



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

**THE TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON**

**RFP #2019-001**

**The Retail Strategy:**

**Retail and Light Industry**

**ISSUE DATE:**  
**August 15, 2019**

**CLOSING LOCATION:**

**Williamston Municipal Center**  
**ATTN: Sonya R. Crandall**  
**12 W. Main Street**  
**Williamston, SC 29697**  
**[sonyacew@gmail.com](mailto:sonyacew@gmail.com)**

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE DATE AND TIME:**  
**September 5, 2019 at 5:00pm**

A copy must be emailed to [sonyacew@gmail.com](mailto:sonyacew@gmail.com) and six (6) copies of the proposal must be presented by 5:00 PM on September 5, 2019 to the address above. (Please show RFP # on the lower left corner of package.)

## SECTION I

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND PURPOSE OF THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

The Town of Williamston is a municipal corporation located in Anderson County. The Town provides vital services to its residents and requires capable and competent **Retail and Light Industry Recruitment Services**.

The Town of Williamston will evaluate and select a Retail and Light Industry Recruitment Services vendor to assume the support of its Economic Development needs. The selected Vendor shall be required to sign an agreement that the Town determines to be fair, competitive, and reasonable.

#### **Minimum Qualifications:**

To be eligible to respond to this Solicitation, the Vendor must demonstrate that it has sufficient qualifications, resources and experience to provide the services under this solicitation. Those qualifications are as follows:

- **Overall Experience**
  - a. Vendor shall have a minimum of 3 years' experience in retail and light industry recruitment.
  - b. Vendor must demonstrate experience in data collection, reporting and identifying opportunities for expansion and attraction of new retail operations in the Town.
- **Vendor Relationships**
  - a. The vendor must be able to demonstrate active participation in recruitment of community grocery stores and table service restaurants serving the southeastern United States. Desirable grocers include but are not limited to: ALDI, Bi-Lo, Costco, Food Lion, Ingles Market, Kroger, Lowes Food, Piggly Wiggly, Publix, Safeway, Wal-Mart, and Winn Dixie. Desirable restaurant types include but are not limited to: steakhouse, grill, café, trattoria or other casual or premium casual dining establishments.
  - b. Vendor must demonstrate experience beyond data collection and into relationship and connections with retail sales operators and have up-to-date contact lists.
- **Approach and References**
  - a. Vendors must use mobile data as part of their business model.
  - b. Vendor must have members of staff or team with a current real estate license.
  - c. Vendor must provide at least two client references to which similar services have been provided.

The Town of Williamston is seeking to identify and select an outside independent organization to perform retail and light industry recruitment for the Town. The remainder of this document provides information that will allow a service provider to understand the background for this project, the scope of the effort, and how to develop a proposal to the Town of Williamston.

## **SECTION II BACKGROUND**

This project is part of a larger multi-component project called The Retail Strategy: A Three-Pronged Action Plan. It is a federally funded initiative under the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). In this initiative, EW will launch an intensive Strategic planning process and pilot test several selected strategies for the Town of Williamston to jumpstart its next phase of economic development activities.

The Retail Strategy Action Plan project follows the completion of the highly successful Williamston Downtown Acceleration Project (WDAP) funded by ARC in 2017-18. It incorporated a series of beautification strategies including a streetscaping plan to create an inviting, walkable downtown environment, building on the charm and amenities of historic commercial buildings, Mineral Spring Park and the public municipal center. The WDAP streetscaping project complemented several projects to help revitalize the commercial center of the town and helped fulfill several strategies in its Community Master Plan. WDAP also laid the foundation for future economic development by providing the area with a new and fresh look that has helped spur heritage-oriented tourism and economically-oriented placemaking activities. In addition, and perhaps most importantly, this first phase helped start a buzz of activity and conversation about future redevelopment. Completed components include new streetscaped areas, welcome signage, banner extensions, a façade program improving over 20 commercial buildings, the addition of 5 art murals, and the creation of 15 inviting rest stops with benches and planters placed throughout the downtown area.

The revitalization of the downtown area is paramount to the future of the Town. The next step for the Town is to engage in the recruitment of residential developers (growth), light industry (job creation), and targeted retail sales operators to the Town (economic vibrancy). The intention is to create an inviting environment for the 10,000 daily commuters that drive through the downtown area on Highway 20, while also encouraging our residents to shop, dine and work locally. The historic Mineral Spring Park is already a frequent destination for day visitors and event-goers. However, Williamston has in its sights to be more. The Town wishes to be known for offering a high quality of life and become an ongoing “hot spot” for activity, adventure, and enjoyment of arts and culture, all situated in a natural and thriving commercial center located in the heart of the community.

## **SECTION III GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION**

Award of the contract resulting from this RFP will be based upon the most responsive Vendor whose offer will be the most advantageous to the Town of Williamston in terms of cost, functionality, and other factors as specified elsewhere in this RFP.

The Town of Williamston reserves the right to:

- a. Reject any or all offers and discontinue this RFP process without obligation or liability to any potential vendor,
- b. Accept other than the lowest priced offer if certain factors are met that prove to be advantageous to the Town, and
- c. Award a contract on the basis of initial offers received, without discussions or requests for best and final offers.

Vendor's proposal shall be submitted in several parts as set forth below. The Vendor will confine its submission to those matters sufficient to define its proposal and to provide an adequate basis for The Town of Williamston's evaluation of the Vendor's proposal.

In order to address the needs of this procurement, The Town of Williamston encourages Vendors to work cooperatively in presenting integrated solutions, if necessary or desirable. Vendor team arrangements may be desirable to enable the companies involved to complement each other's unique capabilities, while offering the best combination of performance, cost, and delivery being provided under this RFP. The Town of Williamston will recognize the integrity and validity of Vendor team arrangements provided that:

- d. The arrangements are identified and relationships are fully disclosed, and
- e. A prime Vendor is designated that will be fully responsible for all contract performance.

Vendor's proposal in response to this RFP will be incorporated into the final agreement between The Town of Williamston and the selected Vendor(s). The submitted proposals are suggested to include each of the following sections:

1. Cover Sheet
2. Executive Summary
3. Approach and Methodology
4. Project Deliverables
5. Project Management Approach
6. Detailed and Itemized Pricing
7. Appendix: References
8. Appendix: Project Team Staffing
9. Appendix: Company Overview
10. Appendix: Non-Discrimination Statement

General provisions and instructions with specific award parameters are provided in Section IV. The requirements for each of the above-mentioned sections (1-10) are outlined in Section V. Then in Section VI, the scope of work for this project is clarified in detail.

**SECTION IV**  
**INSTRUCTIONS**

- 4.1 **Responsibility:** It is the sole responsibility of the Vendor to assure that it has received the entire Request for Proposal.
- 4.2 **Written Notifications:** Vendors will be notified in writing of any change in the specifications contained in this RFP.
- 4.3 **Content Interpretation:** No verbal or written information that is obtained other than through this RFP or its agenda shall be binding on the Town of Williamston. No employee of the Town of Williamston is authorized to interpret any portion of this RFP or give information as to the requirements of the RFP in addition to that contained or amended to this written RFP document.
- 4.4 **Right of Rejection and Clarification:** The Town of Williamston reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to request clarification of information from any Vendor. The Town of Williamston is not obligated to enter into a contract on the basis of any proposal submitted in response to this document.
- 4.5 **Request for Additional Information:** Prior to the final selection, Vendors may be required to submit additional information which the Town may deem necessary to further evaluate the Vendor's qualifications.
- 4.6 **Denial of Reimbursement:** The Town of Williamston will not reimburse Vendors for any costs associated with the preparation and submittal of any proposal, or for any travel and/or Diem costs that are incurred.
- 4.7 **Gratuity Prohibition:** Vendors shall not offer any gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value to any official, employee, or agent of the Town of Williamston for the purpose of influencing consideration of this proposal.
- 4.8 **Right of Negotiation:** The Town of Williamston reserves the right to negotiate with the selected Vendor the exact terms and conditions of the contract.
- 4.9 **Right of Rejection of Lowest Fee Proposal:** The Town of Williamston is under no obligation to award the project to the Vendor offering the lowest fee proposal. Evaluation criteria included in this document shall be used in evaluating proposals.
- 4.10 **Exceptions to the RFP:** Vendors may find instances where they must take exception with certain requirements or specifications of the RFP. All exceptions shall be clearly identified, and written explanations shall include the scope of the exceptions, the ramifications of the exceptions for the Town of Williamston, and a description of the advantage to be gained or disadvantages to be incurred by the Town as a result of those exceptions.

- 4.11 **Indemnification:** Vendor, at its own expense and without exception, shall indemnify, defend and pay all damages, costs, expenses, including attorney fees, and otherwise hold harmless the Town of Williamston, its employees, and agents, from any liability of any nature or kind in regard to the delivery of these services.
- 4.12 **Certificate of Insurance:** Vendor will be required to provide proof of insurance, including professional liability and workers' compensation evidencing that the contractor has a workers' compensation insurance policy in force.
- 4.13 **Rights to Submitted Material:** All proposals, responses, inquiries, or correspondence relating to or in reference to this RFP, and all reports, charts, and other documentation submitted by Vendors shall become the property of the Town of Williamston when received.
- 4.14 **Copies:** An original and six copies of the proposal and supporting documents must be submitted in response to the RFP to the Williamston Municipal Center (see cover page). An electronic copy is also to be submitted to: [sonyacew@gmail.com](mailto:sonyacew@gmail.com)
- 4.15 **Contacts:** Vendors must submit proposals in accordance with the instructions contained in this RFP. All requested information must be submitted with the proposal. Instructions for preparation and submission of proposals are contained in this package. Questions regarding this request for proposal should be directed to:

Sonya Crandall, Project Manager  
The Retail Strategy: A Three-Pronged Action Plan  
(864) 650-7075  
E-mail: [sonyacew@gmail.com](mailto:sonyacew@gmail.com)

- 4.16 **Contract:** The contract between the Town of Williamston and the contractor shall consist of (1) the Request for Proposal (RFP) and any amendments thereto, and (2) the proposal submitted by the contractor in response to the RFP. In the event of a conflict in language between the two documents referenced above, the provisions and requirements set forth and/or referenced in the RFP shall govern. However, the Town of Williamston reserves the right to clarify any contractual relationship in writing with the concurrence of the contractor, and such written clarification shall govern in case of conflict with the applicable requirements stated in the RFP or the contractor's proposal. In all other matters not affected by the written clarifications, if any, the RFP shall govern.
- 4.17 **Termination of Contract:** The Town of Williamston may cancel the contract at any time for breach of contractual obligations by providing the consultant with a written notice of such cancellation. Should the Town of Williamston exercise its right to cancel the contract for such reasons, the cancellations shall become effective on the date as specified in the notice of cancellation sent to the contractor.
- 4.18 **Public Viewing:** RFP is posted for public viewing at Town Hall, 12 W. Main Street, Williamston, SC 29697, and on the website at [www.envisionwilliamston.com](http://www.envisionwilliamston.com)

- 4.19 **Requests for RFP:** Requests for RFP will be issued by email or download from website at [www.envisionwilliamston.com](http://www.envisionwilliamston.com). A hard copy will be supplied upon request.
- 4.20 **Notice of Award:** Notice of award will be posted on Envision Williamston's website at [www.envisionwilliamston.com](http://www.envisionwilliamston.com)

## SECTION V

### DETAILED RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

#### COVER SHEET

This cover sheet is to be completed and signed. Please submit the original with your application. A blank copy is provided in Section IX.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This section will present a high-level synopsis of the Vendor's responses to the RFP. The Executive Summary should be a brief overview of the engagement, and should identify the main features and benefits of the proposed work.

#### SCOPE AND APPROACH

Include detailed information and technical expertise by phase. This section should include a description of each major type of work being requested of the Vendor. The proposal should reflect each of the requirements listed in the Scope of Work Section of this RFP. Also include a time line for work completion.

#### DELIVERABLES

Include descriptions of the types of reports used to summarize and provide detailed information on security risk, vulnerabilities, and the necessary countermeasures and recommended corrective actions. Include sample reports as attachments to the proposal to provide an example of the types of reports that will be provided for this engagement.

#### PROJECT MANAGEMENT APPROACH

Include the method and approach used to manage the overall project and client correspondence. Briefly describe how the engagement proceeds from beginning to end.

#### DETAILED AND ITEMIZED PRICING

Include a fee breakdown by scope of work item and any projected expenses. This is a deliverable-based project. A set price fee should be described by deliverable, with a total project amount indicated, not to exceed **\$45,000**.

#### APPENDIX: REFERENCES

Provide two current corporate references for which you have performed similar work. Work for municipal corporations should be identified.

## **APPENDIX: PROJECT TEAM STAFFING**

Include biographies and relevant experience of key staff and management personnel. Describe the qualifications and relevant experience of the types of staff that would be assigned to this project by providing brief biographies for those staff members. Describe bonding process and coverage levels of employees. Affirm that no employees working on the engagement have ever been convicted of a felony.

## **APPENDIX: COMPANY OVERVIEW**

Provide the following for your company:

- Official registered name (Corporate, D.B.A., Partnership, etc.), address, main telephone number, toll-free numbers, and facsimile numbers.
- Key contact name, title, address (if different from above address), direct telephone, and fax numbers.
- Person authorized to contractually bind the organization for any proposal responding to this RFP.
- Brief history, including year established and number of years your company has been offering retail recruitment and/or light industry development services.

## **APPENDIX: NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

Provide an original, signed copy of the Non-discrimination statement completed by an authorized representative of the company.

## **SECTION VI**

### **SCOPE OF WORK**

The Town of Williamston is seeking retail services to attract desired retail, food store(s), and restaurants to the community. The Town is also seeking to include strategies to attract light industry such as call centers and technology firms to the area. The Town of Williamston will work closely with the vendor to enhance business retention, identify Williamston's strengths and weakness and leverage those into a retailer's or industrial leader's decision to locate inside the Town. The vendor will serve as an extension to the staff and the vendor's sole focus will be one of turning Williamston's data and community story into an attractive home for new retail and light industry.

#### **6.1 Minimum Requirements:**

- a. The vendor must stay in regular contact with the Project Manager for this project.
- b. The vendor must be prepared to demonstrate the number and type of contacts made on behalf of the Town of Williamston on a quarterly basis.
- c. Vendor must visit the market at least once every quarter.



## 6.2 **Work Completion:**

The work should commence by October 1, 2019. All work must be completed by no later than May 29, 2020.

## 6.3 **Main Activities:**

Below is a synopsis of the Retail Strategy Action Plan development process.

**Activity 1. Conduct Retail Trade Analysis** for the Williamston area. This will include examination of any changes in the market needs of the area based on retail sales data, and will also incorporate travel time data for analysis and identification of the area's market potential. Two workshops will be conducted. The resulting data will inform subsequent discussions with key informants and public meetings.

**Activity 2. Prepare Initial Research on Local Land Development Options** for the Williamston area. This activity will result in detailed maps that convey information on and analysis of acreage size, ownership, zoning, environmental impact, and infrastructure capacity.

**Activity 3. Identify, Schedule and Conduct Personal Interviews** with prospective developers, landowners, and funding agents. This information will be utilized to assess the interests and priorities of developers in converting these lands into better economic use, and the necessary steps and costs to achieve those ends as well as potential funders and their available contribution levels. This activity will also incorporate some basic definitions and distinctions of terminology so that all interviewees are working from a common understanding of key terms (Joyaux, 2011).

**Activity 4. Plan, Market and Conduct Public Meetings** to garner citizen input on targeted businesses, industry options, residential growth, and recreation/quality of life amenities. This process builds on the 2017 Community Voices survey and will expand into light industry discussions for job creation that will support retail growth. It will also incorporate features of the five point process of the Orton Family Foundation and its recommendations for community engagement such as (1) Knowing the community; 2) Keeping promises, 3) Going to the people, 4) Spreading the word, and 5) Asking for personal stories (*Downtown Idea Exchange*, Jan., 2019).

**Activity 5. Collect and Analyze** all planning data for Final Action Plan development. Develop summary tables and synthesize information into user-friendly materials for policy making and fund development. Identify individuals and organizations responsible for Action Plan tasks, calculate budget requirements, and develop realistic time lines for completion of each major task by category.

**Activity 6. Pilot Test Initial Strategies** by following up with developers and other interested parties that are "low hanging fruit" and have indicated they are ready for action. Revise strategies as needed based on new activity and "learning by doing" (Aristotle, the Nicomachean Ethics).

**Activity 7. Prepare Final Action Plan** and submit for Town Council approval and

implementation. Together the action plan illustrates “The things we do together, not because we want to make a profit or earn material reward, but because we care enough about something to take collective action...provides a space in which private citizens can organize for public work...” (Duarte & Snyder in Joyaux, 2011, p.9).

### **Anticipated Impacts**

The anticipated outputs include:

- 1) A detailed strategy, timeline and realistic budget for **Targeted Retail Recruitment** of at least 2-4 identified new businesses.
- 2) A **Light industry Action Plan** that focuses on 2-3 sectors for recruitment to diversify the business economic base, with a site location in Williamston to promote local job creation.
- 3) **Engagement of the Community** in targeted recruitment strategies for community improvement.

The anticipated outcomes include:

- 1) Increased pedestrian foot traffic and sales revenue at historic downtown businesses,
- 2) Increased Hospitality Fund revenue generation, and
- 3) Additional (spillover) interest in new business start-ups and expansion of businesses from outside the area to open a second or third location in Williamston.

It is anticipated that these strategies, used in combination, will attract more retail, jobs, and development for residential dwellings and light industry. As such, they will bring more visitors and residents to the area, thereby leading to recruitment of a needed grocery store, restaurants, entertainment and additional retail shopping options for the historic downtown area.

## **SECTION VII**

### **EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD**

#### **CRITERIA**

Any award to be made pursuant to this RFP will be based upon the proposal with appropriate consideration given to operational, technical, cost, and management requirements. Evaluation of offers will be based upon the Vendor's responsiveness to the RFP and the total price quoted for all items covered by the RFP.

The following elements will be the primary considerations in evaluating all submitted proposals and in the selection of a Vendor or Vendors:

1. Completion of all required responses in the correct format - 10%.
2. The extent to which Vendor's proposed solution fulfills the Town of Williamston's stated requirements as set out in this RFP – 20%.
3. An assessment of the Vendor's ability to deliver the indicated service in accordance with the specifications set out in this RFP – 20%.
4. The Vendor's stability, experiences, and record of past performance in delivering such services – 20%.
5. Availability of sufficient high quality Vendor personnel with the required skills and experience for the specific approach proposed – 20%.
6. Overall cost of Vendor's proposal – 10%.

**SECTION VIII**

**NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

The Vendor certifies that:

- (1) No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or otherwise discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, or gender in connection with any bid submitted to the Town of Williamston or the performance of any contract resulting there from;
- (2) That it is and shall be the policy of this Company to provide equal opportunity to all business persons seeking to contract or otherwise interested in contracting with this Company, including those companies owned and controlled by racial minorities, cultural minorities, and women;
- (3) In connection herewith, We acknowledge and warrant that this Company has been made aware of, understands and agrees to take affirmative action to provide such companies with the maximum practicable opportunities to do business with this Company;
- (4) That this promise of non-discrimination as made and set forth herein shall be continuing in nature and shall remain in full force and effect without interruption;
- (5) That the promises of non-discrimination as made and set forth herein shall be and are hereby deemed to be made as part of and incorporated by reference into any contract or portion thereof which this Company may hereafter obtain and;
- (6) That the failure of the Company to satisfactorily discharge any of the promises of non-discrimination as made and set forth herein shall constitute a material breach of contract; entitling the Town of Williamston to declare the contract in default. Therefore, will exercise any and all applicable rights and remedies including but not limited to: cancellation of the contract, termination of the contract, suspension and debarment from future contracting opportunities, and withholding and/or forfeiture of compensation/payment due on a contract.

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**Signature**

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**Title**

**SECTION IX**

**COVER SHEET – THE RETAIL STRATEGY PROPOSAL**

I have read and understood the requirements set forth in this **RFP #2019.001** and agree to therewith.

**SUBMITTED BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**VENDOR:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NAME (PRINT):** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TOWN /STATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP** \_\_\_\_\_

**TELEPHONE:** (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
**Area Code**

**FAX:** (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
**Area Code**