



Request for Proposals

Regional Media Marketing Campaign

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) requests proposals from qualified firms to develop and implement Phase II of a media marketing campaign to raise public awareness and support regional and statewide efforts to obtain an accurate count for the 2020 decennial census. The goal of this project is to ensure a fair, complete, and accurate count during the 2020 Census for the purpose of safeguarding fair representation and distribution of resources.

Proposals will be accepted until **4:00 p.m. Friday, June 19**. Any proposals received after that date and time will not be considered.

Background

The US Constitution requires that every person living in the United States is counted every ten (10) years to ensure fair representation in Congress and distribute federal program dollars among states and localities based on population. The decennial census provides foundational information that will be used to make policy decisions for ten years. Businesses and industries also decide where to locate new offices, facilities, and services based on census data, creating new jobs and promoting economic growth.

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) is located in Peoria, Illinois and serves as the Regional Planning Commission for Peoria, Tazewell, and Woodford Counties. In addition, TCRPC is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Peoria-Pekin Urbanized Area. TCRPC delegates its MPO responsibilities to the Peoria-Pekin Urbanized Area Transportation Study (PPUATS). TCRPC will support local governments in their efforts to increase public awareness and ensure a quality census.

To aid in census outreach, TCRPC applied for and was granted to be the Regional Intermediary for North Central Illinois by the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) for the 2020 Census Grant Program. This entails collaborating and coordinating subrecipients to conduct census outreach and education efforts in a 10-county North Central Illinois region: DeWitt, Fulton, Livingston, Marshall, Mason, McLean, Peoria, Stark, Tazewell, and Woodford counties.

TCRPC has been granted FY21 funding to continue the Census outreach due to the extension of the 2020 Census in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. TCRPC's FY21 grant application includes the development and implementation of Phase II of its region-wide, multilingual marketing campaign in the North Central Region. This would include, but is not limited to, television, radio, digital/online, billboard, print, and social media. Focus will need to be made to the Census Tracts with low response rates.

Project

TCRPC has divided the project into five (5) phases: planning, education and engagement, awareness, motivation, and reminding.

Phase 1: Planning (July 2020)

Outreach to promote the 2020 Census must first begin with a planning phase to clearly identify the goals and objectives of the process. This phase includes reviewing response rates in each county by census tract. More focus should be on census tracts with lower response rates and the Hard-to-Count population that resides in the identified census tracts.

Phase 2: Remind & Motivation (July – October 2020)

In this phase, the purpose is to provide targeted outreach to communities with a low response rate and encourage the prompt completion of the census from among the public, especially the HTC populations. The US Census Bureau's initial response rate will be used to target the Census Tracts with low response rates. The advertisement of US Census Bureau protocols and timeline for manual enumeration to non-responding households will also be advertised during this phase.

Phase 3: Reporting (October - November 2020)

The last phase is intended to provide a comprehensive report on the success of the marketing campaign, lessons learned, and suggestions for the 2030 Decennial Census.

Scope of Services

The scope of services sought by the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission and its local partners shall include the provision of all required labor, materials, equipment, expertise, and media buying related to this RFP and Scope of Services.

The primary purpose of this RFP is to secure expert consultant service to develop and implement the media marketing campaign to support census outreach and communication in the North Central Illinois region.

The following items should each be addressed in the submittal.

Task 1: Review existing material and resources

The consultant will work with TCRPC, project partners, Illinois Census Office, US Census Bureau, and national organizations to collect and review existing materials that can be used in developing Phase II of the North Central Illinois 2020 Census Media Marketing Campaign.

The consultant will utilize existing materials to support the design of the media marketing campaign and the selection of key messages for paid and other media. The consultant will work with community organizations to reach the intended audiences, raise awareness, and motivate them to complete the census survey.

Task 2: Clarify target audiences

The preparation and implementation of the media marketing campaign is intended to build public understanding and support of the census, address barriers that prevent undercounted persons from completing census forms on time, and influence decision making to promote a complete and accurate census count. Barriers to response include lower trust in government, increased number of residents with limited English proficiency, concern about consequences of

responding for undocumented persons, mobility of households, and limited internet access and skills. Consultant recommendations regarding strategies to deliver focused messages to undercounted groups is an important element of this work.

Hart-to-Count (HTC) populations include:

- Foreign-born individuals
- Older adults
- People experiencing homelessness
- People in the LGBTQIA community
- People lacking access to internet services
- People living close to or below the poverty line
- People who are young and mobile
- People who distrust the government
- People who live in rural areas
- People with disabilities
- People with limited English proficiency
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- Renters
- Undocumented immigrants
- Young children

Task 3: Develop approach to 2020 Census framing, messaging and branding

The consultant will recommend an overall strategic communications approach, including framing the issue, developing messaging for the general public and HTC audiences, identifying cost-effective message delivery options, branding, and creating an overall look and feel for graphic design.

Task 4: Prepare and submit media marketing campaign

The consultant will prepare the final campaign that outlines the recommended approach/strategy, which will include key audiences, messages, message delivery methods, and proposed branding and graphic design, for census outreach communication. The plan will include elements for earned media, including possible media partnerships; paid media; social media; and use of community partners to deliver messages to stakeholders/clients. The plan will include a budget for paid media and a timeline associated with the release of the paid and earned media. The consultant will provide vector artwork for all graphics.

Task 5: Approval of media marketing campaign

The consultant will work with TCRPC, project partners, Illinois Census Office, and US Census Bureau to approve the media marketing campaign for the North Central Illinois region.

Task 6: Implementing media marketing campaign

The consultant will start the implementation process of the Media Marketing Campaign once approved by all partners. The consultant will collect and track data on the media marketing campaign to measure the success of individual activities. Example data collection methods are: number of markets reached, number of viewers reached, number of materials developed, number of cultures/languages targeted, and number of online clicks. Activity reports will be prepared and submitted monthly. A final comprehensive report will be due in November 2020.

Deliverables

The contract will result in the anticipated deliverables:

1. Survey of available census materials and resources,
2. Strategies to deliver focused messages to HTC populations,
3. Branding and overall look and feel of the graphic design,
4. Vector artwork for all graphics,
5. An approved region-wide Marketing Media Campaign with budget and timeline of both earned and paid media, and
6. Monthly reports on collection and tracking of data on campaign implementation.
7. Comprehensive report on the campaign with lessons learned

Budget

In the grant application, TCRPC allocated \$175,000 for a consultant for marketing and media buying. This budget is dependent on the total grant award if funded.

Submittal Contents

The following information shall be included under the title “**North Central Illinois 2020 Census Phase II Marketing Campaign**” and addressed to mbruner@tricountyrpc.org. If preferred, hard copies will be accepted at the following address:

Michael Bruner, Planner II
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission
456 Fulton Street, Suite 401
Peoria, IL 61602

Contents of Submission

Firms should letter and number responses exactly as the questions are presented herein. Interested proposers are invited to submit proposals that contain all the following information:

1. Introduction (transmittal letter)
2. Background and Experience
3. Personnel/Professional Qualifications
4. Approach
5. Project Schedule
6. Additional Requested Information

1. Introduction (transmittal letter)

By signing the letter and/or offer, the responding firm certifies that the signatory is authorized to bind the firm. The transmittal letter should include:

- a. A brief statement of the firm’s understanding of the scope of the work to be performed;
- b. A confirmation that the firm meets the appropriate state licensing requirements to practice in the State of Illinois if applicable;
- c. A confirmation that the firm has not had a record of substandard work within the last five years;

- d. A confirmation that the firm has not engaged in any unethical practices within the last five years;
- e. A confirmation that, if awarded the contract, the firm acknowledges its complete responsibility for the entire contract, including payment of any and all charges resulting from the contract;
- f. Any other information that the firm feels appropriate;
- g. The signature of an individual who is authorized to make offers of this nature in the name of the submitting firm.

2. Background and Experience

Responding firms should:

- a. Describe the firm by providing its full legal name, date of establishment, type of entity and business expertise, federal tax identification number, short history, current ownership structure, and any recent or materially significant proposed change in ownership. The same information is to be given for any proposed subconsultant. If subconsultants are anticipated, differentiate the roles proposed for each firm or consultant involved in the project and estimate the percentage of work assigned to each.
- b. Identify the location of offices for the firm and for proposed subconsultants, and the office location responsible for managing the project.
- c. Describe any prior engagements in which the submitting firm assisted a governmental entity with any other projects relating to Marketing Outreach, Education, and the Census. Proposer should include three examples of work on similar projects as described in the Scope of Services. Proposer should provide the names, phone numbers, and emails of contact persons in the organizations for whom any projects referenced in this section were conducted. Proposer should include written references (letters or forms are acceptable) from previous clients attesting to the quality of work proposer cites in this section.
- d. Describe any issue the characteristics of which would be uniquely relevant in evaluating the experience of the submitting firm to handle the proposed project.
- e. Describe any relevant specialized knowledge in marketing outreach, educational material, and census related advertisement.

3. Personnel/Professional Qualifications

Responding firms should:

- a. Identify staff members who would be assigned to act for the firm in key management and field positions providing the services described in Scope of Services, and the functions to be performed by each.
- b. Include resumes or curriculum vitae of each such staff member designated above, including name, position, telephone number, email address, education, and years and type of experience. Describe, for each such person, the relevant projects on which they have worked. If sub-consultants will be used, include this information for each sub-consultant.

4. Approach

Responding firms should:

- a. Clearly describe the unique approach, methodologies, knowledge, and capability to be employed in the performance of the Scope of Services.
- b. Present innovative concepts, approaches, and methodologies, if any, not discussed in the Scope of Work for consideration.
- c. **Submit a statement of qualifications that addresses as many of the tasks listed in the Scope of Services above as deemed feasible by the responding firm within the proposed timeframe.**

5. Project Schedule

The proposal shall include a general project schedule and estimated completion date with the understanding that TCRPC and its partners are interested in moving forward quickly with the plan. All activities and deliverables must be complete by October 31, 2020.

6. Proposed Compensation

The proposal will include a full description of all fees proposed by the Consultant for performing the services described in the Scope of Services, including a fee schedule that reflects the cost to complete each of the 6 tasks in the Scope of Services. TCRPC is not liable for any cost incurred by any proposers prior to the execution of an agreement or contract created as a result of this RFP. TCRPC shall not be liable for any costs incurred by the selected consultant that are not specified in the contract.

Selection Process

TCRPC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals. All submittals become the property of TCRPC upon receipt. TCRPC will evaluate each submittal according to the following factors on a 100-point scale:

1. (25 points) Qualifications and Experience

The firm's submittal should reflect qualifications and experience necessary to successfully execute the Scope of Services. The firm's submittal must demonstrate a level of familiarity with the proposed project and an understanding of the unique challenges posed by the project.

2. (25 points) Availability to Complete the Project on Schedule

The firm's submittal should echo the capacity needed to complete this time-sensitive project.

3. (20 points) Record of Success and References

The firm's submittal should demonstrate success on similar projects and provide examples of similar work, including at least three references with contact information. Reviewers will also assess the applicability and relevance of the consultant's experience and previous projects.

4. (30 points) Quality of Proposed Approach

The firm’s submittal should describe their unique capacities to complete the project and demonstrate these in a responsive workplan, addressing all items in the Scope of Services.

All submittals will be reviewed by TCRPC staff and partners. All submittals will be scored and ranked; however, the committee IS NOT bound to select the highest-scoring submittal. TCRPC and its partners may interview one to three firms for this project upon consensus of the selection committee. TCRPC reserves the sole right to invite one firm to the scope negotiation and contract development stage or to reject all candidates that submit.

Contract Development

This Request for Proposal does not commit the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission to award a contract or to pay costs incurred by a consultant in responding to this RFP or for any costs associated with discussions required for clarification of items related to this RFP. TCRPC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this request, or to cancel any or all of this RFP, if it is considered in the best interest of TCRPC. TCRPC may require the proposer selected to participate in negotiations, and to submit to such price, technical, or other information as many be needed to finalize a contract.

Contract development and scope negotiation will follow award selection. Respondents must be amenable to inclusion, in a contract, of any information provided whether herein or in response to this RFP or developed subsequently during the selection process. A fixed-price contract is expected to be utilized, with payment terms to be negotiated and full scope determined as part of the contract with the selected respondent.

The contract shall not be considered executed unless signed by the authorizing representative of TCRPC.

Compliance with Laws

The selected firm agrees to be bound by all applicable Federal, State, and Local laws, regulations, and directives as they pertain to the performance of the contract.

Questions

TCRPC staff will answer all questions related to this RFP until 4:00 p.m., June 16, 2020. All questions and answers will be posted publicly on TCRPC’s website.

Questions should be addressed to:

Michael Bruner, Planner II

mbruner@tricityrpc.org