRO as a complete, responsive proposal in response to this solicitation, any and all proposals submitted to METRO must contain all of the following items, properly signed (as required) and fully completed by the Proposer.

3.1.1 Cover Letter. The cover letter shall be signed by an official of the firm with the responsibility to bind the firm contractually, and should also state that the offer is valid for ninety (90) days after submittal.

3.1.2 Tab 1 – Statement of Firm's Qualifications and Experience. This document shall include a narrative description of the Proposer that includes the following elements:

- Briefly introduce firm, providing a summary of the firm's background, stability, administration, organization and staffing.
- Brief bios for employees who would service the account.
- Identify the Proposer's project manager and management team including roles and responsibilities and percentage of time to be dedicated to this project. Include any professional designations and affiliations, certifications and licenses, etc. or other information that will illustrate the technical competence of the proposed personnel.

3.1.3 Tab 2 – Brief Case Studies. This section shall include brief case studies on social media plans and links to social media pages for at least three clients for which the firm has planned and created social media content; briefs should include a recap of the plan research, goals and measurable objectives, as well as a brief summary of strategies, target audiences and tactics. Include five samples of longform and/or specialized social media content your firm has created, as well as links to the firm website and social media pages.

3.1.4 Tab 3 – Proposed Contractual Terms. METRO intends to negotiate a cost-reimbursable contract, subject to a not-to-exceed amount, with the successful proposer.

3.1.5 Tab 4 – Appendix. The following documents/forms MUST be completed by the Proposer and submitted with the Proposal:

- Attachment A - Proposer Questionnaire
- Attachment B - Certifications Form
- Attachment C - Price Proposal Form.

3.2 Proposal Evaluation and CONTRACTOR Selection.

3.2.1 Standards for Award. This solicitation is a Request for Proposals (RFP). METRO intends to award a contract to the Proposer whose proposal conforms to the solicitation and is determined to be the most advantageous to METRO, taking into consideration price and other evaluation factors set forth below. In order to be eligible for contract award a proposal must meet all of the following criteria:

- a. The proposal submitted is responsive to the solicitation.
 - i. A proposal shall be considered responsive if it conforms in all material aspects to the requirements of the solicitation at the scheduled time of submission and does not require further discussions with the Proposer.
 - ii. It shall be at the sole discretion of METRO to determine if a proposal “conforms in all material aspects to the requirements of the solicitation.”
- b. The Proposer who submitted the proposal is a responsible Proposer.
 - i. A Proposer shall be considered responsible if the Proposer possesses, at the time of contract award, the ability to perform successfully and a willingness to comply with the terms and conditions of the proposed contract (attached as Part III – Pro-Forma Contract to this RFP).
- c. The Proposer is judged, at the sole discretion of METRO, to be the qualified firm that offers the best value to METRO for the product and services to be provided.

3.2.2 Evaluation and Award Process. All proposals shall be evaluated by a Proposal Evaluation Committee comprising professional staff employed by METRO. Following the receipt of proposals, proposals will be evaluated and a contract will be awarded in accordance with the following process:

- a. Proposals will first be evaluated by METRO staff for responsiveness in accordance with the standard set forth in Part I, Section 3.3.1.a above. Only those proposals that are determined to be responsive shall be evaluated for Proposer responsibility.
- b. Proposers who submitted responsive proposals will be evaluated by the Proposal Evaluation Committee for responsibility in accordance with the standard set forth in Part I, Section 3.3.1.b above.

- c. Proposals that are determined to be responsive and that were submitted by responsible Proposers shall be further evaluated by the Proposal Evaluation Committee to select the proposal that is most advantageous to METRO. To determine the most advantageous proposal, the committee will evaluate the responses and will make a recommendation for award based on the best value to the agency. Evaluation will be based on the following criteria:

Weight	Criterion	Standard
32%	Thoroughness of Submitted Sample Plans, as Outlined in Briefs	Emphasis will be placed on content relevance as related to organization's stated goals, measurability of objectives and appropriateness of suggested content for various platforms.
32%	Quality of Content Samples	Emphasis will be placed on message clarity, medium and fit for various platforms.
31%	Qualifications and Experience of Key Personnel	Emphasis will be placed on the ability of the firm to service and support the needs of Rock Region METRO. Experience of lead account executive and content provider; organizational structure; staffing plan; and methods for meeting the requirements of this RFP in the most efficient manner will be an important consideration.
5%	Cost	Competitive and reasonable.

PART II – SCOPE OF SERVICES

1. Project Scope and Timeline

Rock Region METRO would like to enhance its social media presence with a 12-month social media plan that includes goals, objectives, strategies and tactics for our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Linked In channels. Ideally, planning can take place in December, with implementation beginning January 2016 and a final document for January-December 2016 content provided by an agreed upon date (the plan could be produced incrementally on a monthly basis or on a 3-month or 6-month timeline). Needed items include a comprehensive plan that takes into account three major projects for 2016: The January launch of a new mobile app, a March sales tax funding initiative and the organization's 30th anniversary in July. The selected firm would engage primarily in planning and creating content and making recommendations for measurement and monitoring: with some limited longform content (any content beyond a short, typical social media post, i.e., stories, blog posts, videos, lists, etc.) and graphic design support (specifically, creation of images tied to suggested content and creation of any suggested longer form articles and/or specialized content). Plan implementation and paid content would be handled by the Rock Region METRO staff.

2. Social Media Content Emphasis

Rock Region METRO is the public transit organization serving central Arkansas. It comprises three branches: METRO Local, a fixed-route bus service serving Pulaski County; METRO Streetcar, a rail system operating in Little Rock and North Little Rock; and METRO Links, a 24-vehicle paratransit service. Social media content should focus on keeping audiences informed of transit alerts and trip planning tools, updates on the proposed Move Central Arkansas bus service plan, general transit industry information, job postings, advertising and rental information and more. Content should support the agency's goals to raise awareness of the benefits of public transit to our community and to increase ridership.

3. Budget

\$20,000. Please keep in mind that social media costs come from a marketing and communications budget that includes all agency paid media, collateral development (including creative, printing and mailing costs), website hosting, community engagement events and more. We anticipate this plan will take a flat number of hours to create and that most costs will stem from an initial discovery meeting, a public relations practitioner's hourly rate and account management. Cost has been given the lowest evaluation rate in this process. While it is important, selection of the firm chosen will depend heavily on the on the quality of content, thoroughness of plan recaps submitted and qualification and experience of the personnel who would work on this account.

PART III
FORMS & CERTIFICATIONS

ATTACHMENT A

PROPOSER QUESTIONNAIRE

1. SUBMITTING BUSINESS ENTITY IDENTIFICATION & OWNERSHIP DISCLOSURE

Company: _____

Contact Person: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Organized under the laws of the State of _____

Principal place of business located at _____

Taxpayer Identification Number: _____

Indicate which the following apply:

- Corporation
- Partnership
- Sole Proprietor
- Small Business
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)
Certified By Arkansas UCP? _____

2. OTHER INFORMATION

1. General character of work performed by your firm:

2. Has your firm ever failed to complete any work awarded to you? If yes, explain.

3. Has your firm ever defaulted on a contract? If yes, explain.

4. Indicate the names of subcontractors, if any, proposed for this project and whether the subcontractor is a certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and by whom they are certified.

5. Please indicate if your firm, subcontractor or any persons associated therewith in the capacity of owner, partner, director, officer or any other position involving the administration of federal funds:

- is currently under suspension, debarment, voluntary exclusion, or determination of ineligibility of any federal agency;
- Has been suspended, debarred, voluntarily excluded, or determined ineligible by any federal agency within the last three (3) years;
- Has a proposed debarment pending; or
- Has been indicted, convicted, or had a civil judgment rendered against it or them by a court of competent jurisdiction in any matter involving fraud or official misconduct within the last three (3) years.

CERTIFICATION

I certify that this proposal is made without prior understanding, agreement, or connection with any corporation, firm or person submitting a proposal for the same services, materials, supplies or equipment, and is in all respects fair and without collusion or fraud. I understand collusive bidding is a violation of State and Federal law and can result in fines, prison sentences, and civil damage awards.

I hereby certify that the responses to the above representations, certifications, and other statements are accurate and complete. I agree to abide by all conditions of the Request for Proposals and certify that I am authorized to sign for the Proposer.

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____ Title _____

ATTACHMENT B

CERTIFICATIONS FORM

In submitting this proposal, the undersigned certifies on behalf of its firm and any proposed subcontractors as follows:

Eligible Bidder:

The bidder warrants and represents that neither the Bidder nor its subcontractors: (1) have not within a three-year period preceding this Bid been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (federal, state or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of federal or state antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property; (2) are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (federal, state or local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in item (1) of this certification; and (3) have not within a three-year period preceding this bid had one or more public transactions (federal, state or local) terminated for cause or default.

Bid Validity:

If this offer is accepted within ninety (90) calendar days from the due date, to furnish any or all services upon which prices are offered at the designated point within the time specified.

Receipt of Addenda:

The Bidder warrants and represents that it has received all Addenda issued by the Authority in connection with this Request for Proposals.

Non-Collusion:

The Bidder has made this proposal independently, without consultation, communication, or agreement for the purpose of restricting competition as to any matter relating to Request for Qualifications with any other FIRM or with any other competitor.

Affirmative Action/DBE:

The Bidder is in compliance with the Common Grant Rules affirmative action and Department of Transportation's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise requirements. Certified DBEs should attach notice of eligibility. METRO has established a 4% DBE goal for FY 2015 – 2017. **No DBE goal has been established for this project.**

Non-Conflict:

The Bidder warrants and represents that no employee, official, board member or family member of the Rock Region METRO is or will be pecuniarily benefited directly or indirectly in this Contract.

Equal Employment Opportunity:

The Bidder warrants and represents that the bidder or Bidder hereby certifies that it will comply with the requirements of the "Civil Rights" provisions of this solicitation.

Covenant Against Gratuities:

The Bidder nor any of its employees, representatives, or agents have offered or given gratuities (in the form of entertainment, gifts, or otherwise) to any director, officer, or employee of the Rock Region METRO with the view toward securing favorable treatment in the awarding, amending, or the making of any determination with respect to the performance of this Contract.

Integrity and Ethics:

The Bidder has a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics, in compliance with 49 U.S.C. Section 5325(j)(2)(A).

Public Policy:

The Bidder Is in compliance with the public policies of the Federal Government, as required by 49 U.S.C. Section 5325(j)(2)(B).

Administrative and Technical Capacity:

The Bidder has the necessary organization, experience, accounting, and operational controls, and technical skills, or the ability to obtain them, in compliance with 49 U.S.C. Section 5325(j)(2)(D).

Licensing and Taxes:

The Bidder Is in compliance with applicable licensing and tax laws and regulations.

Financial Resources:

The Bidder has, or can obtain, sufficient financial resources to perform the contract, as required by 49 U. S. C. Section 5325 (j)(2)(D).

Timeliness:

The Bidder Is able to comply with the required delivery or performance schedule, taking into consideration all existing commercial and governmental business commitments.

Performance Record:

The Bidder is able to provide a satisfactory current and past performance record.

Employment of Illegal Immigrants:

The Bidder certifies that they will not employ or contract with any illegal immigrants in their contracts with the Authority, as required by ACA § 19-11-105.

Certification Signature:

The Bidder attests to certifications by signature of this document.

Signature

Printed Name

Title

Date

**ATTACHMENT C
PRICE PROPOSAL**

Job Title	Hours Required (A)	Hourly Rate (B)	A X B
Total			

CERTIFICATION

I certify that this proposal is made without prior understanding, agreement, or connection with any corporation, firm or person submitting a proposal for the same services, materials, supplies or equipment, and is in all respects fair and without collusion or fraud. I understand collusive bidding is a violation of State and Federal law and can result in fines, prison sentences, and civil damage awards.

I hereby certify that the responses to the above representations, certifications, and other statements are accurate and complete. I agree to abide by all conditions of the Request for Proposals and certify that I am authorized to sign for the Proposer.

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____ Title _____