



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

For Government and Public Affairs Services

Issue Date: July 31, 2024

Proposal Submission Deadline: August 30, 2024

Summary

Through this Request for Proposals (“RFP”), the Downtown San Diego Partnership (“DSDP”) is seeking proposals from individuals, organizations, and/or firms to provide government relations, public affairs, and lobbying services in order to assist DSDP, and its related entities, to: (1) build relationships with City of San Diego and County of San Diego elected and appointed officials; (2) advance DSDP legislative priorities in **Attachment A**; and (3) provide political communication, social media, press and coalition support. A complete list of the scope of services needed is provided in **Attachment B** (Scope of Services). DSDP expects the work to commence on or about September 15, 2024 through August 30, 2025 with the potential for DSDP to renew the contract at DSDP’s sole discretion.

RFP Timetable

The timetable for this RFP is as follows:

Description	Date
Release of RFP	July 31, 2024
Deadline for Written Questions	August 7, 2024 by 5 p.m.
Response to Questions Provided	August 8, 2024 by 5 p.m.
RFP Proposals Due	August 30, 2024 by 5 p.m.
Interviews	September 3-6, 2024 by 5 p.m.
Execution on Contract	No later than September 12, 2024
Commencement of Work	No later than September 30, 2024

Questions and Responses

Prospective proposers may *only* submit questions regarding this RFP by email to gsutton@downtownsandiego.org. **All questions must be received by 5:00 p.m. (Pacific Time) on August 7, 2024.**

The Prospective Proposer may not contact or receive information outside of this RFP process. If it is discovered that the Proposer contacted and received information from anyone other than the email address specified above and under the process specified herein regarding this solicitation, DSDP may, in its sole discretion, disqualify the prospective proposer and/or the proposal from further consideration.

When submitting questions, please specify which section of the RFP you are referencing and quote the language that prompted the question. Questions may address issues or concerns that the evaluation criteria and/or business requirements would unfairly disadvantage Proposer or, due to unclear instructions, may result in DSDP not receiving the best possible responses from Proposer.

DSDP will provide responses to questions by August 8, 2024 by 5:00 p.m. DSDP reserves the right to group similar questions when providing answers.

Proposal Submission Deadline

The Proposer's proposal should be submitted by email to gsutton@downtownsandiego.org by 5:00 p.m. on August 31, 2024. Please include "PROPOSAL FOR GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC AFFAIRS SERVICES" in the email subject line.

It is the sole responsibility of the submitting Proposer to ensure that its proposal is received before the submission deadline. Submitting Proposers shall bear all risks associated with delays in delivery. Any proposals received after the scheduled closing date and time for receipt of proposals may not be accepted.

Proposal Requirements

Proposals shall include (at minimum) the following components:

- **Proposer's qualifications and demonstrated experience** with (i) lobbying and government relations; (ii) experience with Downtown issues, particularly an

understanding of the San Diego region; and (iii) examples of communication styles, social media campaigns, big picture non-profit political strategy, and legislative analysis.

- **Demonstration of successful lobbying efforts** that led to positive legislative and/or policy changes, funding opportunities, etc.
- **Proposer’s proposal for meeting the goals and priorities in Attachment A.**
- Proposer shall indicate the size and staff including the names of principal, company official(s), and other personnel (including any sub-contractors and/or sub-contracted firms) who will be assigned to work on behalf of DSDP under this agreement.
- **Proposer must provide a description of any fees/and or compensation** the Proposer may seek from DSDP for services, inclusive of staff time, equipment, materials, travel, administrative/clerical, overhead and other out-of-pocket expenses, if applicable to this contract. If the firm uses hourly billing rates (instead of a flat retainer fee), please provide a detailed fee summary with a total annual not-to-exceed cost. Proposers are advised that DSDP prefers compensation structures that are a flat retainer rate on a monthly payment schedule.
- **Proposer must identify any and all potential conflicts of interest** with other current or former clients, including, but not limited to, other member-based organizations, special district or business improvement district operators, and affiliates thereof, and how they expect to resolve those conflicts. **Proposer must also complete and attach Attachment C “Contractor References” with Proposal submission.**

Proposal Evaluations & Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the following evaluation criteria:

Criteria Outline	Criteria Weight
Proposer’s qualifications and demonstrated experience	45%
Demonstration of successful lobbying efforts.	20%
Proposer’s approach to the services requested in Attachment A.	20%
Fees and/or compensation Proposer may seek from DSDP	15%

Following the initial evaluation, DSDP may select one particular Proposer or select a number of Proposers (with or without interviews); or conduct interviews with a “short list” of Proposers, consisting of those Proposers reasonably likely, in the opinion of DSDP, to be awarded the contract.

Any interview may include discussions about services offered, conflicts of interests with other clients, or fees/compensation amount or structure. Interviews may take place through written correspondence, telephone or video conference, and/or face-to-face interviews, at DSDP's sole discretion. DSDP reserves the right to not convene interviews or discussions, and to make an award on the basis of initial proposals received. References may be contacted at any point in the evaluation process.

After a Proposer(s) has been selected, DSDP will negotiate a contract for execution. If a satisfactory contract cannot be negotiated, DSDP may, at its sole discretion, begin contract negotiations with the next qualified Proposer who submitted a proposal, as determined by DSDP.

Proposers are further notified that DSDP may disqualify any Proposer with whom DSDP cannot satisfactorily negotiate a contract.

Confidentiality

Proposals submitted in response to this RFP shall become the exclusive property of DSDP.

Non-Discrimination

DSDP will not discriminate and will require their contractors to not discriminate on the basis of race, gender expression, gender identity, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, or disability in the solicitation, selection, hiring, or treatment of subcontractors, vendors, or suppliers.



ATTACHMENT A

ADVOCACY PLATFORM

The Downtown San Diego Partnership Advocacy Platform (“Platform”) serves as a guiding document for Downtown San Diego Partnership (“DSDP”) staff and stakeholders, specifically the Government Affairs and Economic Development teams, to engage with officials at the local level (City & County) on policy priorities with direction from the Downtown Planning and Public Policy Committee, Political Action Committee, as well as the Executive Board of Directors.

This is a guiding document to be used as a lens to analyze and take positions on legislation as they are introduced on specific policies directly relevant to the Partnership’s mission, vision, and goals.

For more than 30 years, the Downtown San Diego Partnership has served as the principal voice and driving force behind the economic prosperity and cultural vitality of Downtown San Diego through membership, advocacy, public services, and community investment. The DSDP 5-year strategic plan presents a new organizational framework structured around the following four goals. They are guided by the feedback we heard from our Downtown community and are the bedrock of the Downtown Partnership’s work over the next five years.

1. Champion a Welcoming and Resilient Community
2. Actualize the Full Potential of Clean & Safe
3. Create America's Outdoor Downtown
4. Guide and Promote Economic Prosperity

The City of San Diego and the County of San Diego are directly involved in these issues and new proposals are introduced every year. This Platform will provide foundation with a proactive means to encourage and support policies that are consistent with priorities.

DSDP staff will seek to utilize the platform to build coalitions with other regional stakeholders, such as SANDAG, MTS, Port of San Diego, San Diego Housing Commission, San Diego Regional Airport Authority along with the City of San Diego and County of San Diego to advocate for any shared priorities. Staff will also use this platform to engage other state advocates, such as the California Downtown Association and other Downtown Partnership associations throughout the state to build coalitions of support behind policies that benefit Downtown San Diego.

URBAN REVITALIZATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Advocate for policies that ensure a high quality of life and thriving economy for residents and businesses of the urban core and Downtown San Diego.

1. Advocate for policies and funding that support economic investment, eliminate blight, and encourage a robust and activated Downtown environment.
2. Support innovative financing strategies for local entities related to DSDP operations, including property and business improvement districts.
3. Engage in budget processes (Federal, State, and Local) to ensure the urban core of San Diego receives its fair share of incentives and resources.
4. Support policies and regulatory streamlining that will have a positive benefit on the restaurant industry, including permitting, safety, and compliance issues.
5. Support policies and funding that support San Diego's hotel and tourism sectors.
6. Advocate for proposals that encourage investment in arts and culture that will have a positive benefit on the Downtown region.
7. Support policies that enhance workforce recruitment and retention solutions.
8. Support policies that protect Downtown businesses from theft and crimes and

HOMELESSNESS AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

increase the safety of Downtown residents and families.

Advocate for policies and resources for homelessness programs that serve the Downtown and urban core of San Diego, and those that seek to mitigate and address our behavior health and substance use and abuse crisis, consistent with Partnership goals.

1. Support allocation of resources and legislation that will support and enhance the DSDP's homelessness programs impact, including but not limited to the Clean and Safe operations and Family Reunification Programs.
2. Assist the Regional Task Force on Homelessness, City of San Diego, and County of San Diego in advocating for resources for homelessness programs that are consistent with DSDP goals. To include: support for equity-based homelessness resource allocation; and support for resource allocations to support sub-populations of those experiencing homelessness.
3. Support any allocation of additional government resources to the region that seeks to mitigate our current behavioral health and substance abuse crisis.

HOMELESSNESS AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH (CONT.)

4. Encourage reforms to the conservatorship process that allow for more appropriate utilization among our most vulnerable residents.
5. Advocate for additional resources for behavioral health infrastructure, including but not limited to health hubs, mobile crisis centers, mobile and street based health, and related programs.
6. Encourage policies that provide parity between mental health substance abuse disorder and physical health care services, along with related care coordination services.
7. Support resources for rental assistance and similar programs that help prevent homelessness. Specifically, support for additional resources for post-acute care.

INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORTATION, AND PARKS

8. Encourage efforts to reduce homeless encampments and clean up waste and debris within our urban core.

Advocate for resources and policies that support infrastructure, transportation, park space, and environmental health to better serve the Downtown and urban core of San Diego.

1. Engage in budget processes to support proposals that would drive infrastructure and transportation investment to the Downtown and urban core of San Diego.
2. Engage in various regulatory and grant-making processes to support the projects that are a priority for DSDP, including but not limited to Infrastructure Infill grants, active transportation grants, and SB 1 funds.
3. Support bond proposals and investments that could be utilized on DSDP priority projects.
4. Advocate for active transportation infrastructure that will improve safety and facilitate pedestrian mobility while also working toward climate action goals.
5. Encourage policies that support regional projects that bring people to the Downtown and the greater urban core areas, including the airport connector and LOSSAN corridor.
6. Support bond proposals and other policies that provide for more green space in urban environments, consistent with DSDP goals.
7. Advocate for additional funding and policies that support regional climate action plans and create additional opportunities for urban green space and management.

HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Encourage policies that acknowledge and support the important role Downtown and urban core development plays in meeting regional housing, climate change mitigation, mobility, and economic development goals.

1. Advocate for incentives to infill development that are consistent with DSDP priorities, including reforms to parking requirements, increased density bonuses, incentives for developers who build around transit, and related development fees.
2. Support land-use reforms and other policies that will help the City of San Diego meet and exceed its housing goals in the Downtown and urban core.
3. Engage in the state budgetary and regulatory process to ensure state resources for all affordable housing types are allocated for Downtown San Diego.
4. Support policies that provide relief and flexibility regarding commercial real estate occupancies including adaptive reuse.
5. Engage in regulatory processes to facilitate resources for the Downtown urban core, including but not limited to sustainable community's grants, adaptive reuse grants, and housing bonds.
6. Support measures that promote the use of public land for housing of all income levels.



ATTACHMENT B

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The principal responsibility of the selected Proposer is to support DSDP staff and provide a full range of government relations, public relations, lobbying, and coalition engagement services that meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Build Relationships with City of San Diego & County of San Diego Elected and Appointed Officials

- a. Formulate strategies and tactics to achieve DSDP's advocacy objectives.
- b. Enhance DSDP's relationships with key local elected officials, departments and agencies, specifically within the County of San Diego.
- c. Coordinate meetings with local elected officials and agency department leaders to provide DSDP the opportunity for face-to-face communication as needed.
- d. Monitor actions that are of relevance with local agencies, boards and commissions, including but not limited to the San Diego Housing Commission, Regional Task Force on Homelessness, City of San Diego Council Committees and Council Hearings, County of San Diego BOS Dockets, Downtown Community Planning Council, Airport Authority, Port of San Diego.
- e. Engage with federal policy makers as needed.

2. Advance Legislative & Advocacy Priorities

- a. Pursue legislative and/or policy directives, including any funding opportunities, to assist with addressing priority issues for DSDP.
- b. Identify actions that reflect DSDP's priorities, as identified by Attachment A (Advocacy Platform).
- c. Identify and analyze additional legislation that may have an impact on DSDP, including information on the elected official, any background information on the reason for the action, those entities in support and opposition, the effect of the action on DSDP, and a recommendation for DSDP's position.



ATTACHMENT B

- d. Draft and distribute letters to appropriate elected officials and committees to support or oppose legislation and collaborate with DSDP staff to track engagement.

3. Provide Public Affairs (Communication and Coalition) Support

- a. Support DSDP's relationships with key community groups, labor, business groups, and other relevant stakeholders for advocacy purposes.
- b. Develop and post social media messaging, press releases and advise on coalition development as it relates to achieving and or promoting various policy objectives.
- c. Perform additional public relations and media functions on behalf of DSDP in relation to the established priorities of advocacy priorities.

D O W N T O W N
SAN DIEGO
P A R T N E R S H I P

ATTACHMENT C

Reference #1
Organization Name:
Address of Organization:
Organization Contact Name:
Organization Contact E-mail:
Description of Contract Services:
Number of Contracted Years:

Reference #2
Organization Name:
Address of Organization:
Organization Contact Name:
Organization Contact E-mail:
Description of Contract Services:
Number of Contracted Years: