



Explore Lincoln City

City of Lincoln City

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Interactive Agency of Record for Explore Lincoln City

Lincoln City, Oregon

RFP SCHEDULE

Request for Proposal Issued:	March 8, 2024
Deadline to Submit Clarifying Questions:	April 15, 2024
Proposals Due:	April 22, 2024
Tentative Dates for Interviews:	April 29 – May 3, 2024
Notice of Intent to Award Contract:	June 1, 2024
Anticipated Contract Start Date:	July 1, 2024

I. NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Lincoln City through the Explore Lincoln City Department, will receive proposals for this RFP until 5:00 PM, Pacific Time on April 22, 2024 to provide: Interactive Agency of Record Services for Explore Lincoln City. No proposals will be received or considered after that time.

The resulting contract from this RFP will have an initial term of one year through June 30, 2025, with two (2) additional one (1) year optional extensions thereafter subject to mutual agreement of the parties.

Proposal packets are available from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday through Friday at Explore Lincoln City, 4th Floor of City Hall, 801 SW Hwy 101, Suite 401, Lincoln City, OR 97367, telephone (541) 996-1274 or may be obtained at <https://www.explorelincolncity.com/about-us/request-for-proposals/>. Sealed proposals are to be delivered to Explore Lincoln City at the above Highway 101 address or sent by email to ttrainor@lincolncity.org.

For procurement process questions, please contact Tyrel Trainor, at Explore Lincoln City, ttrainor@lincolncity.org, (541) 996-1272

Explore Lincoln City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals not in compliance with public bidding procedures and requirements, and may reject for good cause any and all proposals upon the finding that it is in the public interest to do so and to waive any and all informalities in the public interest. In the award of the contract, Explore Lincoln City will consider the element of time, will accept the proposal or proposals, which in their estimation, will best serve the interests of Lincoln City and will reserve the right to award the contract to the contractor whose proposal shall be best for the public good.

II. PURPOSE OF RFP

Explore Lincoln City (ELC) invites responses to this Request for Proposal (RFP) from qualified firm(s) interested in becoming the Interactive Agency of Record ("agency") for ELC. ELC will enter into a contract with the selected agency to maintain and assist with the implementation and hosting of the explorelincolncity.com website, while also directing website traffic from oregoncoast.org (previous iteration of the ELC website) to explorelincolncity.com.

III. BACKGROUND

Explore Lincoln City is the recognized Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for Lincoln City. Explore Lincoln City carries out its mission through destination management, tourism promotion and visitor experience in Lincoln City and the

surrounding area. Tourism works in partnership with members of the industry, other City departments and with communities within Lincoln City to develop and enhance local tourism assets and experiences. Explore Lincoln City works to balance the interests of visitors, businesses, other organizations, and government through innovative leadership and strategic investment of resources and staff.

The main objective in communications is to enhance the destination experience, improve the perception of Lincoln City as a vacation destination, and communicate the breadth of experiences Lincoln City offers to encourage week-long stays. The main tactic is to provide printed and virtual resources for in-town visitors and the keystone publication Lincoln City offers is its annual visitor guide.

ELC is funded by tax dollars generated from a city-wide transient room tax (TRT) of 12%. Sometimes referred to as transient lodging tax (TLT). The annual funding available varies with the collection of TLT dollars. These tax dollars are to be used for the development and promotion of tourism in Lincoln City. The Lincoln City City Council advises and oversees the programs and budget of the ELC.

ELC employs a core staff of six (6) FTE. ELC's Marketing Manager, along with the Director, will be the primary point of contact for the Interactive Agency of Record. In addition to two (2) administrative employees, ELC employs two (2) staff to manage and deliver our events, outreach, public relations, social media and content efforts.

The ELC website is the central hub for all Lincoln City tourism information and is a key asset for annual marketing campaigns and digital platforms. Through this website, ELC provides travel inspiration, destination resources, business listings, event calendars, travel planning tools and brand reinforcement.

Explore Lincoln City's website was first developed in 2009 and then again between 2018 and 2019. The site was originally built on a WordPress platform, but then was redesigned on a Craft CMS platform. The website is currently hosted on an Amazon Web Services (AWS) platform for the web host as well as the content delivery network for the image/file content. Metrics and reporting are done through Google Analytics. The current site domain is hosted through GoDaddy. The website currently uses iDSS Cyclone and ELC would be interested in some type of Customer Relationship Management tool to be in place.

IV. OBJECTIVES

ELC proposes to retain a highly qualified, capable firm to act as the Interactive Agency of Record. Special consideration will be given to those agencies with proven destination marketing experience. The successful agency will work with ELC to maintain and assist with website and strategies to make it more effective. ELC is seeking an agency that values partnership, communication and can interpret and actualize our vision. ELC expects an agency that is creative, producing work

that stands out in a competitive market, knowledgeable, demonstrating thorough understanding of digital concepts, tactics and trends, and accountable, with results-based execution and timely follow through.

V. SCOPE OF WORK

ELC is requesting proposals from qualified and interested agencies for professional services to maintain the existing website, and manage a Customer Relationship Management tool, provide website annual services (including but not limited to site hosting and support), provide annual search engine optimization services, with monthly reports on their search engine optimization work. These services would be provided while also understanding ELC's vision to promote tourism, meeting the needs of local businesses, resulting in expanding tourism revenue and the economic health of Lincoln City. The selected Interactive Agency of Record shall provide ELC with professional services that will be outlined in a contract for services including an approved annual program of work and budget for each year of the contract.

The goals of explorelincolncity.com are:

1. **Showcase the Lincoln City experience:** serve as the most trusted online destination for Lincoln City travel/tourism information.
2. **Enhance the consumer experience:** provide helpful tools and engage with consumers at every stage of the trip—from awareness through consideration to the post-vacation experience.
3. **Connect consumers with local tourism providers** in order to bridge the gap between a Lincoln City vacation dream to a tangible travel product.

The successful agency will play an integral role in maintaining ELC's robust publishing platform—explorelincolncity.com—that serves as the hub of all our digital efforts to promote travel in the city of Lincoln City.

A. Agency Structure

In addition to internal staff, ELC contracts with a Marketing Agency of Record. This facilitates design and brand message development of explorelincolncity.com. In addition to the key agencies mentioned above, ELC also maintains relationships with other smaller agencies for services such as e-mail marketing, web hosting and technical consulting. The chosen Interactive Agency of Record will be expected to be part of our agency team and coordinate as needed with appropriate agencies.

B. Proposal Specifications

1. **Explorelincolncity.com** serves as part inspiration and part planning resource—a guide to be used by travelers who are considering Lincoln City as destination and those who are further along their vacation planning path or those who are already traveling in the area. It serves as the central hub of our digital platforms and serves as the primary call to action for ELC's marketing and public relations campaigns.

Adherence to the design and branding specifications set forth in the Lincoln City Brand Guidelines is emphasized and manifested in ELC's advertising campaigns, collateral materials and Visitor Guide. The chosen agency will be expected to work closely with ELC's marketing and Marketing Agency of Record to maintain the tone, photography, type and graphic elements of the Lincoln City style.

2. **Site Maintenance:** Maintain content, navigation, architecture and usability, social media and engagement, mobile optimization, site searchability, attention to analytics.
3. **Content:** Add content as needed or assist ELC staff in the addition of new structure, content, usability, et.
4. **Hosting Services:** Agency shall directly provide hosting services for **explorelincolncity.com** or provide a recommendation for ELC to secure independent hosting service or retain existing service. Hosting service should be adequate to support the site architecture, peak traffic and uploaded assets, while being fast and reliable. The hosting service will deliver data through a secure protocol (HTTPS). ELC should be automatically backed up on a nightly basis. The agency will provide support to oversee the transition from the current hosting service to a new one, if applicable.
5. **Domain Name:** The current domain for the ELC website is **explorelincolncity.com** (it was formerly **oregoncoast.org**). **Oregoncoast.org** should continue to direct to **explorelincolncity.com**
6. **Agency Ideas:** ELC is also interested in agency ideas and advice on how to offer the best user experience possible. Agencies are encouraged to share ideas related to content, social media integration, tools, architecture, navigation, SEO, design, and overall site engagement.

C. Support, Maintenance & Training

The selected agency must provide ongoing support per an agreed upon contract for all technical issues related to the site. This includes, but is not limited to, ELC staff consultation, design, functionality, security, system updates and overall improvements.

Agency must have a designated round-the-clock point of contact for emergency purposes. Round-the-clock support may include, but not limited to: live chat, online training manuals, support FAQs, customer support forums, instructional videos, informational newsletters, informational and support-driven webinars (live and archived), request forms and support-related updates through common social networking mediums.

The agency should be available for ongoing training as needed or in conjunction with installation of new features.

VI. ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Additional services may include:

- 1. Email Marketing**
- 2. SEM**
- 3. E-ticketing**
- 4. Sub-branded microsite development**
- 5. Domain Brokerage**

If your agency is able to provide any or all of these services, please describe your ability to do so, the added value these services can provide, and an estimated pricing structure. If your agency is able to provide additional services beyond those identified above, provide recommendations that would be relevant to ELC.

VII. FUNDING, BUDGET & TERMS

Funding of the work described herein will be determined by TLT collections and as approved and authorized by the Lincoln City City Council. ELC works within a fiscal year period of July 1st through June 30th of the following year. Communicating to ELC the timeline of services is emphasized, when work will be completed. ELC will have the ability to consider any identified change in annual services and associated fees for this service during the annual renewal process, as influenced by unperceived market changes. Each year, the awarded firm is expected to provide a detailed scope of work budget to ELC outlining the anticipated annual costs of services prior to work commencing for that fiscal year.

The term of the contract shall be from the effective date through June 30, 2025 with the option for two (2) additional one (1) year extensions thereafter subject to the mutual agreement of the parties.

VIII. SELECTION PROCESS

From a review of the statements of qualifications received, the City of Lincoln City's

Explore Lincoln City Department intends to evaluate the proposals and possibly invite one or more firms to be interviewed before making a final selection of a firm for the project. Explore Lincoln City will notify selected firms of the date and times of any interviews. Explore Lincoln City reserves the right to select based solely on statements of qualifications received.

The selected respondent whose selection was based on qualifications will then negotiate with Explore Lincoln City on fee and contract conditions. If a reasonable fee cannot be achieved with the respondent of choice, negotiations will proceed with other qualified respondents until a mutually agreed contract can be negotiated.

IX. EVALUATION CRITERIA

An evaluation committee will review all proposals that are initially deemed responsive and they shall rank the proposals in accordance with the below criteria. The evaluation committee may recommend an award based solely on the written responses or may request proposal interviews/presentations.

Interviews/presentations, if deemed beneficial by the evaluation committee, will consist of the highest scoring proposers. The invited proposers will be notified of the time, place, and format of the interview/presentation. Based on the interview/presentation, the evaluation committee may revise their scoring.

Written proposals must be complete and no additions, deletions, or substitutions will be permitted during the interview/presentation (if any). The evaluation committee will recommend award of a contract to the final City decision maker based on the highest scoring proposal. The City decision maker reserves the right to accept the recommendation, award to a different proposer, or reject all proposals and cancel the RFP.

Proposers are not permitted to directly communicate with any member of the evaluation committee regarding this RFP during the evaluation process. Explore Lincoln City will communicate status upon review of written responses.

Evaluation Criteria – Written Response	Points Available
Project Understanding	25
Qualifications	35
Experience & References	25
Proposed Pricing & Fees	15
Available Points	100

Interviews (if any) Based on the following:

- Level of Understanding of Lincoln City & DMOs
- Experience & Qualifications

- Creativity & Design Appeal of Previous Work
- Team Compatibility

X. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

To enable ELC to efficiently evaluate the responses, it is important that each response be submitted as outlined in this section. Please include an outside cover and/or first page, containing the name of the project followed by a Table of Contents. Provide the following information in the order in which it appears below:

A. Written Response

Agency Information

- Provide basic information including agency name, addresses, and telephone number of all offices.
- Describe your organizational structure, history and size of agency.
- Provide the name of agency principal(s) and primary contact.

Project Understanding & Management Strategy

- Describe your company's values and approach to client relationships and account management, including enough detail so that ELC can determine that the agency has a thorough understanding of the services required by this project.
- Indicate what you would characterize as key competitive challenges, opportunities, and trends that ELC should be mindful of relative to today's changing technologies and marketing environment.

Qualifications, Capabilities & Approach

- Provide background information describing your business, including a comprehensive overview of your capabilities to provide the requested service, your ability to enhance a tourism destination marketing organization's website, and initial ideas that demonstrate how your agency's experience can benefit Lincoln City.
- Identify your agency's capabilities as it pertains to meeting the requirements in the Scope of Work and Additional Services sections above.
- Indicate your agency's ability to provide ongoing support and maintenance.
- Explain benefits and limitations of your CMS if your proposed CMS is not open source.

Experience & References

- All team members (including subcontractors) included on the team shall be identified.

- Provide samples of work and a summary of website development services of this nature provided to any current clients in Oregon.
- Provide a summary of experience with public-sector accounts or non-profit agencies of similar size and scope as described in this solicitation.
- Provide a minimum of two references including contact names, dates that the services were provided, addresses and telephone numbers. At least two of the references must be current clients. References may be checked to verify the agency's ability to perform similar tasks.
- Indicate your knowledge of the tourism industry and the City of Lincoln City.

Proposed Pricing & Fees

The pricing and fee component must include a detailed project budget and description of the compensation requirements of the firm, including fees and services, and any commissions. Specifically itemize:

- Annual licensing fees
- Ongoing maintenance and support fees
- Hosting service fees
- Any other billable expenses or proposed additional services

Additional Information

- Provide any other information as part of your proposal, which you believe to be important to the selection process.

B. Interview (if any)

Will consist of an agency interview including review of the written Proposal, agency qualifications and discussion of the project and working relationship. The interview will be no more than one hour. All other questions and contact with ELC with regard to this RFP must be done in writing (via e-mail is satisfactory). The interview may be conducted in-person or remotely.

Information to be Evaluated in Interview (if any):

- Level of understanding of Lincoln City and the tourism industry.
- Relevance of agency's experience and qualifications.
- Recommendations on maintenance of explorelincolncity.com.
- Ability to meet demands of changing trends, mediums and technologies.
- Compatibility of the agency and ELC teams.

Interview questions will be considered part of the respondent's proposal for evaluation purposes. ELC will select the best overall proposal, considering both the written proposal and the proposers' response to the interview questions, as determined in accordance with the evaluation criteria set forth above.

FINAL SELECTION WILL BE MADE BASED UPON THE COLLECTIVE EVALUATION OF THE WRITTEN RESPONSE AND INTERVIEW (IF ANY).

XI. ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS, NOTIFICATIONS & INFORMATION

- **All Information True:** By submitting a response, Respondents represent and warrant that all information provided in the response submitted shall be true, correct and complete. Respondents who provide false, misleading, or incomplete information, whether intentional or not, may be excluded.
- **Proposals are deemed confidential** until the “Notice of Intent to Award” letter is issued. This RFP and one copy of each original proposal received in response to it, together with copies of all documents pertaining to the award of a contract, will be kept and made a part of a file or record which will be open to public inspection.
- **Cost of Responses:** ELC will not be responsible for the costs incurred by anyone in the submittal of responses.
- **Contract Negotiations:** This RFP is not a contract or a commitment of any kind. If this RFP results in a contract offer by ELC, the specific scope of work, associated fees, and other contractual matters will be determined during contract negotiations.
- **No Obligation:** ELC reserves the right to evaluate responses submitted; waive any irregularities therein; select candidates for the submittal of more detailed or alternate proposals; accept any submittal or portion of submittal; reject any or all Respondents submitting responses; should it be deemed in ELC’s best interest; or cancel the entire process.
- **Professional Liability Insurance:** The Respondent shall have the appropriate liability insurance certificate by an insurer authorized to transact insurance in the State of Oregon, to be submitted on an annual basis.
- **W9 and Business Registry:** The Respondent will need to provide a W9 and maintain registration as a business with the Oregon Secretary of State upon contract award.

XII. TIMELINE & SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

Estimated selection timeline:

Request for Proposals Issued:	March 8, 2024
Deadline to Submit Clarifying Questions:	April 15, 2024
Request for Proposals Due:	April 22, 2024
Tentative Dates for Interviews:	April 29 – May 3, 2024
Notice of Intent to Award Contract:	June 1, 2024
Anticipated Contract Start Date:	July 1, 2024

Responses must observe submission instructions and be advised as follows:

Complete Proposals may be mailed to the below address or e-mailed directly to ttrainor@lincolncity.org. The subject line of the e-mail must clearly identify the RFP title. ELC will provide confirmation that the proposal has been received. If the proposal is mailed, a sealed original copy labeled with the RFP title and digital copy (on compact disk or flash drive) must be included. The proposal (hard copy or e-mail) must be received by 5:00 PM PT on April 22, 2024.

Mailing address including Hand Delivery, UPS and FEDEX:

**Explore Lincoln City
Attn: Tyrel Trainor
801 SW Hwy 101, Suite 401
Lincoln City, OR 97367**

ELC reserves the right to solicit additional information or clarification from the vendors, or any one vendor, should the City deem such information necessary.