

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Strategic Marketing Planning and Consultation Services

Grand Haven Main Street / Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

Total Budget for Professional Services: \$5,000

Bids must be received by 5:00 pm on Tuesday, March 31, 2026, to be considered.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Grand Haven Main Street / Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is seeking proposals from qualified marketing professionals or firms to provide **strategic guidance on how and where the downtown district should focus its marketing efforts.**

The purpose of this engagement is to help the DDA identify **the most effective marketing channels, audiences, and promotional opportunities** for a downtown district with limited resources.

This engagement is intended to provide **strategic direction and practical recommendations**, not ongoing marketing services or campaign management.

A previously completed **Market Data Report** will be provided and should be referenced when developing recommendations.

2. BACKGROUND

The Grand Haven Main Street / Downtown Development Authority supports a vibrant historic downtown district in **Grand Haven, Michigan**. The district includes a mix of retail, dining, service, and entertainment businesses and hosts a variety of community events throughout the year.

The DDA manages several marketing tools including social media, event promotion, partnerships with local media, and other promotional opportunities. However, with limited resources, the DDA is seeking **professional guidance to help prioritize where marketing efforts will have the greatest impact.**

The DDA will remain responsible for implementing any marketing or advertising efforts. The selected consultant will provide **strategic recommendations only.**

3. PROJECT GOAL

The goal of this project is to provide the DDA with **clear, practical guidance on how to market the downtown district more effectively.**

Specifically, the consultant will help identify:

- Priority audiences most likely to visit downtown
- The most effective marketing channels to reach those audiences
- Opportunities to promote downtown during slower seasons
- How to better align marketing with downtown events and business activity
- Tools or partnerships that could help expand the district's marketing reach

Recommendations should be **realistic and achievable for a small organization with limited marketing resources**

4. BUDGET

The total budget available for this project is **\$5,000**.

This amount must include **all professional services associated with the project**, including analysis, meetings, and final recommendations.

Proposals should be structured to provide **clear strategic value within this budget**.

5. SCOPE OF WORK

The selected consultant will provide strategic guidance that may include:

Review and Analysis

- Review the provided Market Data Report
- Review existing DDA marketing efforts and channels
- Identify key insights relevant to downtown marketing opportunities

Strategic Guidance

Provide recommendations on:

- Priority audiences for downtown marketing
- Effective marketing channels and platforms
- Opportunities to reach regional visitors
- Seasonal marketing opportunities
- Marketing partnerships or collaborations
- Efficient use of limited marketing resources

Implementation Guidance

Provide practical suggestions for:

- Where the DDA should focus marketing efforts
- How to prioritize marketing investments
- Basic ways to evaluate marketing success

Collaboration

The consultant will participate in one or two working sessions with DDA staff and/or committee members to review findings and discuss recommendations.

6. DELIVERABLES

Deliverables should be **clear, practical, and easy to use**, and may include:

- A summary of key insights from the Market Data Report
- Strategic recommendations for downtown marketing priorities
- Suggested marketing channels and audience targets
- Guidance on measuring marketing effectiveness
- A presentation or discussion session with DDA staff and/or committee members

The DDA is seeking **practical recommendations rather than a lengthy formal marketing plan**.

7. EVENTS AND PROMOTIONAL CONTEXT

Downtown hosts several events throughout the year that help attract visitors and support local businesses. These events provide context for marketing recommendations and may include:

- Wine About Winter
- Sidewalk Sales
- Chow Down Centertown
- Bones About Town
- Fall Festival & Trick or Treat
- Light Night
- Small Business Saturday
- Santa in Centertown
- Tote Club Days

The consultant will not be responsible for event execution but may consider these events when recommending marketing priorities.

8. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals should include:

Firm Overview

- Background and experience
- Experience working with downtown districts, small communities, or tourism marketing

Project Approach

- How the Market Data Report will inform the analysis
- How recommendations will be developed within the \$5,000 budget
- How findings will be presented to DDA staff and stakeholders

Fee Structure

- Total proposed cost for services
- Confirmation that all services are included within the \$5,000 budget

Relevant Experience

- Examples of similar marketing strategy or advisory projects

References

- At least two professional references
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9. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Understanding of the DDA's goals and constraints
 - Quality and clarity of the proposed approach
 - Experience with similar communities or organizations
 - Ability to provide practical, actionable recommendations
 - Cost and overall value
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9. GENERAL TERMS

Standard City/DDA contractual requirements will apply, including:

- Non-collusion
 - Insurance requirements
 - Ownership of work product
 - Confidentiality
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10. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Please direct questions of any kind to Chandi Pape, Grand Haven Main Street Executive Director, by email at cpape@grandhaven.org or by phone at 616 -844-1188. Thank you very much for your time, and I look forward to hearing from you soon! The winning bid will be announced on Wednesday, April 3, 2026.