

ND Region 4 Tourism/Destination/Community Development Plan

**Request for Proposal for Development Planning Services
for the
Red River Regional Council**

Date Released: March 26, 2021

Proposals Due: April 21, 2021

Statement of Purpose

With this Request for Proposal (RFP), the Red River Regional Council seeks a contractor with a demonstrable portfolio for successful tourism or destination development and amenity planning and development and a successful track record of impact. The selected contractor will be responsible for creating a tourism and amenity development action plan designed to increase visitor traffic, attract people to live in the area, and increase economic resiliency in the state planning region four in northeastern North Dakota inclusive of the Pembina Gorge. The plan should also include recommendations that seize opportunities post-pandemic to attract new residents (both remote workers and entrepreneurs) to this rural area.

Responses to this RFP can be from any type of entity, including but not limited to sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, limited partnership, limited liability company, limited liability partnership or any combination of these entities.

Questions or inquiries regarding this request must be directed to Mike Duerre and Dawn Mandt by email at mduerre@nd.gov and dawn@redriverrc.com.

BACKGROUND

This regional planning effort is a partnership of multiple organizations focused on economic and community development, outdoor recreation, historical and cultural events and amenities and more. This plan is intended to provide a cohesive vision and amenity development plan for both the local/county level as well as better connecting the region with common goals. The plan will guide local improvements intended to enhance quality of life and serve as attractors of both visitors and residents to the region.

The region includes North Dakota planning Region 4 (Grand Forks, Nelson, Walsh and Pembina Counties) and the Pembina Gorge which straddles Pembina and Cavalier Counties near the Manitoban border.



The region includes 41 communities; four counties; three state parks; numerous county and city parks; lakes; the Red River and an array of additional rivers; Frost Fire Park; and three Canadian/US border crossings (Pembina, Neche, and Walhalla).

Significant partners in the project include:

- Frost Fire Park www.frostfirepark.org
- Grand Forks Convention and Visitors Bureau www.visitgrandforks.com/
- Nelson County Job Development Authority www.redriverrc.com/nelson-county-job-development-authority/
- ND Department of Commerce <https://commerce.nd.gov/>
- ND Parks and Recreation Department (Icelandic, Pembina Gorge, and Turtle River) www.parkrec.nd.gov/
- Pembina County Job Development Authority www.redriverrc.com/pembina-county-job-development-authority/
- Red River Regional Council www.redriverrc.com/
- Rendezvous Region Tourism Council rendezvousregion.com/

- Walsh County Job Development Authority www.digwalshcounty.com

Related plans/resource include:

- Pembina Gorge State Recreation Area Master Plan
<https://sites.google.com/site/peminagorge/master-plan>
- Red River Comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan 2019-2024
<https://www.redriverrc.com/about/>
- ND Parks and Recreation Department Strategic Plan
<https://www.parkrec.nd.gov/business/planning/strategic-plan>
- ND Parks and Recreation 2021 Economic impact survey (to be released mid-March 2021)
- Northeast Manufacturing Group Strategic Plan <https://www.redriverrc.com/northeast-manufacturing-group/>
- 2020-2021 Region 4 Business Retention and Expansion Program (to be completed Q2 2021)
- Grand Forks Convention and Visitors Bureau – economic and direct spending impact
- ND Department of Commerce - Data Center (census, research staff, REMI models)
- Icelandic State Park Master Plan (late 2021)

SCOPE OF WORK

The selected consultant (“Respondent”) will:

- Review perceptions and visions for Region 4 and the Pembina Gorge provided by stakeholders and the general public. This will involve community outreach and research of the area.
- Develop and execute a research strategy to identify unique characteristics of the region that separate it from other destinations as a place to live, work, invest, and visit.
- Develop an amenity needs assessment in Region 4 to identify opportunities to better support quality of life for residents and tourism development.
- Develop a local/county as well as regional action plan(s) for short (2-3 year) and long term (5-10 year) development goals based on research and analysis of stakeholder and public input.

DELIVERABLES

- A detailed summary of research and assessment findings.
- A planning document(s) which includes detailed local/county level development recommendations/action plan, priority areas, and regional recommendations/action plan.
- A messaging document that distills the research on audiences and differentiation and includes strategy recommendations to effectively utilize this messaging across multiple channels.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must clearly indicate the name of the responding organization, including the Respondent’s website, as well as the name, address, telephone number and email address of the organization’s primary contact for this proposal. The proposal must include:

- A description of qualifications and experience for the firm and that of key personnel assigned to this project (and that of each separate entity proposed as part of a team, if applicable). It is noted that equipment, material, and staff shall be provided by the contractor.
- A description of at least three previous projects completed by the contractor or team to demonstrate experience related to brand identity and messaging services, particularly for place branding for downtown organizations, business districts, or other similar entities. Please include a corresponding budget or budget range for each project.
- At least three references, including contact names and telephone numbers. References are preferred from downtown organizations, business districts, public agencies or other similar entities connected to relevant place branding work.
- A detailed work plan outlining the approach to the tasks outlined in the Scope of Work. Please detail any proposed or suggested adjustments to the scope or tasks.
- A detailed project schedule including defined benchmarks and deliverables with staff hours assigned to each area
- A detailed itemized budget for each service outlined in the Scope of Work, plus an hourly rate schedule by personnel, and the proposed number of hours budgeted for each member of the team.

Proposals must be submitted by April 21, 2021 at 5 p.m. CST. Submit a single pdf submission to mduerre@nd.gov and dawn@redriverrc.com. You will receive an email confirming receipt of your proposal.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

The planning committee consisting of representatives of the partner organizations listed above will evaluate submitted proposals. Final selection will be the sole determination of the Red River Regional Council.

1. RFP Evaluation Criteria. Vendor selection will be made based on the results of the proposal evaluations and the vendor interviews by the selection panel. Submitted proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
 - a. Experience of the vendor or team, including relevant experience of the key individuals who will be assigned to this project, as indicated by prior successful completion of similar projects.
 - b. Project approach and methodology and understanding of project objectives and project issues to meet the stated Scope of Work.
 - c. Demonstrated ability to work effectively to bring such projects to successful completion within the constraints of time and budget.
 - d. Vendor’s proposed allocation of the project budget and total costs to deliver items specified in the Scope of Work.
 - e. Vendor’s proposed schedule to complete the project.
2. Vendor Interviews. The selection committee reserves the right to invite some or all respondents to attend an interview or to make an oral presentation on their proposals, at the time and in the manner specified by the organization. Interviews and presentations will be made through a Zoom or Microsoft Teams format.

The selection will be subject to the final determination of the selection committee and Red River Regional Council and will be contingent on the successful completion of a contract between the Red

River Regional Council and the selected partner. We reserve the right to select all or a portion of a proposal.

TIMELINE

RFP Issued:	March 26, 2021
Questions must be submitted by:	April 9, 2021 by 5 p.m. CST
Questions will be published to registered vendors by:	April 14, 2021
Proposals due:	April 21, 2021 by 5 p.m. CST
Vendor interviews:	April 27-28, 2021
Vendor selection:	April 28, 2021
Project Kick-Off with Committee:	May 4, 2021
Final Completion Date:	March 31, 2022

PROJECT BUDGET

The total budget for this project, inclusive of all related project expenses, travel, per diem, production costs, etc. not to exceed \$100,000.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Red River Regional Council expects to enter into a written agreement with the selected contractor that shall incorporate this RFP and the final proposal. Further, Respondent will be bound to comply with the provisions in this RFP in addition to any other terms and conditions as deemed necessary. In its sole discretion, the Red River Regional Council reserves the right to:

1. Withdraw this RFP without notice.
2. Accept or reject any or all submissions.
3. Accept submissions which deviate from the Scope of Work as the Red River Regional Council deems appropriate and in its best interest.
4. Negotiate with any, all, or none of the Vendors responding to this RFP.

The Red River Regional Council shall not infringe upon any intellectual property right of any Respondent, but specifically reserves the right to use any concept or methods contained in the proposal. Any desired restrictions on the use of information contained in the proposal should be clearly stated. Responses containing your proprietary data shall be safeguarded with the same degree of protection as the organization's own proprietary data. All such proprietary data contained in your proposal must be clearly identified. The organization shall not be under any obligation to return any materials submitted in response to this RFP. The Red River Regional Council assumes no responsibility or liability for any costs you may incur in responding to this RFP, including attending meetings or contract negotiations. All data included in this RFP, as well as any attachments, are proprietary to the organization.