



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS DESTINATION MARKETING SERVICES

August 25, 2026

1. **PUBLIC NOTICE**

The Pine Bluff Advertising and Promotion Commission (hereafter Commission) is seeking proposals from qualified destination marketing agencies to provide integrated destination marketing services to the Commission, an independent commission of the City of Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Our goal is to enhance the visibility, reputation, and desirability of our city as a leading travel destination.

Any questions, clarifications, or requests for information regarding this RFP shall be directed in writing to the Commission's Executive Director:

Sheri Storie – sstorie@ExplorePineBluff.com

Any future clarifications, modifications to the solicitation, or directives issued regarding this RFP, shall be issued in writing as an addendum. Respondents must acknowledge addenda received as part of their submission.

2. **BACKGROUND & INTENT**

The Commission is a component unit of the City of Pine Bluff, Arkansas. The Commission was created by Ordinance No. 4269 of the City of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, on December 19, 1977. The Commission operates pursuant to authority vested therein by Title 26, Chapter 75, Subchapter 6 of the Arkansas Code, as amended; and utilizes all revenues collected for purposes not inconsistent with said statutes and local ordinances.

The Commission is the governing body of Explore Pine Bluff, the tourism office for the city of Pine Bluff, Arkansas whose vision is to enhance Pine Bluff's position in the tourism industry by promoting and developing the city as a travel destination that provides culturally rich, diverse, and inclusive experiences.

The Commission is seeking proposals from interested and qualified firms to provide destination marketing services to the Commission for a period of twelve (12) months with additional one (1) year extensions at the sole option of the Commission.

3. **OBJECTIVES**

The selected destination marketing agency will help us achieve the following objectives:

- A. **Drive Measurable Economic Growth:** Increase overnight stays, lodging tax collections, prepared food tax collections, and local visitor spending across key regional drive marks.
- B. **Elevate Brand Awareness:** Position the destination's unique cultural, outdoor, culinary, and historical assets to stand out against competing regional markets.
- C. **Expand Reach & Audience Engagement:** Grow leisure, sports, eco-tourism, and group travel segments through targeted, data-informed messaging.
- D. **Strengthen Destination Reputation:** Build positive regional and national visibility through strategic media placement and community storytelling.

4. **SCOPE OF WORK**

A. Brand Strategy & Campaign Development

- i. Develop and execute integrated, multi-channel marketing campaigns tailored to drive-in, leisure, and niche travel markets (e.g., eco-tourism, sports travel, cultural heritage).
- ii. Craft audience-specific messaging and creative assets for residents, leisure travel, and group/event organizers.
- iii. Provide strategic direction and brand positioning guidelines to differentiate the community within the region.

B. Media Planning & Digital Marketing

- i. Manage paid media buying across digital, social, and OTT/CTV channels.
- ii. Implement dynamic digital ad tracking, conversion modeling, and audience targeting.
- iii. Monitor performance and optimize campaign spend in real time based on audience behavior and attribution data.

C. Content Creation & Digital Assets

- i. Produce high-converting digital assets, including photography creation direction, short/long-form video, and promotional editorial content.
- ii. Execute organic social media content strategies and community engagement to foster brand growth.
- iii. Build media press kits and partner asset toolkits to empower local stakeholders and regional tourism partners.

D. Analytics, Reporting & Partner Collaboration

- i. Track and report on key performance indicators (KPIs) including ad conversions, feeder-market penetration, and digital referral traffic sent to local hospitality and lodging partners.
- ii. Deliver monthly/quarterly performance reports with actionable insights for continuous campaign refinement.
- iii. Assist in supporting local hospitality, retail, and event partners through co-op opportunities and promotional alignment.

5. **PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS**

Interested firms should submit a proposal that includes:

- A. **Company Profile:** Brief background, including the history, size and areas of expertise.
- B. **Team Structure:** Profiles of the proposed team members and their relevant experience.
- C. **Case Studies:** Examples of previous work, particularly similar projects for tourism offices of related industries.
- D. **Proposed Strategy:** An outline of your proposed approach to achieve the defined objectives.
- E. **Budget:** Detailed pricing structure, including any anticipated expenses.
- F. **References:** Contact information for at least three client references.

6. **RFP SCHEDULE & RESPONSE SUBMISSION**

The following is the proposed schedule for agency selection. Timely delivery of submissions is at the risk of the Respondent. Any submittals received after the deadline will not be considered.

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|-----------------------|--|
| A. August 25, 2026 | RFP Released |
| B. September 15, 2026 | Last day to submit written requests for information / clarifications |
| C. September 25, 2026 | Submissions due by 2:00 p.m.; evaluation of qualifications begins |
| D. October 5, 2026 | Interviews with short-listed respondents begin, if needed |
| E. October 28, 2026 | Selection Announcement |

Interested firms may submit responses by the following:

EMAIL:

sstorie@ExplorePineBluff.com

USPS:

P.O. Box 9047
Pine Bluff, AR 71611

Hand-Delivery*:

623 S. Main Street
Pine Bluff, AR 71601

*Please call 870-534-2121 prior to hand-delivery to ensure office is open.

7. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- A. Experience and qualifications of the team.
- B. Quality of the proposed strategy and creativity.
- C. Understanding of the tourism industry and our target audience.
- D. Cost-effectiveness.
- E. References and past performance.

8. SELECTION PROCESS

The Commission shall evaluate all proposals and may conduct interviews with up three (3) agencies deemed to be the most highly qualified to provide the proposed services.

The Commission shall then enter negotiations with the highest qualified firm for the services to be rendered, at compensation which the Commission determines is fair and reasonable. In making such a determination, the Commission shall consider the scope, complexity, and professional nature of the services to be rendered.

Should the Commission be unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with the firm considered to be the most qualified, at a price determined to be fair and reasonable to the Commission, negotiations with that firm shall be formally terminated. The Commission shall then undertake negotiations with the second most qualified firm. Failing to accord with the second most qualified firm, the Commission shall terminate negotiations. The Commission shall then undertake negotiations with the third most qualified firm. If unable to negotiate a contract with any of the selected firms, the executive director shall reevaluate the professional services, including the scope and reasonable fee requirements, and again compile a list of qualified firms and proceed in accordance with the above stated procedure until an agreement is reached.

9. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- A. All costs associated with developing or submitting a proposal in response to this request, or to provide oral or written clarification of its contents shall be borne by the Respondent. The Commission assumes no responsibility for these costs, whether or not an agreement or contract is awarded.
- B. All questions and requests for information shall be submitted in writing as established in the RFP Schedule. Oral and other interpretations or clarifications will be without legal effect.
- C. The Commission, or its designee, reserves the right to obtain clarification and/or additional information from any firm in regard to its submission. The Commission also reserves the right to terminate this RFP, and reissue a subsequent solicitation, and/or remedy technical errors in the RFP process.
- D. The Commission, or its designee, reserves the right to negotiate terms with other respondents should negotiations be terminated with the first and/or second selected respondent.
- E. This RFP does not commit the Commission to make a recommendation of award or commit the Commission to enter into an agreement or contract. The Commission reserves the right to award one, more than one, or no contract(s) in response to this RFP.
- F. Submittals and any other documents received from a Respondent in response to this request are public records and subject to public inspection and copying.

10. REJECTION OF PROPOSALS AND CLARIFICATION OF RESPONSES

The Commission reserves the right to reject any or all responses to this RFP and reserves the right to obtain clarification of any point in a firm's proposal or to obtain additional information necessary to properly evaluate a particular proposal. Failure of respondent to respond to such a request for additional information or clarification could result in rejection of that firm's proposal.

11. CONCLUSION

We look forward to receiving your proposal and collaborating to promote Pine Bluff, Arkansas effectively. Thank you for your interest in working with the Pine Bluff Advertising and Promotion Commission.