



South Washington County Telecommunications Commission

Request for Proposals

For

Organizational Rebranding

South Washington County
Telecommunications Commission (SWCTC)

6939 Pine Arbor Drive
Suite #106
Cottage Grove, MN 55016

www.swctc.org



Published

Monday, Sept. 11, 2023

Proposals Due:

Friday, Sept. 29, 2023 by 4:30 p.m.

I. Purpose & Background

A. Purpose of RFP

The South Washington County Telecommunications Commission (SWCTC), located in Cottage Grove, Minnesota, invites proposals for the purpose of selecting a branding/marketing consultant to guide the organization through a major rebranding initiative.

This initiative will include community outreach/discovery to uncover current brand recognition and perceptions; new name and brand development (organization name, logo, colors, style, voice etc.) and final deliverables (final files, templates and other deliverables noted in this request for proposals). The chosen consultant will be expected to perform services as required by SWCTC in a professional and timely manner.

B. General Background

Established in the early 1980s, SWCTC is the cable television franchising authority for the Minnesota cities of Woodbury, Cottage Grove, St. Paul Park, Newport, and Grey Cloud Island Township. The member municipalities participate under a Joint Powers Agreement, which establishes the commission and includes two voting members from each of the participating entities. Day-to-day operations are overseen by an appointed Executive Director and seven additional full-time staff positions.

In its role as cable franchising authority, SWCTC manages funding and resources received from the cable operator (Comcast) on behalf of its member communities. The Joint Powers Agreement delegates to the Commission all responsibilities for enforcing cable franchise regulations, requirements, and policies. In addition, it establishes SWCTC as the Public, Education, and Government (PEG) video provider for the member municipalities.

SWCTC creates content for and manages seven (7) local cable access channels that can be viewed by cable subscribers within its members' geographies. Content is also streamed online both live and on-demand and is accessible to anyone with an internet connection. Programming consists of local governmental meetings; professionally produced videos; public service announcements; educational videos; local event coverage; and more.

In addition, SWCTC oversees a Community Media Center in Cottage Grove, MN; provides select "video-for-hire" services; oversees several social media channels; produces podcasts; and serves as a community partner at several local events throughout their coverage area.

C. Strategic Planning for Future Success

Over the last 40 years, the cable television landscape has changed dramatically – particularly with the advent of the internet and the introduction of streaming video platforms. Through this changing landscape, SWCTC has continued to keep up with advances in technology, equipment, programming preferences, video delivery methods, and varying funding levels to maintain its status as an important community resource.

In late 2022, SWCTC approved a three-year strategic plan (**Appendix A**), which continues to place the organization's primary focus on returning value back to its member cities and cable subscribers. In addition, the plan calls for SWCTC to enhance its work engaging the community, and amplifying the aspects of its communities that make residents want to live, work, play, and invest.

One of the tactics to better engage with member communities is to create better awareness for SWCTC – its services, offerings, programming, and the value it creates through organizational rebranding.

II. Proposal Contact and Schedule

A. Proposal Contact & Submission

One (1) digital copy of the proposal must be submitted by the proposal deadline to:

Mark Martinez, SWCTC Executive Director
mark@swctc.org

SWCTC
 6939 Pine Arbor Drive
 Suite #106
 Cottage Grove, MN 55016

B. Proposal Schedule

Request for Proposals (RFP) Published	Monday, Sept. 11, 2023
RFP Questions Due from Proposers	Monday, Sept. 18, 2023
Responses to RFP Questions Published	Wednesday, Sept. 20, 2023
Proposals Due	Friday, Sept. 29, 2023, by 4:30 p.m. CT
Staff Proposal Review	Oct. 2 – 13, 2023
Consultant Interviews (if necessary)	Week of Oct. 16
Executive Committee Review/Recommendation	Thursday, Nov. 2, 2023
Contract Negotiation with Chosen Consultant	By or before Friday, Dec. 8
Contract Considered by Commission	Thursday, Dec. 14, 2023
Anticipated Contract Start Date	First Quarter 2024

C. RFP Release

This RFP was issued Monday, Sept. 11, 2023. SWCTC reserves the right to amend this RFP at any time. The RFP, and any changes to the RFP, will be posted at www.swctc.org/rfp.

D. RFP Questions & Responses

All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted by email to mark@swctc.org or by completing the RFP Questions form at www.swctc.org/rfp by Monday, Sept. 18, 2023. SWCTC will post responses and any addenda to this RFP to www.swctc.org/rfp no later than Wednesday, Sept. 20, 2023.

III. Budget

SWCTC is anticipating a budget range of \$50,000 - \$60,000 for this initiative. Proposals over \$60,000 will be accepted and reviewed, but must include an explanation of the value added for a higher dollar amount.

IV. Scope of Services

The purpose of this rebranding initiative is to create a new and distinctive identity for SWCTC that can be used throughout the organization, including but not limited to: on its website, social media, television channels, programming, advertising, building signage, vehicles, documentation, messaging, etc. The chosen consultant will work with SWCTC to develop a new name and brand that reflects the organization's mission, vision, values, and goals.

A. Consultant Responsibilities

During this project, the consultant will be expected to perform the following duties and/or provide the following deliverables:

Client Meetings, Communication and Project Management

1. Conduct any necessary research (including reviewing SWCTC operations, strategic priorities, relevant reports, studies, and surveys, etc.) to gain a working knowledge of the organization.
2. Participate in a project kick-off meeting (*in-person*) with SWCTC staff and Commission representatives to review and refine the following:
 - a. Scope of Services
 - b. Project Timeline
 - c. Expectations
 - d. Deliverables and Submittal Dates
 - e. Goals, Tactics and Priorities
3. Coordinate and participate in monthly status updates/working group meetings (*virtual*) with SWCTC staff and Commission representatives and summarize action items from meetings.

Discovery & Engagement

4. Conduct community engagement with the goal of gaining insight into community recognition and reaction to SWCTC and potential new names/brands. SWCTC encourages creative and engaging methods to gather community feedback. Based on the proposed budget, the expectation is a minimum of two (2) community touchpoints.
5. Gather feedback from SWCTC member city (Woodbury, Cottage Grove, St. Paul Park, Newport, and Grey Cloud Island Township) representatives to gain insight on recognition and reaction to SWCTC and potential new names/brands. Based on the proposed budget, the expectation is a minimum of one (1) touchpoint with each city – which can be done individually, as a group, digitally or by other means.

Brand Goals

6. Undertake an analysis of SWCTC's current brand positioning, target audience, competitive landscape, and opportunities and, with input from SWCTC, provide a clear definition of brand purpose and goals.

Brand Design

7. Develop a minimum of three (3) options/styles for a revised brand identity. Components should include:
 - a. Updated and Modern Name (to reflect the organization's priorities, assets and amenities and better represent the organization as a community media facility)
 - b. Logo
 - c. Tagline/Slogan
8. Upon a final design option/style being chosen, the final branding deliverables shall include:
 - a. Final Name, Logo, and Tagline/Slogan
 - b. Color Palette
 - c. Typography/font
 - d. Sample Imagery/Graphics

Brand Guidelines

9. Develop a set of brand guidelines that outline the visual and verbal elements of the new brand identity and provide a tool kit for organization use of the revised brand and assets.

Brand Implementation & Training

10. Provide recommendations for launching and promoting the new brand identity to both internal and external audiences and stakeholders. Suggest strategies for implementation and sustainability of brand that may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Brand Launch Campaign
 - b. Website Revisions
 - c. Social Media Strategies
 - d. Cable Channel Implementation
 - e. Print & Digital Collateral
 - f. Advertising
 - g. Media Relations
 - h. Event Participation
 - i. Talking Points
 - j. Use of Common Voice/Personality

Include proposed budget and timelines where relevant.

11. Provide training to SWCTC staff and Commission necessary to use and speak about the new brand consistently and effectively. (*Virtual*)

Deliverables

12. Final deliverables should include, at minimum:

- a. Final Artwork in Design File Format and Camera-Ready Vector (.ai, .eps, .svg, .png, .pdf, etc.)
- b. Final Brand and Style Guide (Word/PDF and PowerPoint) (outlining brand usage, voice, guidelines, verbiage, policies, etc.)
- c. Final Implementation Recommendations Report
- d. Final Presentation to Commission (*in-person*)

V. Specific Proposal Requirements

Responses must be straightforward and concise. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content. Please do not include any general promotional material. It is the responsibility of all proposers to examine this entire RFP package and seek clarification of any item or requirement before submitting.

For proper comparison and evaluation, proposals must include the following items and be organized in a manner specified in the following pages. Failure to meet these requirements, or proposals that contain insufficient information for a meaningful evaluation may be disqualified from further consideration.

A. Title Page

Include, at minimum, name and address of the proposing firm, name and title of proposal contact, and contact telephone number and email address.

B. Cover Letter

One-page opening letter and a signature of person authorized to bind the proposing firm to the terms of the proposal.

C. Project Approach

Provide a detailed description of how the firm will address the desired items listed within *Section IV. Scope of Services* (above)

D. Project Schedule

Assuming a project start in the first quarter of 2024, include a timeline for achieving each of the Scope of Services and Deliverables listed in *Section III* above, from project kick-off to project completion.

E. Experience

Address consultant's overall capabilities to lead this branding process, engage key stakeholders and the public, and develop modern and creative organizational brands. Include:

1. Resumes of individuals who will perform the work outlined in this proposal, including their capabilities and experience conducting similar work.
2. Description of at least three (3) similar projects undertaken by the consultant within the last five years.

F. Budget

Provide a detailed, itemized budget and identify the approximate hours and fees for meeting each requirement identified in *Section IV. Scope of Services* above.

G. Client References

Provide three (3) professional references for similar work that has been performed by your firm, including the names, addresses, titles, and telephone numbers of the person most familiar with the work.

VI. Additional Requirements & Stipulations

A. General Requirements

1. All proposals and attachments must be submitted to mark@swctc.org by the proposal deadline.
2. No proposal received after the due date and time will be considered.
3. All proposals shall be held firm for 90 days from the proposal due date.
4. SWCTC is not responsible for locating or securing any information that is not identified in the proposal or reasonably available to SWCTC.
5. After proposals have been received, SWCTC may schedule interviews and demonstrations with any or all proposers as a part of the evaluation process to determine the most appropriate proposer to whom the contract should be awarded.
6. SWCTC shall send written notification of desire for interview/demonstration, and written notice of award to the successful proposer.

B. Reservation of Rights

During the evaluation process, SWCTC reserves the right to request additional information or clarifications from vendors, or to allow corrections of errors or omissions. SWCTC also reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, waive formalities, negotiate terms and conditions, and to select the agent and service options that best meet the needs of SWCTC.

C. Proposal Costs

SWCTC is not responsible for any costs incurred by the proposer to prepare or submit a proposal, participate in proposer demonstrations or for any other cost to the proposer associated with responding to the RFP.

D. Ownership of Proposals

All proposals become the property of SWCTC upon submission, and the proposals will not be returned to the proposers. By submitting a proposal, the proposer agrees that SWCTC may copy the proposal for purposes of facilitating the evaluation or to respond to requests

for public data. The proposer consents to such copying by submitting a proposal and warrants that such copying will not violate the rights of any third party, including copyrights.

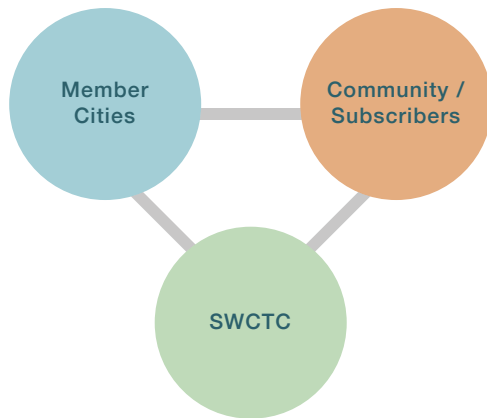
E. Public Records and Requests for Confidentiality

All information included within proposals is subject to Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minn. Stat. § 13.591, unless identified as “trade secret” information as defined at Minn. Stat. § 13.37.

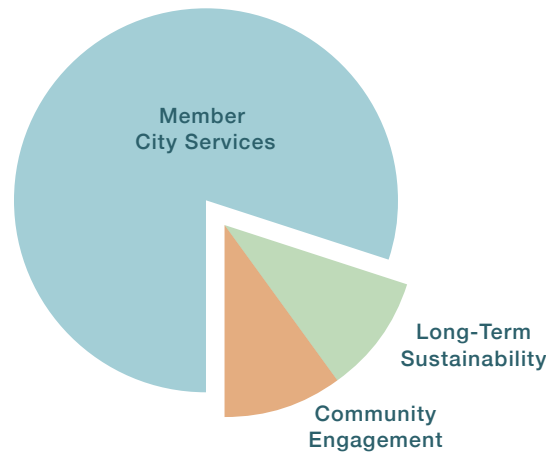
SOUTH WASHINGTON COUNTY TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION 3 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

RELATIONSHIP SPHERES

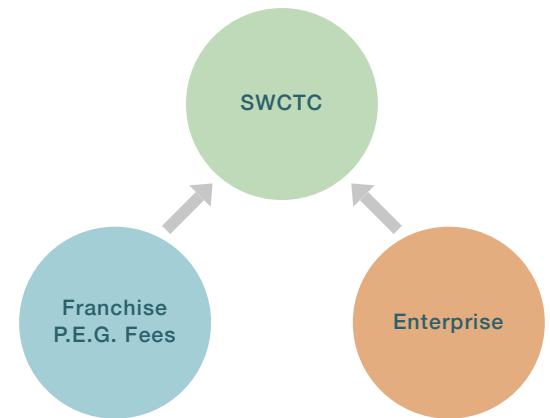
RETURN OF VALUE (ROV)
Franchise / Content / Investments



WORK PRIORITIES



DIVERSIFIED REVENUE



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

OBJECTIVE

MEASURE

TARGET

Member Cities

Core service focus within legal parameters
Return value at every opportunity
Promote collaboration with city staff
Increase awareness of commission activity

Reflect the Joint Powers Agreement
Implementation of the Reserve Policy
Present financial and service data
Conduct performance reviews

Revenue % allocation back to cities
Net revenue return to cities
Commission Investments
Quarterly and Annual reporting

Community Engagement

Identify community needs
Build community partnerships
Broaden distribution of content

Engagement surveying
Partnerships programs
Analytics and Data

Grow viewership and participation in events
Add 2 new partnership organizations per year
Track analytics and survey results

Long-term Sustainability

Renew Cable Franchise Agreement
Diversify revenue
Seek Enterprise opportunities

Activity and Financial reporting
Number of revenue projects
Revenue/Profit

Renewed Cable Franchise
Develop capacity to market SWCTC video services
Find long-term office solution