



**Request for Proposals for  
Tourism Promotion, Marketing and Event Coordination Services  
for the City of Stanwood**

Introduction and Summary

Stanwood, Washington is requesting proposals from qualified firms for creation, implementation and performance documentation of tourism promotion, marketing and special event coordination services for the city consistent with the recently adopted "Discover Port Susan" brand.

This is a one-year contract for services beginning in 2016 with two 1-year options to renew. The budget for this contract is approximately \$35,000 per year (not including advertising expenses which may be offset by event sponsors). The estimated contract amount will include event management, website and social media content, print advertising, promotional campaigns, market research, performance measures and administrative costs.

Proposals are due **Wednesday, April 13, 2016 at 4:00 p.m.** Proposals should be prepared in accordance with this RFP and mailed or delivered to:

Deborah Knight, City Administrator  
City of Stanwood  
10220 270<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Stanwood, WA 98292  
[deborah.knight@ci.stanwood.wa.us](mailto:deborah.knight@ci.stanwood.wa.us)

Six hard copies and one electronic copy on CD of the submittals must be received by the deadline indicated above. Postmarks will not be accepted.

Background

The City of Stanwood, Washington is located in northwest Snohomish County on the shores of Puget Sound and the Salish Sea. The city is well positioned to serve as the launch point for tourism destinations in the region including Camano Island, Warm Beach, Port Susan Bay and Skagit Bay. The city provides shopping, dining and special events to attract tourists. The city has been working with regional partners to communicate a consistent and positive identity as a unique and high-quality community to draw visitors to the area and improve the economy.

In 2015, the city launched the first issue of a visitor information magazine "Discover Port Susan". The magazine is professionally published and highlights activities in Stanwood and the rural communities surrounding the city. 15,000 copies of the magazine are distributed from the Canadian border to Olympia and the Kitsap Peninsula. The third issue of the magazine will go to print in May 2016.

The city also received a Snohomish County hotel/motel tax grant to develop a logo and brand guidelines for the Port Susan area including the City of Stanwood. The brand and



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logo establish a cohesive identity for the recreational opportunities within the greater Port Susan area. The brand provides the base for consistent messaging. The Port Susan brand evokes an appeal to explore, discover, relax and enjoy the outdoors in a way that you remember your family doing when you were a child. The brand encourages visitors to make new memories.

Since 2012, the city has been assisting event organizers to co-market and promote regional marquee events. The city also started organizing its own events including Touch-a-Truck in May, a summer concert series in June, July, August and September and a family movie night in Church Creek Park.

The city's tourism, marketing and promotion efforts have been successful but disparate. The City Council is interested in leveraging the existing budget for multiple activities by consolidating the city's tourism promotion and marketing efforts into a single contract for services.

### **Statement of Need**

The city is in need of tourism promotion, marketing and event services and wishes to contract with an experienced and qualified consultant to create and implement multi-media tourism marketing services that will result in increased tourism business and number of tourists to the City of Stanwood. Contractors will be required to manage special events and assist city staff, and area festival and event organizers with marketing and promotion efforts of those events. Proposed marketing campaigns should integrate with current marketing campaigns.

### **Scope of Work**

1. **Event Management** – Work with city staff and volunteers to secure sponsors, develop marketing materials, advertise, promote, and oversee the city's Touch-a-Truck, Summer Concert Series, Movies in the Park, National Night Out, Light up Your Holidays and other special events; work with private event managers to cross promote the city's brand.
2. **Website** – Manage the city's tourism website to promote local businesses and events to residents and businesses; create and promote advertising space on the website as a part of the sponsorship package for businesses; develop content for the website; update and enhance the website weekly with new event information; link the website to the City of Stanwood, Chambers and other regional travel promotion sites.
3. **Social Media** – Maintain existing Facebook site and add additional social media outlets to the tourism marketing effort, including Twitter and Instagram. Update and enhance social media platforms weekly with new information.
4. **Publications** – Design, print and distribute posters, rack cards and print advertising to attract residents and visitors to special events; create and



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distribute media kits at tradeshow; provide editorial content for the Discover Port Susan visitor guide.

5. Branding/Advertising –Utilize print, on-line, and radio to target travelers; place events on travel portals such as Washington State Tourism Alliance, Skagit County, and Snohomish County Tourism; submit regular news releases to local media regarding events; Educate business owners on how to use the “Discover Port Susan” brand; create and implement innovative promotional campaigns to drive residents and visitors to visit local businesses; Continue to work with Snohomish County Tourism, Island County Tourism, Snohomish County Parks, State Parks, and local photographers to collect photo images, video, B-roll, etc., of the area.
6. Securing Sponsors – Create sponsorship packages to bring value to businesses supporting special events; network with local businesses to import the value of the Discover Port Susan brand and involvement in community events.
7. Travel Trade – Host tour operators, travel writers and others to familiarize them with our community.
8. Market Research – Calculate the number of visitors to each special event; track advertising success rates via click throughs, website landing pages etc; submit quarterly reports to the economic development board and city council.
9. Budget – Create advertising and marketing budgets for city events and promotion activities; secure, manage and track sponsorships and paid advertising for city events; submit monthly expense reports.

**Form of Proposal**

Respondent proposals should not exceed 12 pages, including attachments and should include:

1. Cover letter limited to one page, including name, address and telephone number and e-mail address of the person(s) representing the firm.
2. Knowledge of the City of Stanwood and surrounding communities that are a part of the Port Susan brand. The narrative should identify past marketing and tourism related experiences in the city and region.
3. Experience managing special events including the name of the event, event sponsor, location, number of attendees, the consultant’s role and event budget.
4. Proposed strategy for providing outreach and marketing support for area festivals and events designed to attract out of area visitors.
5. Experience developing and managing websites and social media to promote tourism. Include a list of the sites and site sponsors.
6. Proposed approach to use the Internet, social media and print materials to



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- develop, manage and execute a comprehensive marketing strategy
7. Experience writing copy and editorial content
  8. Names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of at least three clients for whom the respondent has recently performed tourism promotion services including a sample of product(s) delivered.
  9. A detailed budget for the contracted services, inclusive of travel, administrative costs, sub-contracted services, media development and delivery.
  10. Measures proposed to assess impact of contract performance including strategy to measure economic impacts to area businesses.

**Evaluation**

Proposals will be evaluated by city staff and members of the city council. Respondents may be interviewed by a selection committee. The community development sub-committee may make a recommendation for contract award to the City Council who will make final selection.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

Proposer qualifications, experience and demonstrated ability	40 pts.
Proposed approach to implement scope of services	30 pts.
Budget and cost of proposal	20 pts.
Strategy to measure economic impacts	10 pts.

**Estimated Timeline**

Deadline for Proposals: April 13, 2016  
Selection: April 28, 2016  
Contract Start Date: May 1, 2016

**Terms**

The City shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by the firm in preparing, submitting or presenting its response to the RFP.

The contract resulting from the acceptance of a submittal by the City shall be in a form supplied or approved by the City, and shall reflect the specifications in this RFP.

The selection committee reserves the right to request additional information from



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respondents.

The City reserves the right to reject all submittals.

Contract Terms: A contract will be awarded for one year with two 1-year options for renewal. A performance review will be conducted annually.

It is the intention and understanding of the City that the consultant shall be an independent contractor and that the City shall be neither liable for nor obligated to pay sick leave, vacation pay or any other benefit of employment, nor to pay any social security or other tax that may arise as an incident of employment. Consultant shall pay all income and other taxes as due. It is recognized that consultant may or will be performing services during the term of the contract for other parties and that the City is not the exclusive user of the Consultant's services.

All proposals are public records.

All materials created under contract with the City of Stanwood will be owned by the City.