

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**  
**Regional Trails Branding & Communication**  
**October 2023**

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**1. GENERAL INFORMATION**

- 1.1. Tourism Tomorrow Indy (TTI), on behalf of a group of trail-focused stakeholders, is seeking responses to this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to select a qualified vendor to develop a shared brand and communication package storytelling the bicycle and pedestrian trail network in the Indianapolis region (Marion and adjoining counties).
- 1.2. The vendor response to this RFQ must be received by TTI no later than October 20, 2023 at 5PM EDT.
- 1.3. Questions pertaining to this RFQ should be directed to Brad Beaubien at [brad.beaubien@tourismtomorrow.org](mailto:brad.beaubien@tourismtomorrow.org) no later than October 9, 2023 at Noon EDT.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1. Since the creation of the first Greenways Master Plan in 1994 and construction of the initial segments of the region's first trail two years later, demand for and investment in walking and biking trails has grown significantly. From rails-to-trails corridors and scenic streambank paths to trails along major roads in developing areas, these connections provide a needed transportation and recreation system to these areas. In Indianapolis alone an unprecedented \$100 million of new and upgraded trail infrastructure is planned, not including extensions of the world-renowned Indianapolis Cultural Trail to the White River and 16 Tech. As these investments begin to transform livability and mobility in Central Indiana, an opportunity exists to better package, celebrate, and communicate this growing system.
- 2.2. To this end, a core group of partners have convened to collaborate on developing a regional trails branding and communication package. While it is intended that a broader group of stakeholders will be engaged in the development of this package, this core group of partners includes Tourism Tomorrow/Visit Indy, the City of Indianapolis Department of Public Works, the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Parks Alliance, Bike Indianapolis, and the Connected Communities initiative led by the Indianapolis Foundation and Central Indiana Community Foundation. These partners seek a branding and communication strategy partner to guide them through a consensus-building process that culminates in developing a shared brand and communication assets.
- 2.3. This communication work connects to other recent, ongoing, and upcoming trail-related planning that goes beyond the over \$100m of trail construction. The Department of Public Works will be updating its most current Greenways Master Plan, most recently completed in 2014. The Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization is developing a regional Trail-Oriented Development Plan. The Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development is preparing to update its long-range transportation plan for the county, IndyMoves.
- 2.4. Tourism Tomorrow Indy is the non-profit, future-focused arm of Visit Indy, the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for Indianapolis. Its work focuses on research, planning, and product development that is both visitor-focused and resident-aligned. Like Visit Indy, TTI aligns with the Indianapolis metropolitan statistical area (MSA) with a priority focus on Indianapolis and Marion County.

2.5. TTI's long-term destination-wide plan is known as Indy's Destination Vision, with prior iterations referred to as the Tourism Master Plan or Tourism Master Vision. The overarching purpose of the Destination Vision is to improve the appeal of Indy as a place to live, work, and visit through quality of life and place improvements, thereby increasing leisure travel while improving the existing core strength of group and event business. The Destination Vision defines an operational approach called Tourism with Purpose, a philosophy that seeks to harness the power and impact of travel and tourism to address community needs and challenges. The plan, available at [indydestinationvision.com](http://indydestinationvision.com), uses guiding principles related to people, place, and prosperity to focus the impacts of dozens of recommended actions. Specifically, plan action 6A supports development of trails regionally and the packaging, promotion, and programming of them to increase their usage.

### **3. PROJECT GOALS**

- 3.1. Develop a coordinated and broad-based voice to actively position and communicate Central Indiana's trail network as a cornerstone experience of visiting and living in Indy.
- 3.2. Build local and national awareness of Central Indiana's existing and growing trail network and how it can be used.
- 3.3. Increase and diversify usage of the trail network by both residents and visitors.

### **4. DESIRED SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES**

- 4.1. **Development of a shared brand.** In partnership with the client team, facilitate a process with identified stakeholders to co-develop a brand for the regional trail network.
  - 4.1.1. These stakeholders, to be identified by the client team, will include diverse individuals, organizations, agencies, and businesses who build, activate, utilize, communicate, or are economically connected to Central Indiana's trail system.
  - 4.1.2. This brand should serve as an independent regional umbrella that communicates and positions the system experience as a whole, offering a brand promise for residents and visitors that effectively connects and clarifies existing partner brands and does not compete with them.
  - 4.1.3. Key audiences should be identified for use throughout the entire project, with representative profiles developed for each audience. These audiences should be inclusive of different resident and visitor groups and be intentionally inclusive of diverse socioeconomic and demographic users.
  - 4.1.4. At a minimum, deliverables should include: brand usage guidelines; brand positioning, promise, and personality; tagline, vocabulary, and story; logo mark; and, color and font palettes.
  - 4.1.5. In addition to stakeholder engagement, user research and testing is desired as part of brand development that is inclusive of all identified audiences.
- 4.2. **Development of a system pattern language.** In partnership with the client team, facilitate a process to develop an effective naming, language, and environmental design convention for the trail network. The system pattern would focus on local destinations/nodes with a system of connections to the larger regional network.
  - 4.2.1. In partnership with the City of Indianapolis' update to its Greenways Master Plan and in consultation with other regional partners, work to consolidate and differentiate various trail facility terms currently in use today, such as greenway, trail, shared-use path, multi-use path, protected bike lane, and cycletrack. These terms should be community and language agnostic, experientially distinctive from a user perspective, and clearly hierarchical. This hierarchy should consider both infrastructure characteristics (widths/capacities, distance, amenities) as well as destination connections (connecting regional destinations like downtowns or major attractions vs more local destinations like mixed-use villages vs access destinations like

- neighborhoods or nature). Identify a toolkit of physical design cues and environmental graphic opportunities applicable to all audiences that communities can integrate to trail design and construction that reinforce this system hierarchy.
- 4.2.2. Inventory existing names and associated marks of branded trails (i.e. Monon Trail, B&O Trail). Where brand conflicts exist between communities, convene brand authorities to facilitate amicable brand reconciliation where possible, and where not, identify any commonalities that can be emphasized, or other strategies, to unify such trails.
  - 4.2.3. Identify local and regional trails that are also designated as part of a larger state or national trail system (ie National Road Heritage Trail). Develop a strategy that accommodates such secondary designations in the pattern language.
- 4.3. **Development of a communication toolkit.** In partnership with the client team, develop a suite of communication and marketing materials that storytell the brand. All of these tools will be managed and maintained by the client team without further consultant engagement.
- 4.3.1. Develop a WordPress-powered website that packages and tells the story of experiencing Central Indiana’s trail network. A process with the client team and with user testing should be employed to develop content and features applicable to various identified audiences, but this is currently expected to be more than a map. It likely includes trail history and future plans, key amenities and destinations along them, integration of partner offerings, blog storytelling content, prepackaged itineraries and route making based on criteria like distance, origin/destination location, and amenities and destinations.
  - 4.3.2. Develop a social media strategy that brings the brand and website to life, encouraging user engagement and user-generated content creation. This strategy should include guidance on voice, goals, content guidance and cadence, moderation, handle and hashtag usage, and platform differentiation. An inventory of other social media accounts in the trail marketing space should also be included.
  - 4.3.3. Develop a suite of visual assets for use in the website, social and marketing materials, and by partners.
    - 4.3.3.1. Develop a robust inventory of experience-focused photography and videography assets that focus on the user experience of all trails and trail types for use by partners. This inventory should include commissioned work as well as UGC with usage rights secured, and should include diverse audience types in terms of demographics and abilities and be reflective of both pedestrians and bicyclists and of all types of trail settings.
    - 4.3.3.2. Identify trails not present or outdated on Google Maps and Google Street View and work to get them updated in Google platforms. Similarly work to get any missing or incorrect data in OpenStreetMap updated.
    - 4.3.3.3. Develop up to three first-person virtual video “rides” that align with website prepackaged trail itineraries. These videos are intended to help new or naïve users understand how to use trails and what to expect along predetermined routes, increasing their willingness to engage the trail network for the first time. These rides will be representative of diverse trail settings.

## 5. SELECTION CRITERIA

- 5.1. Team and Talent. Demonstrate competency and experience in all tasks identified in this RFQ. Describe the vendor team, including how it is organized, its core competencies, differentiators, and the experience of the key individuals who would be working most closely on this project. For these key individuals, share approximate time commitments they expect to dedicate to this project as well as how long they have been with the company. Also note any XBE status (Minority, Women, Disabled, or Veteran-owned enterprises) of members of

the vendor team and if that status is recognized by the State of Indiana or City of Indianapolis. Strong XBE participation is looked upon very favorably.

- 5.2. Creative Portfolio. Provide examples of previous work that complements the branding, communication, and environmental design tasks identified in this RFQ. This should include at least three logo marks and at last three websites, all of which should have been produced internally by the vendor team (not outsourced to a firm not on the submitting team).
- 5.3. Project Approach. Propose a process and realistic monthly timeline that meets the needs of the goals and tasks identified in this RFQ. (Note that task 4.2.1 will inform work of the Indianapolis Greenways Master Plan update, which does not yet have a timeline. However, we expect this task to be one of the earlier tasks in our timeline.) Demonstrate understanding of the collaborative nature of this project and provide examples of how you have managed a process that required significant consensus building across diverse partners. For the timeline, identify a proposed project management and stakeholder group meeting cadence as well as key deliverable milestones.
- 5.4. References. Provide at least three references, with specific names and contact information, for projects led by the team in the past two years.

**6. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS**

- 6.1. The Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) shall include a one-page cover letter plus a maximum of eleven (11) pages to address the SOQ criteria as specified in Section 5. Adherence to the maximum page criteria is mandatory; each page side (maximum size 8 ½” x 11”) with criteria information will be counted. Pages that have photos, charts and graphs will be counted towards the maximum number of pages. The submittal cover, table of contents, section divider pages, and Appendix A resumes do not count towards the page limits. Appendix A resumes for team members shall be no more than one (1) page for each team member.
- 6.2. In addition to the SOQ document, vendors should submit up to 3 links to websites they created (not outsourced) and one link to a video they created. These links should be submitted as hyperlinks in the body of the email response.
- 6.3. Vendors must submit a digital copy of their response as a single PDF document and be no larger than 25MB in file size. All responses must be received by the deadline, should be labeled with the subject “RFQ: Trails Branding Project”, and emailed to Brad Beaubien, [brad.beaubien@tourismtomorrow.org](mailto:brad.beaubien@tourismtomorrow.org).

**7. SELECTION PROCESS AND SCHEDULE**

- 7.1. A review team consisting of partners selected by TTI will evaluate each SOQ according to the above criteria, provided references, and any past performance evaluations and other information available to TTI. Subject to the quality of submitted SOQs, TTI will select one or more qualified finalists for interviews, which may be conducted in-person or through videoconferencing. The purpose of these interviews will be to expand on the information provided in the SOQ, not to repeat information already provided.
- 7.2. The following tentative schedule applies to this RFQ. Submitting vendors must be available to meet with the review team on the interview meeting date.

Activity	Date
RFQ Released	October 2, 2023
Questions Due	October 9, 2023 @ Noon EDT
Question Response Sent to All	October 11, 2023 by 5pm EDT
SOQ Due	October 20, 2023 by 5pm EDT
Vendors Notified for Interviews	October 27, 2023
Interviews	On or after November 3, 2023