



Request for Proposal (RFP): Strategic Planning Consultant

Issued by:

Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber of Commerce (GGCC)

Website: www.ggchamber.org

Issue Date: January 22, 2025

Proposal Due Date: February 21, 2025

I. Introduction

The Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber of Commerce (GGCC), a vital business organization serving the Upcounty communities of Montgomery County, Maryland, is seeking a qualified consultant to lead the development of a comprehensive strategic plan. With a proud history of over 75 years and recent expansion of our service area, the GGCC recognizes the need to redefine our vision, mission, and goals to ensure we continue to serve our members effectively in a post-COVID landscape.

This strategic planning initiative will involve a thorough evaluation of the Chamber's current programs, services, and operations to better align with the needs of our growing and diverse membership base.

II. Background

Since its establishment, the GGCC has been committed to fostering business growth and building a thriving community in Gaithersburg, Germantown, and beyond. The Chamber represents businesses of all sizes and industries, providing advocacy, networking opportunities, and resources to support their success.

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, the GGCC has expanded its reach to serve the broader Upcounty area. However, it has been decades since the Chamber has undertaken a bottom-up strategic planning process to reassess its goals and strategies. This RFP seeks

to engage a consultant who can guide this critical process, ensuring broad stakeholder input and the development of actionable recommendations.

III. Project Scope and Objectives

The GGCC seeks a consultant to:

1. Assess Current State:

- Conduct a thorough review of the Chamber's current mission, vision, programs, and operations with a key stakeholder committee group
- Evaluate the effectiveness and relevance of existing services and activities.

2. Engage Stakeholders:

- Facilitate discussions with GGCC leadership, including a Strategic Planning Committee and staff, the Executive Committee of the Board, and finally the Board of Directors.
- Collect input through focus groups, and/or interviews to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges.
- Lead the Board to a decision, if needed, on new mission/vision/values statements.

3. Develop Strategic Plan:

- Draft a strategic plan that outlines clear goals, objectives, and priorities for the next 3-5 years.
- Include recommendations for improving member engagement, expanding services, and enhancing operational efficiency.

4. Implementation Framework:

- Provide a roadmap for implementing the strategic plan, including timelines, performance metrics, and resource requirements.
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IV. Deliverables

The selected consultant will deliver:

1. A comprehensive assessment report summarizing stakeholder input and key findings. We prefer this to be a true summary document - minimal, easy to understand, digest, and share with the Board of Directors.
 2. A draft and final strategic plan document, including:
 - Updated mission and vision statements, if necessary.
 - Strategic goals and objectives.
 - Actionable strategies and initiatives.
 - Metrics for evaluating progress.
 3. A presentation of the final strategic plan to GGCC leadership and key stakeholders.
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V. Proposal Requirements

Interested consultants should submit a proposal that includes:

1. **Introduction:**
 - Overview of your firm/individual practice, including qualifications and relevant experience.
2. **Approach and Methodology:**
 - Description of how you will execute the project scope, including stakeholder engagement methods and timeline.
3. **Project Team:**
 - Names and bios of key personnel involved in the project.
4. **Experience:**
 - Examples of similar strategic planning projects completed for nonprofit organizations, chambers of commerce, or business associations.
5. **References:**
 - Contact information for at least three references from previous clients.
6. **Budget and Timeline:**
 - Detailed cost proposal, including all fees and expenses.

- Proposed timeline for project completion.
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VI. Selection Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Relevant experience and expertise.
 2. Approach to stakeholder engagement and methodology.
 3. Quality of work in similar projects.
 4. Cost-effectiveness of the proposal.
 5. References and feedback from past clients.
 6. While GGCC membership is not a requirement to submit a proposal for this project, preference will be given to consultants/agencies who know the Upcounty business community well. The selected consultant/agency will be asked to join the Chamber if not already a member.
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VII. Submission Instructions

1. Submit proposals electronically in PDF format to: pross@ggchamber.org
 2. Proposals must be received no later than February 21, 2025 at 4:30pm. Late submissions will not be considered.
 3. For questions or clarifications, contact: Paula Ross, President & CEO
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VIII. Timeline

- **RFP Issued:** January 22, 2025
 - **Proposal Submission Deadline:** February 21, 2025
 - **Consultant Interviews and Selection:** February 24-28, 2025
 - **Project Kickoff:** March 1, 2025
 - **Project Completion:** May 30, 2025
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IX. Terms and Conditions

- GGCC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to negotiate the terms of engagement with any consultant.
- All materials developed during the project will become the property of GGCC.
- The consultant will adhere to GGCC's confidentiality and non-disclosure requirements.

We look forward to receiving your proposal and partnering with a qualified consultant to shape the future of the Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber of Commerce.