



COSUMNES COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

FOR

Crisis Communication Consulting Services DA-23-005

Release Date: August 5, 2022

Proposal Deadline: Thursday, August 25, 2022, by 2:00 p.m.PST

Proposals must be received via email at the email address below by deadline.

TIFFANY PIPER, MANAGEMENT ANALYST

Email: TiffanyAgrusa@yourcsd.com

Phone: 916-405-7198

PLEASE READ: *Ukraine/Russia-Related Sanctions Compliance.* *Consultant/Contractor is aware of the requirements of California Executive Order N-6-22 ("Ukraine/Russia-Related Sanctions"), which obligates consultants/contractors to comply with existing economic sanctions imposed by the U.S. government in response to Russia's actions in Ukraine, as well as any sanctions imposed under state law. The Services may be subject to compliance monitoring by the District. It shall be the consultants/contractors sole responsibility to comply with all applicable economic sanctions.*

Cosumnes Community Services District
8820 Elk Grove Blvd.
Elk Grove, CA 95624

SECTION 1 – PURPOSE

Cosumnes Community Services District (“District”) is seeking the services to solicit proposals from communications and public relations service providers focused on the specialty area of crisis communications.

SECTION 2 – DISTRICT PROFILE

The District is a regional agency that provides essential quality of life services including fire protection, emergency medical services and parks and recreation services. The Fire Department serves the City of Elk Grove, the City of Galt and the surrounding unincorporated area, while the Parks and Recreation Department exclusively serves the City of Elk Grove. The District is located about 15 miles south of Sacramento and encompasses roughly 157 square miles. The District provides the following core services:

District Departments include:

- Administrative Services Department – Operations include execution and monitoring of the District budget, long-range planning, facility construction management and maintenance, information systems and Human Resources.
- Fire Department – This department consists of two branches, Operations and Administration & Support Services, that work together to provide fire, rescue, and emergency medical services. The area served covers over 157 square miles, including the cities of Elk Grove and Galt, and unincorporated areas of South Sacramento County.
- Parks and Recreation Department – This department manages 101 parks, 18 miles of off-street trails, three community centers, four recreation centers, three aquatics complexes, a nine-hole golf course, and many childcare, sports, and leisure programs.
- Facility and Development Department – This department plans and develops all District facilities and is responsible for building maintenance throughout the District. Department staff assist with the planning, development, management, and improvement of District facilities and projects.

SECTION 3 – SCOPE OF WORK

The goal is to ensure mutually beneficial, two-way communication with external and internal audiences about District issues and services, leading to a more responsive government and a high level of public confidence. It is anticipated that the outcome from this effort will be increased community satisfaction with District communication and incident response in times of crisis.

The focus of the consultant work will be on crisis communication planning, content creation, community and media outreach training, strategic communications counsel, and support on emergent communications issues as needed.

The Consultant will work through a single point of contact in the District's Administrative Services Department, such as the Public Affairs Manager or their designee. A sample scope of work is provided; however, a final scope of work will be determined with the selected Consultant as a part of any contract during negotiations.

1. Crisis Communications Plan

- a. Develop a crisis communications plan that includes roles and procedures for each member of the District crisis communications team, message development, communications tools, sample messages, media lists, and activation procedures.
- b. Plan should include innovative communication methods to reach our diverse audiences, identify barriers to effective communication, and include a mechanism for evaluating the success of the communication activities.

2. Crisis Support

- a. Provide on-call strategic crisis and creative communication services throughout a crisis.
- b. A crisis could be any critical situation that may occur while managing, operating, maintaining or otherwise conducting District business. A crisis could result from a first responder incident, an incident at an event or District facility, or a natural disaster.
- c. Crisis communication services may be requested by the District at any time during the entire duration of this Agreement on an as-needed basis.

3. Community and Media Outreach Training

- a. Provide no fewer than 8 hours of training in-person or online (in-person preferred) for up to 20 District employees, to be completed within one year of contract start and on an annual basis thereafter.
- b. Training should cover a variety of tips and resources for crisis communications, including highlighting the roles of elected leaders during a crisis, internal checklists, key message development, spokesperson training and media outreach.

4. Response Times

The Consultant shall comply with the response times set forth below:

- a. Crisis/Emergency Event, as defined or determined by the District:
 - i. Consultant must be able to be on-site at the District's requested location within six (6) hours of notification, and Consultant must be able to provide twenty-four (24) hour a day/seven (7) day a week

on-site availability until the event has been deemed to be settled and post-crisis debriefing and recovery has been completed.

Types of crises that may require on-premises assistance include:

- A negative event that was unanticipated and for which plans had not been formulated.
- A negative event that had been planned for but happened at an unanticipated rate.
- A confluence of events anticipated and planned for individually, but not in combination.

Work may be done full-time or part-time on a fixed fee basis, not-to-exceed fee basis, or Time and Materials basis. Work may be done on-premises or remotely at the discretion of the District.

Quote Content

The following items must be submitted with your proposal. Omissions may be deemed cause to consider your submittal non-responsive at the District's sole discretion.

- Hourly rates and other costs to provide service
- Consultant's Statement of Technical Experience and References
- Consultant's Statement of Project Team Qualifications
- Consultant's Statement of Value

Do not submit extraneous marketing or promotional information.

Eligibility

Onshore (USA Organization Only)

Work Performance

Performance of the work will be Offsite. Consultant needs to carry work in their office location.

Contract Term

A three-year contract with three (1) year extension options.

SECTION 4 – RFQ OVERVIEW

RFQ Timeline

The District will endeavor to administer the proposal process in accordance with the terms and dates outlined below; however, the District reserves the right to modify the terms, activities, timeline, or any other aspect of the process at any time, as it deems necessary.

EVENT	DATE/TIME
RFQ advertising	August 5, 2022
Deadline for Questions	August 16, 2022, at 5:00 PM
District Provides Responses to Questions	August 19, 2022, at 5:00 PM
Deadline for Submission	August 25, 2022, at 2:00 PM
Evaluation and Review	August 29, 2022 – August 31, 2022
Interviews, if needed	September 1, 2022 – September 2, 2022
District Completes Evaluations	September 7, 2022
Proposers Notified	September 8, 2022

RFQ Coordinator

All communications concerning this RFQ must be submitted via email to the RFQ Coordinator identified below. The RFQ Coordinator will be the sole point of contact for this RFQ.

Tiffany Piper, Management Analyst
Cosumnes CSD
8820 Elk Grove Blvd.
Elk Grove, CA 95624
Email: TiffanyAgrusa@yourcsd.com
Phone: 916-405-5300

RFQ Amendment and Cancellation

The District reserves the unilateral right to amend this RFQ in writing at any time. The District also reserves the right to cancel or reissue the RFQ in its sole discretion. If an amendment is issued, the District shall provide notice of the amendment to all Proposers. In addition, the District shall post the amendment on its website at <http://www.yourcsd.com>. Proposers shall respond to the final written RFQ and any exhibits, attachments, and amendments thereto.

RFQ Questions

Specific questions concerning the RFQ should be submitted via e-mail to the RFQ Coordinator prior to the “Deadline for Questions.” Proposer questions should clearly identify the relevant section of the RFQ, and page number(s) related to the question being asked. The questions submitted, and the District’s responses shall be posted on the District’s website at <http://www.yourcsd.com>.

Proposal Submittal

Proposals must be submitted no later than August 25, 2022, at 2:00 pm PST. Proposals received after this time and date will not be considered.

Proposers must submit an electronic copy (a single .pdf file containing all submitted material) to the RFQ Coordinator:

Tiffany Piper, Management Analyst
Cosumnes CSD
8820 Elk Grove Blvd.
Elk Grove, CA 95624
Email: TiffanyAgrusa@yourcsd.com
Phone: 916-405-7198

SECTION 5 – PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The following guidelines are provided for standardizing the preparation and submission of proposals. The intent is to assist respondents in the preparation of their submissions and to assist the District by simplifying the review process providing standards for comparison of submissions.

Proposals submitted in response to this RFQ shall include a complete response to the requirements in this section in the order presented. The District discourages lengthy and costly proposals. Proposals should be a straightforward delineation of the respondent's capability to satisfy the intent and requirements of this RFQ and should not contain redundancies and conflicting statements.

For qualified firms, contracts are expected to be three-year agreements with the option of two, one-year renewals.

Proposal Format and Content

Proposals should be prepared on standard 8 1/2" x 11" dimension. All proposal pages should be numbered. Failure to follow this specified format, to label the responses correctly, or to address all of the subsections may, at the District's sole discretion, result in the rejection of the proposal.

Delivery Instructions

Consultants shall provide a PDF of their submissions via email to Tiffany Piper at TiffanyAgrusa@yourcsd.com. Hard copies are not required.

The subject line of the email shall read in ALL CAPS: COMPANY NAME: RFQ RESPONSE.

Your submission will be acknowledged with a return email. If you do not receive confirmation, please call 916-405-7198 to verify receipt.

Proposals must contain the following information in the order listed:

1. Introductory letter

The introductory letter should be addressed to:

Jenna Brinkman
Public Affairs Manager
Cosumnes CSD
8820 Elk Grove Blvd.
Elk Grove, CA 95624

The letter shall include the following:

- a. Proposer's legal name and corporate structure.
- b. Proposer's primary contact information, including name, address, phone, website, and email.
- c. Identification of use of sub consultants and scope of work to be performed by sub consultants.
- d. Identification of any pending litigation against the Proposer.
- e. Disclosure of any bankruptcy or insolvency proceedings in last ten (10) years.
- f. Statement indicating the proposal will remain valid for at least 120 days.
- g. Signature of a company officer empowered to bind the Proposer to the provisions of this RFQ and any contract awarded pursuant to it.

2. Table of Contents

The Consultant shall insert a comprehensive table of contents denoting sections three through ten of the proposal as indicated below.

3. Qualifications and Experience

Describe the Contract's capability for undertaking and performing the work, including any professional licenses and certificates held by the Consultant. List types and locations of similar work performed by the Consultant in the last five (5) years that best characterizes the quality and past performance. Also include in detail:

- a. Key Personnel Experience. The submittal must identify the key personnel that is to be assigned if awarded a contract, detailing their qualifications, areas of expertise, a summary of their past experience performing similar services for other jurisdictions, and a resume of each key personnel, including experience working with District staff, local Elk Grove community groups and decision-makers, and regional partner agencies.
- b. Firm Experience. The submittal must describe the Firm's pertinent project experience, including a list of performed relevant projects, past performance, individual or team accomplishments, and examples of similar work for Elk Grove or neighboring jurisdictions in California.
- c. General Firm Information. General firm information including the number of employees, location of firm headquarters, branch offices, and the number of years in business may also be provided.

4. References

The Proposer must provide at least three (3) references which they have conducted similar on-call communication consulting services to within the last five (5) years. References may be contacted as part of the selection process. For each reference, proposer must provide the following information:

- a. Name and contact information (i.e. name, title, address, phone, and email)
- b. Brief description of work provided.

5. Work Plan

The work plan must state the Consultant's ability to provide employment investigation and litigation services. The plan should be simple, easy to read and follow, and address and satisfy the objectives and specifications as listed in Section 3 – Scope of Work in this RFQ.

6. Fee

This section should include the cost for requested services outlined in Section 3 – Scope of Work. Please include a clear and comprehensive fee schedule, including a detailed statement of hourly rates for all positions and classifications of individuals involved and reimbursable expenses. Please also include the rates for a project-by-project basis, as noted in the sample Scope of Work above. Upon completion of tasks, the Consultant will notify the District and request payment for the products and services by submitting an invoice and a brief description of work performed during the billing period. Upon receipt of the invoice, the District will review in a timely manner the products and services noted, verify completion, and authorize payment. No cost increases shall be passed onto the District after the proposal has been submitted.

7. Disclosures

Statement that the Proposer or any individual who will perform work for the Proposer is free of any conflict of interest. The Proposer should identify any professional or personal financial or other interest which could be a possible conflict of interest in performing the services of the RFQ. This includes any activities or relationships of the Consultant that might create a conflict of interest for the Consultant or the District, and, if such activities or relationships exist, a description of the facts, legal implications, and possible effects sufficient to permit the District to appreciate the significance of the conflict and to grant any conflict waiver, if appropriate and necessary.

8. Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The District has a commitment to conduct business with entities that follow sustainable practices and provide safe and healthy workplaces for the individuals employed. In addition, the District is committed to ensuring that diversity, inclusiveness, and equity are integral parts of day-to-day management, work, and service delivery. Proposers are encouraged to review the District's equity statement at www.yourcsd.com/DEI.

Within this section, the Proposer will state and provide a detailed narrative about any diversity or inclusiveness programs the Proposer has implemented.

9. Climate Action Plan and Environmental Sustainability

The District's Climate Action Plan/Sustainability Action Plan is intended to increase the environmental sustainability of the District in terms of HG emission reductions as well as long-term operational efficiency, waste prevention, reduction in the consumption of natural resources, and minimization or elimination of potential adverse effects to the environment that could otherwise occur during District operations. Consultants are encouraged to engage in environmental sustainability practices.

10. Supportive Information

This section may include graphs, charts, photos, resumes, and any other relevant information in support of the Consultant's qualifications.

11. Professional Services Contract Alterations

Attached to the RFQ (**Attachment A**) is a copy of the District's standard Professional Services Agreement ("Contract"). The District's standard Contract may be modified, in the District's sole discretion, to address the specific provisions of this RFQ and Consultant's should note that this RFQ any specifications or other requirements specific to this RFQ shall be included in the Contract and Contract's exhibits following an award of the Contract.

Please review the Contract carefully and note in your proposal any exceptions or alterations to the Contract. **Alterations or changes to the Contract that are not in the Consultant's response will not be allowed after the selection of the Consultant.** This includes alterations, exceptions, or changes to the insurance and indemnity provisions. By requiring these requests up front, the District can compare all respondents on an equal basis. However, the District reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to accept or reject any and all proposed changes to the District's standard Contract.

SECTION 6 – PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Proposals will be evaluated using the categories listed below.

1. Qualifications, Experience, and References
 - a. Experience in performing work of a closely similar nature and size.
 - b. Experience working with public agencies.
 - c. Experience and understanding of governmental agencies.
 - d. Strength, stability, experience, and technical competence.
 - e. Assessment by client references.
2. Personnel and Staffing
 - a. Qualifications and experience of proposed personnel for requested services.
3. Work Plan
 - a. Depth of Consultants understanding of District's requirements.
 - b. Overall quality and logic of work plan.
4. Rates and Fees
 - a. Reasonableness and competitiveness of the rates and fees proposed.
 - b. Adequacy of data in support of figures quoted, basis on which rates and fees are quoted.
5. Consultant's Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
 - a. Demonstration of the Consultant's capability to invite values, perspectives and contributions of people from diverse backgrounds, and integrates diversity into its hiring and retention policies, training opportunities, and business development methods to provide an equal opportunity for each person to participate, contribute, and succeed within the organization's workplace.
6. Quality and Responsiveness of the Proposal
 - a. Completeness of response in accordance with the RFQ instructions.

Finalists may be invited for an interview. The District reserves the right to engage investigation services without interviews or further discussion of the Proposals.

SECTION 7 – GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Collusion

By submitting a response to the RFQ, each Proposer represents and warrants that its response is genuine and not made in the interest of or on behalf of any person not named therein; that the Proposer has not directly induced or solicited any other person to submit a sham response or encouraged any other person to refrain from submitting a response; and that the Proposer has not in any manner colluded to secure any improper advantage over any other person submitting a response.

Gratuities

No person will offer, give, or agree to give any District employee or its representatives any gratuity, discount or offer of employment in connection with the award of a contract by the District. No District employee or representative will solicit, demand, accept or agree to accept from any other person a gratuity, discount, or offer of employment in connection with a District contract.

Required Review and Waiver of Objections by Proposers

Proposers should carefully review this RFQ and all attachments and submit comments, questions, defects, objections, or any other matter requiring clarification or correction (collectively called “comments”) in writing to the District no later than the deadline established in this RFQ. This will allow the issuance of any necessary amendments and help prevent the opening of defective proposals upon which contract award could not be made.

Protests based on any alleged defect with the RFQ will be considered waived and invalid unless the Proposer brings the alleged defect to the attention of the District, in writing, by the deadline as established in this RFQ.

Nondiscrimination

No person will be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, be discriminated against in the admission or access to, or be discriminated against in treatment or employment in the District’s contracted programs or activities on the grounds of disability, age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or any other classification protected by federal or California State Constitutional or statutory law; nor will they be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination in the performance of contracts with the District or in the employment practices of the District’s Consultants. Accordingly, all Proposers entering into contracts with the District will, upon request, be required to show proof of such nondiscrimination and to post in conspicuous places, available to all employees and applicants, notices of nondiscrimination.

Proposal Preparation Costs

The District will not pay any costs associated with the preparation, submittal, or presentation of any proposal made in response to this RFQ.

Proposal Withdrawal

To withdraw a proposal, the Proposer must submit a written notice of intent to withdraw, signed by an authorized representative, to the RFQ Coordinator. After withdrawing a

previously submitted proposal, the Proposer may submit another proposal at any time up to the deadline for submitting proposals.

Proposal Errors

Proposers are liable for all errors or omissions contained in their proposals. Proposers will not be allowed to alter proposal documents after the deadline for submitting a proposal.

Incorrect Proposal Information

If the District determines that a Proposer has provided, for consideration in the evaluation process or contract negotiations, incorrect information that the Proposer knew or should have known was materially incorrect, that proposal will be determined non-responsive and will be rejected.

Assignment and Subcontracting

The Consultant may not subcontract, transfer, or assign any portion of the contract without prior, written approval from the District. Each Consultant must be approved in writing by the District. The substitution of one Consultant for another may be made only at the discretion of the District and with prior, written approval from the District.

Notwithstanding the use of approved Consultants, the Proposer, if awarded a contract under this RFQ, will be the prime Consultant and will be responsible for all work performed and will be responsible for all costs to Consultants for services provided by the Proposer. The Proposer is prohibited from performing any work associated with this RFQ or using Consultants for any service associated with this RFQ offshore (outside the United States).

Right to Refuse Personnel

The District reserves the right to refuse, at its sole discretion; any Consultants or any personnel provided by the Proposer or approved Consultants. The District reserves the right to interview and approve all Proposer staff members in District's sole discretion. Proposer's staff may be subject to the District's background and drug testing processes at any time.

Proposal of Additional Services

If Proposer offers services in addition to those required by and described in this RFQ, those additional services may be added to the contract before contract signing at the sole discretion of the District.

Licensure

Before a contract pursuant to this RFQ is signed, the Proposer must hold all necessary business and professional licenses. The District may require any or all Proposers to submit evidence of proper licensure.

Conflict of Interest and Proposal Restrictions

By submitting a response to the RFQ, the Proposer certifies that no amount will be paid directly or indirectly to an employee or official of the District as wages, compensation, or gifts in exchange for acting as an officer, agent, employee, subconsultant, or consultant of the Proposer in connection with the procurement under this RFQ.

Notwithstanding this restriction, nothing in this RFQ will be construed to prohibit another governmental entity from making a proposal, being considered for award, or being awarded a contract under this RFQ.

Any individual, company, or other entity involved in assisting the District in the development, formulation, or drafting of this RFQ or its scope of services will be considered to have been given information that would afford an unfair advantage over other Proposers, and said individual, company, or other entity may not submit a proposal in response to this RFQ.

Contract Negotiations

After a review of the proposals and completion of the demonstration and proof of concept, the District intends to enter into contract negotiations with the selected Proposer(s). These negotiations could include all aspects of services and fees.

Execution of Contract

If the selected Proposer(s) does not execute a contract with the District within fifteen (15) business days after notification of selection, the District may give notice to that Proposer of the District's intent to select from the remaining Proposers or to call for new proposals, whichever the District deems appropriate.

Right of Rejection

The District reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject any and all proposals or to cancel this RFQ in its entirety at any time.

Any proposal received which does not meet the requirements of this RFQ may be considered to be nonresponsive, and the proposal may be rejected. Proposers must comply with all of the terms of this RFQ and all applicable State laws and regulations. The District may reject any proposal that does not comply with all of the terms, conditions, and performance requirements of this RFQ.

Proposers may not restrict the rights of the District or otherwise qualify their proposals. If a Proposer does so, the District may determine the proposal to be a nonresponsive counter-offer, and the proposal may be rejected.

The District reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to waive variances in technical proposals provided such action is in the best interest of the District. Where the District waives minor variances in proposals, such waiver does not modify the RFQ requirements or excuse the Proposer from full compliance with the RFQ. Notwithstanding any minor variance, the District may hold any Proposer to strict compliance with the RFQ.

The District reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to request clarifications of proposals or to conduct discussions for the purpose of clarification with any or all Proposers. The purpose of any such discussions shall be to ensure full understanding of the proposal. Discussions shall be limited to specific sections of the proposal identified by the District and, if held, shall be after initial evaluation of Proposals is complete. If clarifications are

made as a result of such discussion, the Proposer shall submit such clarifications in writing to the District.

Disclosure of Proposal Contents

All proposals and other materials submitted in response to this RFQ process become the property of the District. Selection or rejection of a proposal does not affect this right. All proposal information, including detailed price and cost information, will be held in confidence during the evaluation process. Upon the completion of the evaluation of proposals, the proposals and associated materials will be open for review by the public to the extent allowed by the California Public Records Act (Government Code Sections 6250-6270 and 6275-6276.48). By submitting a proposal, the Proposer acknowledges and accepts that the contents of the proposal and associated documents will become open to public inspection.

Proprietary Information

The master copy of each proposal will be retained for official files and will become public record after the award of a contract unless the proposal or specific parts of the proposal can be shown to be exempt by law (Government Code §6276). Each Proposer may clearly label part of a proposal as "CONFIDENTIAL" if the Proposer thereby agrees to indemnify and defend the District for honoring such a designation. The failure to so label any information that is released by the District will constitute a complete waiver of all claims for damages caused by any release of the information.

Severability

If any provision of this RFQ is declared by a court to be illegal or in conflict with any law, the validity of the remaining terms and provisions will not be affected and, the rights and obligations of the District and Proposers will be construed and enforced as if the RFQ did not contain the particular provision held to be invalid.

Proposal Amendment

The District will not accept any amendments, revisions, or alterations to proposals after the deadline for proposal submittal unless such is formally requested, in writing, by the District.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The District has a commitment to conduct business with entities that follow sustainable practices and provide safe and healthy workplaces for the individuals employed. In addition, the District is committed to ensuring that diversity, inclusiveness, and equity are integral parts of day-to-day management, work, and service delivery. Consultants are encouraged to review the District's equity statement at www.yourcsd.com/DEI.

Qualified List – Numerous On-call Award Options

Consultants acknowledge that placement on the list of qualified on-call consultants does not commit the District to award a contract. For any project, the District reserves the right to award a contract to consultants (1) that are on the list of qualified on-call consultants; (2) that have an existing contract with the District, or (3) that are selected through a separate competitive process.