



Tourism Partnership Niagara

Request for Proposal: 3-Year Strategic Plan 2025/26 - 2028/29

July 4, 2024

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OBJECTIVE

The successful vendor will lead the TPN staff and board through a strategic planning exercise to develop a three-year plan that includes a north star vision, including deliverables as described in section 3.7 of this document. This plan should be informed by the Board of Directors, utilizing relevant insights and research and be considerate of the TPN's organizational needs and annual Business Plan development.

The successful vendor will deliver a community facing communication document that the TPN can share with its stakeholders and utilize as a foundational resource for business planning through 2028/29.

1.2 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

This Request for Proposals ("RFP") is an invitation to interested vendors to submit proposals ("Responses") to The Tourism Partnership of Niagara ("TPN") for the provision of a 3-Year Strategic Plan: 2025-2028.

This RFP is intended to assist each person who submits a Response (a "Respondent") in gaining an understanding of the TPN's requirements. However, each Respondent is responsible for verifying all the information required for its Response. Please be advised that the TPN is under no obligation to proceed with this Project after receiving and reviewing Responses, and that under no circumstances will any Respondent receive payment of any kind for submitting information in response to this RFP.

1.2 ABOUT TPN

The Tourism Partnership of Niagara (TPN) was established in 2010 as one of Ontario's 13 Regional Tourism Organizations (RTOs). Representing all the municipalities (12) within the Regional Municipality of Niagara, the TPN is an independent, industry-led not-for-profit organization responsible for working with tourism partners to enhance and grow Niagara's tourism products and marketing activities.

The TPN is responsible for marketing the Niagara Region as a world-class, four-season travel destination to domestic and international markets. TPN's role is to increase awareness and effectively present Niagara, while influencing consumers at the intent and consideration phase of the path to purchase. TPN plays a leadership role in the Niagara Tourism and Hospitality apparatus that helps shape the Niagara narrative to attract business and leisure consumers to Niagara.

TPN's vision is for the Niagara Region to be the #1 tourism destination in Canada that people want to visit again and again.

1.3 CONTACT

Tourism Niagara Canada
5741 River Rd, Niagara Falls, ON
L2G 3K9
office@visitniagaracanada.com

1.4 RTOs and MINISTRY OF TOURISM, CULTURE and GAMING

Regional Tourism Organizations (RTOs) are independent, not-for-profit organizations led by the tourism sector. They play an important role in fostering competitive and viable tourism regions across Ontario. RTOs provide regional leadership and support a coordinated and collaborative approach that maximizes resources, encourages strategic planning and investment, and results in stronger marketing with better reach.

RTOs work with all industry stakeholders within the region to grow tourism. RTOs may also work collaboratively across regions and with sector-based organizations on areas of mutual interest. Regions may vary, however, in how their RTOs and existing destination marketing organizations decide to work together.

Through a robust governance and operations framework, RTOs are expected to develop and deliver strategies to meet the following destination management priorities (pillars) in their region:

- Product Development
- Investment Attraction / Investor Relations
- Workforce Development and Training
- Marketing
- Partnerships

RTOs are required to develop an Annual Business plan, developing pillar objectives, activities, and goals or targets, including rationale. Destination development encourages regions to examine their current assets, strengths, needs and aids. The role of the RTO is to provide leadership and support to operators so that regional gaps that meet the evolving needs and experience of tourists.

The primary RTO goals are to increase spending, attract investment and create jobs in the region.

2.0 SUBMISSION PROCESS

2.1 REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must be submitted to the email (as indicated in 1.3) set out above on or before the submission deadline (as indicated in 3.3)

Respondents should include a) Full legal name of Respondent and contact information as well as b) a detailed description of the firm (including number of people employed by the firm, length of time in business, internal organization, range of services offered, special features and equipment, normal business hours). Respondents should include at least three (3) references with Response. Name, firm, address, telephone number and email address of three relevant references for whom the Respondent has provided similar type work. The TPN reserves the right to contact any or all references submitted.

2.2 CONTRACT for DELIVERABLES

The selected respondent will be required to enter into an agreement with TPN for the provision of the professional services outlined in 1.0 and throughout this document.

The initial term of the agreement will be for approximately 18 weeks. TPN reserves the right to extend the agreement for an additional four (4) weeks beyond the initial term, for an overall potential maximum of 22 weeks in total.

2.3 PROPOSED PROJECT TIMELINE

Dates below are proposed at the time of drafting this document and will be revisited, modified as needed, and confirmed by both parties upon project approval.

Date	Milestone
July 4, 2024	RFP Issued
July 12, 2024	Engagement Deadline for Questions
July 16, 2024	Response Deadline to Questions
July 19, 2024	RFP Deadline
July 26, 2024	Vendor Selection
July 30, 2024	Project Launch
August, 2024	Research and Interviews
September, 2024	Strategy Development
October 30, 2024	Project Completion

2.4 PRICING

Respondents should include a detailed price list that clearly indicates fixed and variable costs. Pricing quoted by each Respondent must be inclusive of all labour and materials, insurance costs, taxes, gratuities and all other overhead. The TPN will not

accept any costs, and will not reimburse the successful Respondent for, any hospitality, food or other incidental expenses. All pricing must be in Canadian funds. Terms of payment, including any discounts offered.

2.5 QUESTIONS, EVALUATION and PROJECT AWARD

As outlined in Section 2.3, an engagement period will allow Respondents to ask questions, which should be submitted by email to office@visitniagaracanada.com. Answers to those questions will be made available to all those who register with the contact provided by the Engagement Deadline.

The TPN will have the right to select from among the Responses received. The TPN reserves the right in its sole discretion and for any reason whatsoever: to accept or to reject any or all Responses in whole or in part or not to proceed with all or any part of the project. The successful Respondent will be notified by phone or email, in accordance with the timeline provided in Section 2.3.

2.6 CONFIDENTIALITY

TPN will consider all responses as confidential, subject to the provisions of and the disclosure requirements of the Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act, as may be amended from time to time. TPN will however have the right to make copies of all responses received for its internal review process.

2.7 CONFLICT of INTEREST

The Respondent is required to disclose any real, apparent or potential conflict of interest that comes to its attention in preparing its Response, during the evaluation or during the term of any subsequent agreement. The Respondent shall accept any determination by the TPN, including any requirements to withdraw from the bidding or agreement.

2.8 OTHER

Respondents must not attempt to communicate directly or indirectly with any employee or Board members of the TPN or with members of the public or the media, about the RFP, other than as expressly directed or permitted by the TPN. Respondents may contact the TPN up to the Engagement Deadline (provided in Section 2.3) with any questions regarding this document. Proposals shall be irrevocable for a period of ninety (90) days from the Submission Deadline.

The RFP process and the agreement resulting therefrom shall be governed by the laws of the Province of Ontario and the federal laws of Canada applicable therein.

The successful Respondent will be required to agree to the terms of a Non-Disclosure Agreement with TPN.

3.0 RFP FORMAT

3.1 METHODOLOGY

Describe the approach and/or process you propose to address the RFP requirements. Include any notable methodologies, tools and techniques, and their respective suitability to this project. Briefly describe how your engagement proceeds from beginning to end. Provide details with time and resource requirements.

3.2 SCHEDULE

Using the Proposed Timeline (3.3) as a guide, confirm a detailed project schedule that reflects your proposed approach/process and demonstrates your ability to meet the milestones within the project timeline. Itemize project milestones, deliverables, and engagement points throughout the project schedule.

3.3 PROJECT MANAGER

The successful Respondent will provide all the necessary project management needed to complete the services proposed in response to this RFP. Identify the Project Manager proposed for this project and describe their experience. TPN is particularly interested in relevant regional (Niagara) and tourism experience.

Include the Project Manager's resume. This should be structured to emphasize their relevant qualifications and experience successfully managing projects of similar size and scope to that required by this RFP. The resume should include at least two project references, including:

- Organization name; Including any previous name(s) the organization may have used,
- Name, title, telephone number, and email of the contact for the organization; and
- A brief description of the scope, complexity and duration of the project.

3.4 PROJECT TEAM

The Respondent should be able to demonstrate that its proposed team meets or exceeds the RFP requirements. Provide individual resumes for each proposed resource. The resumes should be structured to emphasize their relevant qualifications and experience in completing projects of similar size and scope to that required by this RFP. Each resume should include at least two project references where the proposed individual served in a similar role, including:

- Name of organization.

- Name, title, telephone number, and email of contact for the organization.
- Brief description of the scope, complexity, dates, and duration of the project; and
- The role the proposed individual played in the referenced project.

3.5 GENERAL FORMAT AND APPEARANCE OF THE PROPOSAL

Respondent responses to this RFP should reflect the professional nature of the services required and should effectively communicate how the consultant(s) will deliver on the requirements of this RFP as concisely as possible.

3.6 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

Upon award of the contract, the successful Respondent will meet with the TPN to further discuss the project, review the proposal, work plan, and discuss the expected outcomes of the assignment. During this meeting, the consultant may request copies of or access to any materials at the TPN disposal that may aid in the development of the strategic plan.

- Execute comprehensive research and material review to support project
- Execute a competitive review for other tourism regions in Ontario and the US, travel markets including marketplace trends
- Conduct a jurisdictional scan to examine alignment with other inter and extra regional strategic plans
- Identification of best practices and defining target market segmentation
- Meet with TPN to review and gather materials to aid in strategic development. These materials are items that TPN has access to and are not the only documents that should be used to develop strategic plan. This should include a review of past strategies plans and research prepared by TPN
- Lead/engage with key tourism stakeholders within the Niagara Region including, but not limited to, individual consultations (interviews) or group discussions.
 - Expectation is that interviews will be held with a minimum of 13 board members, 7 TPN committee members and/or other stakeholders (ie Destination Marketing Organizations), 5 TPN staff and/or Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming representatives
- Establish and project manage through regular progress reports and meetings.
- Provide regular up-to-date budget and hours control report
- Review and form preliminary alignment for draft report with the scope of TPN's:
 - Transfer Payment Agreement with the Ministry
 - Current Strategic Plan and Annual Business Plan
 - Board of Directors' vision

A Draft Strategic plan shall be presented to the TPN Board of Directors at an offsite planning session. Session will be used to gather feedback to further build the final plan and be completed consistent with timeline provided in Section 2.3 of this document.

3.7 FINAL DELIVERABLES

TPN's Final Strategic Plan 2025/26-2028/29 will convey alignment on the organization's North Star vision, encompassing all inputs from the strategic development process.

Final product to be presented to the TPN Executive Committee on **October 31, 2024** and to include:

- Three-year plan for TPN that clearly identifies organizational priorities, goals and strategies
- Provide KPI reporting and analytics
- Implementation of a tracker tool/ scorecard to be used to capture implementation progress

A minimum of three additional presentations will be required.

The final report must also be constructed in a format that supports TPN's Annual Business Plan.