

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

Messaging Framework, Website Redesign & Marketing Collateral

Issued By: Alexandria Economic Development Partnership
Date Issued: Monday, August 11, 2025
Submission Deadline: Wednesday, September 3, 2025; by 5:00pm ET

1. Introduction

The **Alexandria Economic Development Partnership** ([AEDP](#)) invites qualified marketing and design firms to submit proposals to support a phased communications and marketing initiative. This engagement includes the development of a light-touch messaging framework, a full website redesign (including video and content support), and collateral templates to support AEDP's business development and public engagement efforts.

2. About AEDP

AEDP is a public-private partnership that promotes the City of Alexandria as a premier location for businesses and entrepreneurs. AEDP leverages the city's assets (i.e., prime development locations, proximity to Washington, D.C., a strong small business community, and a rich historical identity) to foster economic growth. AEDP's work leads to increased city tax revenues, employment opportunities, and a stronger quality of life for residents. AEDP is funded by the City of Alexandria; as explained below, a new City-wide economic development strategy is driving this RFP.

3. Scope of Work & Deliverables

AEDP has recently undergone a strategic planning process (as part of a larger City-wide conversation about economic development) and seeks a collaborative partner or team of partners to execute a reimagining of their marketing presence and materials, which includes messaging refinement, website redesign, and branded collateral. Firms and individual consultants are invited to submit proposals for the entire scope or any of its parts. AEDP may award the contract to a single firm or assemble a team based on expertise and fit across project phases.

Please note that AEDP has visual brand guidelines in place and is not seeking a new logo.

Part I: Audience Refinement & Messaging Update

- Based on the City of Alexandria's soon-to-be completed economic strategic framework and interviews with internal stakeholders, conduct a light-touch discovery process to surface audience profiles, marketing goals, and core messaging priorities that can serve as the foundation for all future deliverables.
- Development of a messaging framework for AEDP's business development audiences to support consistency in outreach across AEDP's platforms and materials.

Part II: Website Redesign & Content Development

- Refresh AEDP's visual identity online with a modern, professional, and engaging design.
- Improve navigation, content hierarchy, and calls to action to serve business attraction and retention, site selectors, developers, brokers and local businesses.
- Ensure mobile responsiveness and ADA/WCAG 2.1 compliance.
- Optimize for both traditional SEO and Generative Engine Optimization (GEO) to enhance visibility in search engines and AI-generated responses.
- Incorporate analytics planning to track user behavior and engagement.

Deliverables for Website Redesign

- Discovery and stakeholder engagement sessions to inform design direction.
- Sitemap and content architecture recommendations.
- Wireframes and page templates for key content types.
- Visual design mockups reflecting AEDP's updated brand identity.
- UX/UI guidelines and a design handoff package for development.
- AEDP's internal resources are not sufficient to meet the copywriting needs of a new website. While the absence of in-house copywriting capabilities will not disqualify a proposal, the selected firm must be prepared to collaborate with a copywriter engaged directly by AEDP.

Part III: Website Development

- Build a secure, scalable, and easy-to-maintain website using a modern CMS. AEDP currently uses WordPress but would consider other options.
- Implement the visual and UX designs produced in the redesign phase with pixel-perfect accuracy.
- Ensure cross-browser compatibility, responsive design, and ADA/WCAG 2.1 compliance.
- Integrate analytics, SEO tools, and performance monitoring.
- Provide a user-friendly content management experience for AEDP staff with minimal ongoing vendor dependency.

Deliverables for Website Development

- Technical discovery to align CMS and hosting solutions with AEDP's needs.
- Full build-out of approved design templates and page types.
- Content migration from the current site, including text, media, and metadata.
- Integration of third-party tools as needed (HubSpot CRM, analytics, marketing automation).
- Testing and QA across browsers, devices, and assistive technologies
- CMS training, documentation, and handoff to AEDP staff.

Part IV: "Why Alexandria" Video & Shorts

- Create a strategy for developing and deploying key brand videos for Alexandria, to support website use, digital marketing campaigns, and social media.
- Execute those videos. Potential videos include:
 - Short-form videos (15-60 seconds) optimized for social media.
 - Long-form (2-3 minutes) anchor videos for the website or presentations.
 - Industry-specific highlight reels (e.g., tech, life sciences, federal contractors).

Part V: Branded Collateral and Templates

- PowerPoint and Canva presentation templates.

- One-pager, fact sheet, project brief, and proposal templates (Adobe and Canva).
- Adobe and Word digital letterhead.
- Branded Excel sheet template.
- Pop-up banner for booth displays
- Event collateral (e.g., name badges, signage, and print materials).
- Social media graphics suggestions and branded virtual backgrounds.

Optional Add-On: Digital Marketing Strategy & Campaign Development

Optional services would focus on increasing AEDP's visibility among site selectors, developers, entrepreneurs, and business decision-makers. The strategy would also aim to drive qualified traffic to AEDP's website and other digital platforms. Examples include:

- **Digital Advertising:** Recommendations for paid search, display, retargeting, and geotargeted campaigns.
- **Social Media Strategy:** Organic and paid approaches tailored to AEDP's audiences.
- **Content Marketing:** Ideas for ongoing blog posts, videos, or downloadable resources that support business attraction.
- **Email Marketing:** Strategy for outreach, lead nurturing, and marketing automation.
- **Analytics & Reporting:** Frameworks to measure ROI and continuously refine campaigns.

4. Proposal Requirements

All proposals must include the following:

- **Firm Overview:** Relevant experience in commercial real estate or economic development is a plus.
- **Approach & Methodology:** Process for each phase and project management style.
- **Team Structure:** Key personnel, including our day-to-day point of contact and the number of other clients that person oversees, and subcontractors (if applicable). **If selected for the Finalist Interview round, the day-to-day project point of contact and team representative must participate.**
- **Work Sample:** Examples of similar projects for the materials you are bidding on.
- **Client References:** Two or more with similar scope.
- **Cost Proposal:** Provide a detailed, project-based cost proposal broken down by phase of work, including:
 - Phase-based pricing, clearly showing deliverables for each phase.
 - Hourly rates for key team members.
 - Pricing for optional add-on services, listed separately.**Ideally, the total project cost (before add-on services) would not exceed \$250,000, inclusive of all fees and expenses.**
- **Proposed Timeline:** Please share a timeline that addresses key milestones and deliverables.
- **Optional Add-Ons:** Suggestions for additional creative services AEDP may wish to consider, with separate pricing (in addition to the Digital Marketing Strategy & Campaign Development optional add-on referenced above).

5. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following weighted criteria:

1. Creativity and Design Aesthetic (25 points)

Demonstrates strong visual storytelling, compelling creative concepts, and a modern, cohesive design approach aligned with our brand values and audience.

2. Relevant Experience (25 points)

Includes specific examples of past work in economic development, particularly within the Alexandria region or similar communities. Familiarity with local market dynamics and stakeholder needs is strongly preferred.

3. Project Approach and Methodology (15 points)

Outlines a clear, thoughtful, and achievable plan for executing the work, including timelines, workflows, collaboration methods, and quality control.

4. Cost Proposal (15 points)

Offers a transparent and realistic cost structure that aligns with project scope and delivers strong value for investment.

5. Team Qualifications (10 points)

Provides bios and roles of key personnel, with attention to subject matter expertise, creative capabilities, and experience managing similar projects.

6. References (10 points)

Includes at least three professional references who can speak to the firm's reliability, creativity, communication, and project management.

Extra Credit: Added Value (5 points)

Proposals may earn up to 5 additional points for demonstrating unique ideas, services, or tools that provide additional value beyond the core scope.

6. Timeline

The anticipated project timeline is as follows:

RFP Issued	Monday, August 11, 2025
Questions Due	Monday, August 18, 2025
Responses to Questions Posted	Monday, August 25, 2025
Proposals Due	Wednesday, September 3, 2025
Finalist Interviews	Week of September 22, 2025
Firm Selected	Week of September 29, 2025
Project Kickoff	Week of October 6, 2025

7. Submission Instructions

Please submit your proposal as a single PDF document by 5:00pm ET on Wednesday, September 3, 2025, to:

Jessica Sarra

Senior Director of Operations

Alexandria Economic Development Partnership

sarra@alexandriaecon.org

(703) 652-5343

Proposals may address the full scope of work outlined in this RFP or focus on specific components. Respondents should clearly indicate which project phase(s) or deliverables they are proposing to complete and provide relevant detail, work samples, and pricing for each. AEDP reserves the right to engage one or more firms to fulfill the outlined scope based on qualifications and approach.

8. Additional Notes

- AEDP is not seeking a new name, logo, or rebrand.
- Final deliverables must be fully editable and provided in both working and print-ready formats.
- AEDP will retain ownership of the source files, and the firm agrees to share them as requested.
- AEDP encourages submissions from minority-, women-, and locally-owned firms.
- AEDP reserves the right to request additional information, negotiate terms, or reject any or all proposals.
- Late submissions will not be considered.