

DATE: December 20, 2009
TO: Bidders
FROM: Old City District Marketing Committee
RE: Public Relations RFP

BACKGROUND

The Old City District (OCD), a municipal authority/business improvement organization, is celebrating its 11th anniversary this year, and we've accomplished much www.oldcitydistrict.org. Briefly, the OCD was an outgrowth of Historic East Market Street (HEMS) – itself a spin-off of the Old City Civic Association – created to preserve and maintain Market Street from Front to Fifth Sts. In the late 1990's when HEMS was "folded into" and helped create the Old City District, funds from HEMS' 501c3 were converted into the Old City Community Fund, now the 501c3 arm of the Old City District. Those funds are used to maintain streetscapes, replace trees, fix lighting and generally improve the economy of Old City from Walnut to Spring Garden Streets and Front to Sixth Sts.

CURRENT SITUATION

In this 11th year of the Old City District, the Board of Directors is engaging in Strategic Planning funded by the William Penn Foundation in conjunction with the LaSalle University Non-Profit Center. The OCD Board of Directors wants to re-visit and assess the organization's mission and continue to help the neighborhood thrive and stay relevant measured against today's challenges.

Continuing to do a major marketing campaign is one direction that emerged from OCD's Strategic Planning process. For the past four months, OCD led Phase I of a marketing campaign along with Old City Civic Association, Old City Business Collaborative, and Old City Arts Association. While OCD raised the preponderance of funds and chaired the Phase I initiative, all four organizations have been meeting regularly and providing guidance for Phase I.

Moving forward to Phase II, we are now soliciting responses to this RFP to maintain the momentum and continue to position Old City as a good place to live, work, explore, shop, eat and do business. Thus, collectively we are prepared to engage in Phase II of a marketing campaign. That is the basis for this RFP.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

With the national economy still very challenging, we want to re-energize the image and raise the visibility of Old City among residents, visitors, businesses, developers, and regional officials. The objective is to accomplish this in the most cost-effective way possible, by conducting a four-six month broad public relations campaign focused on the neighborhood as a whole supported in part by occasional mentions of individual shops, restaurants, venues, developers, housing opportunities, etc.

COLLABORATION

In this effort, the Marketing Committee of Old City District has taken a leadership position by convening and working collaboratively with other Old City organizations, including the following, which share similar goals:

- Old City Civic Association
- Old City Arts Association
- Old City Business Collaborative

PUBLIC RELATIONS FOCUS

The goal of the campaign is to promote collectively the diverse assets of Old City -- not to publicize any of these organizations or entities individually. For example, one story may be about chefs and the next about lofts; one story might be about entrepreneurs and the next about transportation; one story might be about history as an economic driver and another might be about savvy boomers shopping at hip retailers. Economic development should be the under-pinning of this initiative. And Old City is the connecting theme in each of these stories.

OBJECTIVES

Briefly, here are the major objectives of this four-six month initiative:

- To revive the buzz in the media about Old City and its diverse entities;
- To increase sales at all Old City businesses and traffic at other venues;
- To create a positive, high level awareness of Old City and its events, retailers, restaurants, shops, arts/cultural venues commercial/residential real estate
- To make Old City a "must-visit" for city, suburban residents and tourists alike

ANTICIPATED RESULTS

The collaborative organizations anticipate an on-going stream of media results. We are looking for demonstrated experience in marketing destinations, hospitality and similar entities. We expect to see trend stories, themed stories, perhaps linked to news hooks such as Black History month, Women's History month, the changing economy, and other timely topics, etc.

THE BUDGET

We request a short proposal accompanied by bidders' recommendations as to an appropriate budget including all expenses for Phase II. The bidder should propose the fee and expected results.

NEXT STEPS/SELECTION CRITERIA

On behalf of the four organizations (OCD, OCCA, OCAA and OCBC) the Old City District will send this RFP to approximately 10 individuals/firms and make it available on our website. **Deadline to respond to this RFP will be December 31, 2009 to cphilo@oldcitydistrict.org.**

OCD will receive the responses, distribute them to representatives of each of the four organizations, and convene a meeting of those individuals. OCD will convene a committee meeting the week of January 4 to select finalists. **Finalists will be invited to present to the OCD Marketing Committee the week of January 4, 2010.**

Respondents are asked to provide this information on or before 5:00 p.m. December 31, 2009 by e-mail (cphilo@oldcitydistrict.org):

- Company Name
- Principal Name(s)
- Contact Information
- Profile of the Senior Executive and Account Executive(s) on this assignment
- A minimum of seven recent (2008-2009) examples of public relations success for for-profit and non-profit entities in the tri-state area (Southeastern Pennsylvania, Northern Delaware and Southern New Jersey) in diverse media
- City Business Privilege Licenses

Selection of the winning firm will be based on the following:

- Overall Public Relations experience (20%)
- Demonstration of knowledge of the local community (10%)
- Successful PR results for other tri-state entities (for-profit and non-profit) (30%)
- Creativity (30%)
- Involvement of top talent on this assignment (10%)

The Client is the four organizations described above (OCD, OCCA, OCAA, and OCBC). The day-to-day contact will be OCD President/CEO, Cynthia M. Philo (on behalf of the four organizations).

QUESTIONS

Questions about this RFP should be directed to Cynthia M. Philo, President/CEO, Old City District by e-mail (cphilo@oldcitydistrict.org). All questions will be shared with all RFP recipients, unless they withdraw from this process.