# BUTLER COUNTY BRANDING INITIATIVE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

## PRESENTED BY BUTLER COUNTY BRANDING TASK FORCE (BCBTF)

Butler County Commissioners
Butler County Land Bank
Butler County Port Authority
Butler County Visitors Bureau

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS


Project Synopsis ..... 3
Invitation ..... 3
Background ..... 4
Phase 1: Brand Strategy Scope of Work ..... 4
Phase 2: Brand Creative Scope of Work ..... 5
Submittal Criteria ..... 5
Selection Criteria ..... 6
Compensation ..... 6
Time Schedule ..... 7
Terms and Conditions ..... 7
Submission Information ..... 7

# PROJECT SYNOPSIS

In the past 15 years, Butler County has seen substantial positive growth, development and change in our business community, our tourism industry and our resident population.

In order to better reflect our changing county and to continue to remain relevant to our residents, business community and our visitors as well as the future development of the County, the Butler County Commissioners, Butler County Port Authority and the Butler County Visitors Bureau desire to conduct an in depth branding initiative.

The branding initiative will develop a strategy to continue Butler County's progressive and forward thinking attitude and guide marketing, promotional, public relations and community outreach efforts as well as position the county is one of the leading counties in the country.

# INVITATION

The Butler County Branding Task Force (BCBTF), comprised of the Butler Commissioners, Butler County Port Authority and Butler County Visitors Bureau, is requesting proposals from qualified firms to develop an umbrella brand strategy and brand creative elements for Butler County as a desired county for business, tourism and residential audiences. Resulting deliverables will serve as a platform for the county's marketing, promotional, public relations and community outreach efforts.

The Butler County Branding Initiative will be conducted in two independent and distinct phases:

1. Brand Strategy (including marketing research and brand position)
2. Brand Creative

Firms are invited to submit proposals on any individual section or they may submit a proposal for both sections (Brand Strategy and Brand Creative). It is recommended that proposals for both phases be presented as two distinct phases.

Phase 1 requires a professional, experienced brand firm to analyze, conduct and interpret research as well as demonstrate extensive experience with community branding.

Phase 2 requires a seasoned and experienced design/creative firm to translate Phase 1 branding work into visual elements.

# BACKGROUND

Butler County, Ohio founded in 1803 is one of Ohio's oldest counties yet one of the fastest growing today. As the birthplace to four governors and home to thriving industry, education, arts and sports, Butler County comprises both small, rural settlements and flourishing cities. Its county seat is Hamilton, where the first fort was built on the bank of the Great Miami River. It is named for Richard Butler of Pennsylvania, a major general in the American Revolutionary War. Butler died in 1791 fighting American Indians in northern Ohio. His army marched out of Fort Hamilton, where the city of Hamilton now stands.

Butler County is located in Ohio's southwestern corner. Located between the cities of Cincinnati and Dayton on Interstate 75, Butler County is within 600 miles of 64% of the nation's population. It is within a one-day drive to 20 major metro markets including Atlanta, Charlotte, Chicago, Detroit, Nashville, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Toronto and Washington DC. Its western boundary lies on the Indiana border. The county is generally rural, although urban areas cover twelve percent of Butler County's 467 square miles.

The county's largest city is Hamilton, the county seat, with a population of 62,486 people in 2014. Middletown and Fairfield are the next two largest cities, with populations of more than forty thousand people in 2014. An estimated 374,158 people resided in Butler County in 2014. The county averages approximately 798 people per square mile. Butler County is one of 88 counties in Ohio and its 2014 population of 374,158 ranked 8th in the state.

# PHASE 1 - BRAND STRATEGY

## Scope of Work

- Conduct an analysis of competitive markets and their corresponding branding and marketing efforts
- Review existing research that will assist in achieving the project's goals
- Based on your firm's knowledge and expertise, propose a suggested plan of action with specific details of timelines and your approach to information about Butler County's unique qualities that help us clearly identify who we are. This research should include, but is not limited to, our key stakeholders, residents, business community, community leaders as well as targeted audiences outside of the Butler County region.
- Develop umbrella brand position for Butler County that could work for all audiences augmented by individual messages for each of the separate audiences – residents, businesses, visitors, etc.

# PHASE 2 - BRAND CREATIVE

## Scope of Work

- Translate Phase 1 Brand Strategy into key brand elements including logo treatment with various lockups for involved BCBTF partners as well as color palette. Taglines are not desired as part of Phase 2.
- Produce brand identity/usage guidelines into formalized document.

# SUBMITTAL CRITERIA

For consistency of evaluation, each proposal submittal must contain at least the following elements:

1. **Firm Experience:** A resume of experience and other credentials that illustrate your qualifications and abilities to undertake the project. If proposing on Phase 1, provide at least two examples of community branding projects of similar size and scope that your firm has completed within the last three years. If proposing on Phase 2, provide at least 4 examples of similar community identity development projects as well as a short description of the strategy for each.
2. **References:** A list of references providing names, organizational names, addresses and phone numbers of previous clients. This section should also contain details about type and size of projects.
3. **Project Team Composition:** A team description including resumes for all team members. Identify the capacity in which team members will be used, and identify a Project Manager for ongoing contact. Only include descriptions and resumes of people who will have continuous or substantial involvement in the project.
4. **Approach to the project:** A project approach description, which embraces the outlined proposed Scope of work. Scope of work elements may be expanded to provide further detail or modified to reflect specific procedures unique to the Firm.
5. **Time Frame:** A statement illustrating availability to perform the required tasks, including a proposed time frame required to complete the stated Scope of Work.
6. **Cost Submittal:** A schedule of fees for completing the Scope of Work (see below Compensation for more details).
7. **Statement of Project Collaboration:** A statement confirming the firm's willingness to collaborate with another firm should the BCBTF select two different firms to complete Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the project.
8. **Number of Proposals:** Please submit five (5) copies of the proposal.

# SELECTION CRITERIA

The criteria are generally listed in order of relative importance from the highest to the lowest weighted factors. Proposals will be evaluated on criteria including, but not limited, to the following:

1. The quality and clarity of the proposal as well as the presentation materials that will be considered a reflection of the team's ability to communicate its findings and conclusions to members of the public as well as fellow professionals.
2. Demonstrated experience on similar community branding projects (if proposing on Phase 1) and/or creative projects (if proposing on Phase 2) within the past three years
3. Qualifications of the personnel assigned to the project, including demonstrated success in branding and/or creative development initiatives and the demonstrated ability to accomplish the project. Firms proposing on Phase 2 must have demonstrated experience in the software, hardware and technical knowledge required to produce vector-based files.
4. Project cost
5. Ability, capacity, skill and organization of the respondent to complete the project within budget.
6. Satisfactory reference checks relating to past work relationships

# COMPENSATION

Define the total estimated contract amount on a time and materials, with a "not to exceed" figure. The cost information provided will help to indicate your understanding of the scope of the project. Include the following:

- A list of all phase of the work.
- A list of all tasks required to complete each phase.
- The estimated material and labor hours to accomplish each task and a current fee schedule.
- The time and duration required to accomplish each phase of the work.
- Break out cost for each phase if proposing on both phases of work.

# TIME SCHEDULE

The BCBTF will adhere to the following time schedule, which should result in a selection of a person/firm by June 10, 2016. If deemed necessary by the committee, this schedule may be updated and agencies will be notified.

- Issue RFP March 25, 2016
- Submission of prospective agency partner questions via email to Tracy Kocher, tkocher@GetToTheBC.com by 5 p.m., April 15, 2016
- Answers to prospective agency partner questions will be delivered to all agencies via email by 5 p.m., April 22, 2016
- Deadline for submittal of proposals by 5 p.m., April 29, 2016
- Finalists notified by 5 p.m., May 20, 2016
- Finalist interviews held by TBD
- Notify firm or individual of final selection by June 10, 2016

# TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The BCBTF reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, and to waive minor irregularities in any proposal. The BCBTF reserves the right to request clarification of information submitted, and to request additional information from the respondent. The BCBTF shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by the respondent in preparing, submitting or presenting its response to the RFP. If no single proposal satisfactorily meets the criteria above, the BCBTF may choose to award this contract to more than one agency partner, or to award only part of this proposal, whichever is in the BCBTF's best interest.

# SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Interested firms should submit proposals to:

Butler County Visitors Bureau
Attn: Mark Hecquet
8756 Union Centre Boulevard
West Chester, OH 45069