



Request for Proposals
for
Wayfinding Project

I. INTRODUCTION

The Town of West Jefferson, North Carolina, is requesting proposals for planning and design services from a select group of firms with proven expertise in community branding and wayfinding. The proposal will highlight how the firm can assist the Town in developing a wayfinding signage system for the Town. This project includes the design only of a pedestrian and vehicular wayfinding system to direct visitors around the Town, as well as to help them navigate through the Town to easily find specific destinations. The desired wayfinding system will include a comprehensive array of signs with a consistent Town brand that can be extended to marketing materials and Town events.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In its continuing efforts to ensure that citizens and visitors are able to traverse around the Town and to find key locales and events held in the Town, the Town of West Jefferson seeks to develop a comprehensive wayfinding system that can be modified or expanded as the Town develops and new destinations are added. The wayfinding system should address the needs of locals and visitors using all modes of transportation within Town of West Jefferson. Street level vitality, facility signage, legibility, safety, maintenance and replacement costs are all major concerns in creating an informational signage and wayfinding system that is both direct and friendly. This project may coordinate with the current Town of West Jefferson's Wayfinding signage. It should also set the tone for future projects. The chosen consultant must be able to adhere to a strict timeline. This is envisioned to be a seven-month process, beginning no later than December 2018 and concluding by May 2019. The plan should be easily altered and expanded upon as West Jefferson continues to grow. The program should consider a variety of sign types including, but not limited to:

- Gateway signage
- General directional information and wayfinding (pedestrian and vehicular)
- Parking
- Street signage
- Memorial and historical sites
- Arts and entertainment venues
- Antique venues
- Destinations

III. PROJECT GOALS

- To enhance visitors' and locals' ability to easily navigate around West Jefferson and to find desired destinations (including parking).
- To support and promote a distinct identity for the Town of West Jefferson.
- To raise community and visitor awareness of the Town of West Jefferson and its location.
- To enhance the success and market potential for arts, entertainment, retail, dining and economic growth and development.
- Reduce visitors' search time for destinations and parking.
- To develop a consistent Wayfinding system which will incorporate a brand identity.

IV. LOCATION AND CHARACTERISTICS

The wayfinding/signage program will be installed throughout the Town of West Jefferson (see Attachment A for project boundaries). The consultant should consider existing signage locations. Price of fabrication should be considered. Purchase of signage and installation will be accomplished as part of a separate bid process. It is anticipated that some signage will also be desired along state-maintained roadways. The consultant will work with the NCDOT to ensure that all signage must fully comply with the latest edition of the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) “.

V. BACKGROUND

Background

The Town of West Jefferson is home to approximately 1,300 people. The Town is geographically located in the northwest corner of North Carolina joining Virginia and Tennessee. There are hotels, restaurants, and wide variety of shops located throughout the Downtown. The Town of West Jefferson does have a historical district located within the Downtown area. West Jefferson is a NC Small Town Main Street Community and a quick narrative of West Jefferson is:

While other small towns have grown into cities or simply faded away, West Jefferson has remained the small town that is quintessential Americana. Our town is nestled within the majestic Blue Ridge Mountains of northwest North Carolina. Listed on the National Register of Historical Places, West Jefferson not only presents beautiful landscape and cool mountain breezes, but also gives visitors a sense of history as well as a mix of modern culture. Simply stroll about our town and discover what is so special about West Jefferson.

Long celebrated for the arts, West Jefferson is known for its arts district featuring an array of interesting murals, distinctive public art and numerous galleries. In addition to art galleries, West Jefferson offers a bustling downtown district featuring an eclectic selection of boutiques, exceptional eateries, antique shops, coffee and wine shops and even a craft beer brewery. Some of our largest town attractions include Ashe County Cheese and St. Mary's Church of the Frescoes.

The streets of West Jefferson are pedestrian friendly with attractive bumpouts filled with green and flowering plants during the summer months. There are comfortable benches throughout the town for those who wish to sit a spell and revel in the friendly mountain hospitality that makes our town so special.

Join us during the summer months when West Jefferson hosts annual festivals, concerts, gallery crawls, a weekly farmers market & other special events. If autumn is more your season, join us when the fall foliage is in full swing and enjoy our local fall festivals, corn mazes and pumpkin picking while surrounded by breathtaking colorful scenery. The holiday season offers a Christmas wonderland of lights throughout downtown, choose-and-cut Christmas trees at our many neighboring tree farms as well as community Christmas events. Every season is the right time to visit West Jefferson!

We believe, if you enjoy the simple things in life, you can find it in and around West Jefferson, North Carolina.

Come join us. Everyone fits here.

The West Jefferson Community Partnership (NC Small Town Main Street Committee) has a mission and vision statement:

MISSION STATEMENT:

The West Jefferson Community Partnership is committed to protecting our resources and to preserving and enriching the spirit, cultural, community and family life of our Town.

VISION STATEMENT:

Historic West Jefferson celebrates our small town charm and mountain heritage while continuing to grow becoming a destination for the arts, scenic beauty, and supportive business community.

Future Investment and Development

The Town of West Jefferson places great value on the arts, understanding the vital role they play in the lives of its residents and visitors, as well as economic development.

VI. PROJECT SCOPE

The project will consist of three phases: *Phase 1: Analysis and Program Development, Phase 2: System Design Development and Pre Production, Phase*

3: *Production and Installation*. As stated above, the wayfinding system is expected to be fabricated and installed as part of the *Town of West Jefferson's Wayfinding project* construction. The responsibilities of the chosen wayfinding consultant are expected to end with construction documents suitable for inclusion into the Town of West Jefferson's bid documents for installation for the Wayfinding project. The expected project scope is outlined below. The consultant is free to suggest changes or alternatives in their response to this request for proposals.

Phase 1: Analysis and Program Development

- Conduct an on-site kickoff meeting involving the community and gathering input from the community which will guide the branding identity, and site analysis
 - With staff, develop a list of key contacts, invite them to kick-off meeting,
 - Prepare postcards, flyers to publicize meeting (this is something that can be done in-house to save money)
 - Conduct interviews with stakeholders - Town Board of Aldermen to hear their evaluation of current system, operational difficulties, and needs of a future system,
 - Meet with Town of West Jefferson's Wayfinding project staff and consultants to coordinate schedules, and confer on design and implementation considerations,
 - Meet with representatives of any regulatory agencies having jurisdiction over the rights-of-way or visual characteristics of signage;
 - Take meeting minutes, summarize, and send summary to Town of West Jefferson.
- Document location of existing wayfinding signage. Recommend existing signage that should be removed, replaced, and/or consolidated. Evaluate feasibility of reusing existing locations, poles, hardware on an individual location basis.
- Analyze existing traffic patterns and means of accessing West Jefferson as well as expected future land use patterns. Map recommended corridors that should include signage directing users to the Town of West Jefferson.
- Review existing identity standards
- Learn about maintenance, budget, schedule and phasing issues;
- Review existing plans for wayfinding elements and implementation status;
- Evaluate zoning or other code requirements for the signage;

- Identify user groups, their specific needs, and potential wayfinding difficulties, particularly as they affect the disabled, senior citizens, and residents;
- Determine what destinations should be included in the system, review destination names, and suggest alternate terms that might clarify wayfinding, if necessary;
- Develop a destination list including recommended terminology for primary and secondary destinations;
- Develop a hierarchy of information;
- Determine what sign types and wayfinding elements will be needed;
- Develop the preliminary wayfinding logic;
- Develop the final Project Schedule.

Deliverables:

- Wayfinding Analysis and Recommendations Document (hard copy and editable digital copy) with notes from all stakeholder meetings. Document will include an evaluation of the existing system, users' needs, destinations, zoning requirements, regulatory and jurisdictional issues, recommendations for identity graphics,
- A detailed schedule for project completion, including team members' roles and time commitments, and key meetings and milestones;
- A detailed site plan showing public circulation patterns (vehicular and pedestrian), primary public destinations, and Town of West Jefferson access points,
- A detailed site plan showing the proposed types of signs and the locations where they will be used. The site plan will indicate existing locations that will be reused, existing locations that will not be reused, and new signage locations.

Phase 2: System Design Development and Pre Production

- Analyze architectural elements, materials, themes, existing plans, and the Town of West Jefferson vision in order to develop an appropriate design aesthetic for the system;
- Consult with Town of West Jefferson's Staff Wayfinding designers and project artist regarding potential design concepts for the system and compatibility with the Wayfinding project design
- Prepare detailed designs and prototypes for select sign types.
- Present three initial design concepts for staff review (Town selects two design concepts for additional refinements and public review).
- On site meeting, 1-2 days:

- Public Meeting: Coordinate and invite stakeholder groups and general public to review design options. May also include preliminary review by Council and/or appointed governmental body(ies),
- Complete a minimum two rounds of refinements of preferred design concept selected by Town, based on stakeholder input.
- Apply the approved design to the remaining sign types.
- Present the full sign type array and mock-up signs to STMS Committee.
- Revise the individual sign type designs once more (if needed).

Deliverables:

- Final Design Intent Drawings with written statement regarding rationale for design choices, materials, method of fabrication and how systems can be modified over time; Drawings should be provided in hard copy format, Adobe Acrobat PDF format as well as the native design format.
- Scaled mock ups of potential sign types and concepts (also provided in above three formats), and;
- A statement of probable cost for the fabrication and installation of the system, including number of various sign types and locations.
- Add detailed specifications to the final Design Intent Drawings (exact dimensions, letter heights, materials, mounting details, color specifications, and material performance standards).
- Prepare Sign Location Plans and Sign Message Schedules; Submit to Town for review; Revise; Submit for second review; Revise.
- On-site meeting: 1-2 days.
 - Public Meeting: Present the final sign arrays, mock-ups and location plans.
- Verify the Statement of Probable Cost for the fabrication and develop a phasing plan for implementation (with stakeholder input).
- Prepare the necessary artwork for sign fabrication.
- Create necessary documents for the Town's formal review, attend selected meetings and present system for authorization.

Final Deliverables:

- Final Design Intent Drawing with detailed specifications, in AutoCAD at the standard design sheet size (24" x 36"), in a format suitable for printing.

- Verification of the Statement of Probable Cost, and;
- Implementation Phasing Plan that includes priorities in terms of sites and sign location. This plan should include details for location, such as: distance from a point of interest, conflicts with existing signage and infrastructure.
- Wayfinding and Signage Reference Manual that serves as a guide for re-ordering and maintaining the new wayfinding system. Should include:
 - System summary
 - Map of sign locations and content (in both GIS map and spreadsheet format),
 - Prioritization of sign installation,
 - Shop drawings of each type of sign,
 - Recommendations for future project expansion,
 - Rules of thumb regarding sign placement, method of updating/replacing signs, and roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in project (tracking, maintenance, ordering, etc.).
 - The manual should be submitted in both hardcopy and electronically. The electronic document should be in an editable format- In Design, Word, etc.

Phase 3: Production and Installation

Work with firm selected with all necessary items and specifications needed for production and installation of signage. May include on site meetings with installer and Town of West Jefferson's staff.

VII. PROJECT APPROACH

The approach proposed for this project should address the activities and work products discussed in the Project Scope, above. The consultant is free to suggest changes or alterations as part of their approach. The selected project approach should incorporate the following elements:

1. **Close coordination with and feedback from Town staff and West Jefferson's Town Board of Aldermen.** The approach suggested by the consultant should include steps that ensure that the final product will be developed in close coordination with Town staff and West Jefferson's Town Board of Aldermen and will include iterative feedback from Town staff as the work proceeds. It is anticipated that the Final Design Intent Drawings with detailed specifications will be incorporated into the contractor bid package for the Town of West Jefferson Wayfinding project and also incorporated into current and future redevelopment efforts in the Town of West Jefferson. The consultant should plan to meet with and coordinate findings and

- recommendations with Town staff and consultants working on these on-going efforts. The consultant should be available for a sufficient number of meetings with Town staff to ensure successful coordination and completion of the project. It is suggested that the consultant and Town staff meet at the outset of the project to finalize and coordinate the project schedule and approach.
2. **Final revisions.** The project approach should allow for final revisions and its elements, if needed, based on feedback obtained at any proposed review meetings and through consultation with staff.
 3. **Presentation at Official Town Meetings.** The *Town of West Jefferson's Wayfinding Project* will be presented at a Town Council meeting to obtain official endorsement.

End Product

The *Town of West Jefferson's Wayfinding Project* should conform to the *Project Description and Project Scope* as detailed above. Technical and professional jargon should be kept to a minimum. When technical language must be used, clear definitions should follow. *Plan-view* illustrations, proposed sign types, site plans and maps (if any) should be to scale when possible.

All items are to be submitted in accordance with the terms as specified in this RFP. All deliverables and data will become the property of the Town of West Jefferson, and the Town will hold copyright on the deliverables.

Numbers of Copies and Formats for Deliverables:

- All deliverables of the *Town of West Jefferson's Wayfinding Project* (e.g., drawings, site plans, illustrations, text, etc.) submitted to the Town for review should be delivered as three (3) sets of hard copies as well as a **digital version of same**, unless otherwise agreed to by the Town. The digital version should be in a digital format acceptable to the Town, so that the Town can make additional copies as necessary.
- For the full meeting of the Town Board, in addition to the numbers and formats of deliverables described above, the consultant shall deliver individual tables, drawings, site plans, illustrations, graphs, and graphics in a digital format that enables Town staff to include the images as needed in a PowerPoint presentation for Town Council.

Web Site Accessibility and Americans with Disabilities Act

With the Internet serving as the Town's primary communications vehicle, the Town of West Jefferson is committed to making the information on its web site (www.townofwjnc.com) accessible to the widest variety of users, including those with disabilities. In this regard and in keeping with the Americans with Disabilities Act, it is expressly agreed and understood that the Consultant will

provide an HTML-ready version of – and concurrently with its delivery of – any draft final report, final report, brochure, or other written document required under the scope of this Agreement. In addition, any graphics, photos, or other images part of the HTML file must be identified with an appropriate alternative text tag of no more than 32 characters.

Town of West Jefferson's Responsibilities

The Town of West Jefferson will be responsible for:

- Arranging, scheduling, and providing facility space for meetings, including meetings with public officials.
- Stakeholder and community notification for all meetings and interviews.
- Providing the consultant with comprehensive geographic information for the study area, as either hard-copy plots at scale, or as GIS-based digital data. Geographic information that is available includes but is not limited to: the study area boundary, parcel lot lines, cadastral property data, streams, wetlands, floodplains, stream buffers, topography, slopes, aerial photography, impervious surface inventory including building footprints, and so forth.
- Providing the consultant with copies of relevant Town plans, studies, analyses, ordinances, design guidelines, public and private approved and pending development plans, as well as a build-out projection by block, including projected additional dwelling units and square footage of retail and office space.

Communication with Town of West Jefferson

- The Town project manager should be copied on all emails related to the wayfinding project.
- The consultant should send via email a weekly status report to the Town's project manager outlining progress made that week, and any issues that need the Town's attention in the coming week.
- The consultant is expected to provide all visual and written information to be used during the course of public meetings or workshops (including PowerPoint presentations, handouts, and sign graphics and mockups) *at least* two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting to allow sufficient time for staff review, comment and revision prior to the meeting.

Project Budget, Compensation and Time Frame

Proposed Project Time Frame:

Work on the project should commence within two weeks of notice to proceed. Work should not exceed 7 months from commencement of the project to

submittal of materials for the Town Board meeting, approximately 1 month prior to that meeting. Consultants are expected to provide Final Design Intent Drawings with detailed specifications by February 2019 for incorporation into the contractor bid package for the Town of West Jefferson's Wayfinding project.

Budget and Compensation:

The work will be performed on a fixed price basis.

VIII. CONTENT AND FORMAT OF PROPOSALS

Proposals shall be bound (8.5"x11"). The following shall be addressed as a minimum, with sections tabbed with numbers as follows:

1. Introductory Letter:

- Firm name
- Address
- Contact person
- A clear and concise response as to why the Town of West Jefferson should select your firm for this work

2. Statement of qualifications of firm:

Firm experience and workload

- A detailed description of similar projects successfully completed by the firm in the past three to five years and a detailed description of results of that work; Include the name and telephone number of a contact person for each client who can verify the information provided;
- Listing of all projects (if any) completed for The Town of West Jefferson within the past five years;
- Listing of current projects and percent complete.

Firm personnel experience

- Name of project manager. Provide resume and experience record of project manager.
- A flow chart of team personnel who will actually be assigned to perform substantial amounts of the work on this project and the role of each.
- Provide a resume and experience record for each person, including years of experience, education and anticipated amount of time each will actually work on this project and location of each person.

Sub-consultant personnel experience

- Names and addresses of any outside consultants or associates proposed to be involved with this project.

- Include each proposed sub-consultants' experience and qualifications as described above for firm's personnel.
3. **Project Approach:** A detailed description of how the firm proposes to approach this project. Include sufficient discussion of proposed methodologies, techniques, and procedures for each work item listed in above *Project Scope*. Provide a breakdown and description of tasks assigned per project team member. Describe the hierarchy of project management. The work program should indicate the formats and number of meetings proposed for the public involvement component as well as the number of meetings with Town staff that will be provided, and the timing and purpose of those meetings.
 4. **Project Schedule:** A proposed time schedule and a method of assuring that the time schedule is met, including the name of the person responsible for the time schedule. Provide a proposed time schedule for completion of the key tasks in each phase and the method to assure that the time schedule will be met.
 5. **Budget Proposal:** The Town of West Jefferson will consider fee in its overall evaluation of the proposals. The Town of West Jefferson will strive to accept the lowest bidder.
 - a. Itemized costs for the elements listed in the *Project Scope* above.
 - b. Costs for travel, meals, and lodging.
 - c. If additional items beyond those outlined in this RFP are incorporated in the proposal, the estimated budget shall list those items separately.

Provide a fee schedule for supplemental charges that may be charged for additional unforeseen work tasks, if such services should be required via a future contract addendum, such as: fees for conducting additional public meetings, additional meetings with Town staff, additional stakeholder or community meetings, additional iterations of revisions, or additional information related to installation, etc.

6. **Insurance:** For the selected firm(s), the Town of West Jefferson requires that the final approved contract for professional services specify that the selected firm shall maintain at all times during the term of the contract, at its sole expense:
 - a. Statutory workers' compensation in accordance with the laws of the state where such compensation would be payable. Employers' liability (Coverage B) with limits of not less than \$500,000 per accident.

- b. Automobile liability insurance on any owned, non-owned or rented vehicle with limits of at least \$1,000,000 per occurrence combined single limit bodily injury and property damage.
- c. Comprehensive general liability, including products liability, completed operations liability, blanket contractual liability, broad form property damage and personal injury liability insurance with limits of at least \$1,000,000 per occurrence combined single limit.
- d. Professional services liability for a limit of not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

The Town of West Jefferson shall be named as additional insured and be provided with a certificate of insurance prior to the effective date of the contract or any renewal contract. The Town of West Jefferson shall be provided with all renewal certificates within 30 days of the expiration date of any and all policies listed on the certificate of insurance.

IX. METHOD OF EVALUATION

A panel of the Town of West Jefferson staff members and West Jefferson's Town Board will review the submitted proposals based on the evaluation factors noted.

1. **Firm experience/reputation/workload:** Experience of the firm in similar work and record of successful results. Specifically, firms need to demonstrate experience in the following areas:
 - Developing Wayfinding signage systems for municipalities Working in historic districts and/or other historic settings
 - Developing branding and marketing strategies for traditional municipalities
 - Demonstrated understanding of connection between transportation, land use and economic development in the context of municipal government

Also considered will be the firm's ability to complete the project based on its current workload, demonstrated understanding of the Town's goals and purpose for this project, specific management approach and how the firm proposes to achieve the project's time goals, and the firm's ability to offer the breadth and quality of services required for the project.

2. **Experience of the personnel assigned to the project team:** The Town of West Jefferson will give considerable weight to the individual qualifications of the project team members who will be assigned the work on this project. Considerations will include qualifications of key personnel, project team member's individual experience and other qualifications, project manager's

experience, sub-consultants' (if any) individual experience and other qualifications.

3. **Response to the project goals and scope outlined in the RFP:** This includes demonstrated understanding of scope of project, innovative suggestions that may increase the value of this project, demonstrated ability to present technical data in a user-friendly format with appropriate use of graphics.
4. **Adherence to proposal format.**
5. **Schedule:** The proposed schedule for performing the work for the project. The selected firm must be in a position to begin work within two weeks of notice to proceed.
6. **Fee proposal:** The Town of West Jefferson will consider the fees in the overall evaluation of the proposals.

X. SELECTION PROCESS AND SCHEDULE

Town of West Jefferson's staff will review all submitted proposals to determine those firms that will be granted an interview. Following the interviews, staff will attempt to negotiate an agreement with the top ranked firm. If no agreement can be reached with the top ranked firm, that firm shall be dismissed and staff shall proceed with discussions with the second ranked firm. This process may be repeated as many times as necessary until an agreement can be negotiated that is satisfactory to both parties.

The Town reserves the right to reject any or all bids or proposals, waive technicalities, and to be the sole judge of the suitability of the proposed services for its intended use and further specifically reserves the right to make the award in the best interests of the Town.

Mailing address and contact information:

Individuals responding to this solicitation should mail 3 hard copies and one digital copy of their proposal and direct all inquiries to:

Brantley Price
PO Box 490
1 S Jefferson Ave
West Jefferson, NC 28694

Phone: 336-246-3551
E-mail: admin@townofwj.com

All proposals must be received no later than 2:00 pm on November 9, 2018 in order to be considered.

XII. COPYRIGHT RELEASE

Those firms responding to the RFP shall supply a copyright release in order for staff to make copies of any copyrighted materials submitted.

XIII. INDEMNIFICATION

For the selected firm(s), the Town of West Jefferson requires that the final approved contract for professional services specify that the consulting firm agrees to indemnify and hold the Town of West Jefferson harmless from and against any and all claims, losses, liabilities, costs, expenses, charges, and damages arising from, or relating to, the contractual agreement, including but not limited to attorney's fees, with respect to any cause arising out of, resulting from, or in connection with (a) any breach by the consulting firm of any clause, condition or provision of the contract; (b) any breach or violation by the consulting firm of any applicable criminal or civil law; or (c) any other cause resulting from any act or failure to act by the consulting firm in accordance with the contract. The consulting firm shall promptly assume the defense of any claim, suit or action within the scope of this indemnification at its expense, upon being notified thereof.

XIV. MAPS OF STUDY AREA

One map is attached below, to provide greater understanding of this RFP. They are:

Map 1: Map of Downtown.

Map 1: Map of the Downtown of West Jefferson

