

Memorandum



Date: April 4, 2026
To: Buchanan Downtown Development Authority
From: Tony McGhee
Subject: Draft Marketing Services Request for Proposal

Attached for your review is a draft Request for Proposals (RFP) for market analysis, marketing strategy, and media services focused on increasing targeted foot traffic to Buchanan's Central Business District.

This draft is intended as a starting point for discussion and refinement by the DDA, rather than a final document. The goal is to provide a framework that the Board can react to, adjust, and ultimately tailor to best meet the DDA's objectives and available resources.

The intent of this proposed approach is two-fold. First, the tiered budget structure is designed to allow the DDA to compare costs, deliverables, and levels of service at different investment levels. By seeing what is achievable at multiple price points, the Board can make a more informed decision about scope, priorities, and value. Second, by asking respondents to describe their approach and methodologies, the RFP is structured to encourage creative and strategic thinking from proposers. This may result in ideas, tools, or approaches not previously considered by the DDA, and provide insight into how different firms would address Buchanan's market, attraction potential, and downtown character.

The draft also reflects several best practices commonly used by downtown development organizations, including:

- Emphasis on data-driven market analysis to inform marketing decisions;
- Integration of branding, digital presence, media placement, and performance tracking;
- Flexibility to adapt strategies based on measurable outcomes; and
- A clear evaluation framework to support transparent selection.

Staff believes this approach balances structure with flexibility and positions the DDA to receive meaningful, comparable proposals while still leaving room for innovation and refinement.

We look forward to the Board's feedback on the draft, including scope, budget tiers, evaluation criteria, and any additional priorities the DDA would like to see reflected before the RFP is finalized and released.

Please feel free to share comments or questions during the meeting or in advance, as appropriate.

Request for Bids



Project Name: Discover Buchanan
Project Location: City of Buchanan – Central Business District
Issue Date: TBD
Bid Due Date: TBD

GENERAL OVERVIEW

The Buchanan Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is seeking proposals from qualified firms or consultants to provide market analysis, marketing strategy, and media services intended to drive targeted foot traffic to Buchanan’s Central Business District (CBD). This initiative is part of a broader effort to enhance the visibility, vibrancy, and economic vitality of downtown Buchanan.

Buchanan is located in a region that experiences substantial tourism, particularly during the spring, summer, and fall months. Despite being in close proximity to several popular destinations within the region, the community is not currently capturing a proportionate share of visitor activity and spending. The DDA’s goal is to close this gap by leveraging targeted marketing strategies and coordinated promotional efforts to draw highly targeted visitors to the CBD and encourage them to engage with local businesses, events, and experiences.

The DDA seeks a partner that can assist in understanding the regional visitor market and develop a practical marketing strategy that converts regional tourism into increased visitation and economic activity within Buchanan’s downtown.

SCOPE OF WORK

The selected firm or consultant will work collaboratively with the DDA to complete the following components.

1) Market Analysis

Conduct a market analysis to better understand regional tourism patterns, consumer behavior, and business mix opportunities in Buchanan’s Central Business District.

Respondents must provide pricing and scope for two levels of market analysis services.

- **High Level Market Assessment**
This assessment should provide a general overview of regional tourism trends, visitor demographics, and potential visitor markets that may be targeted for Buchanan’s downtown. The analysis may utilize existing regional data sources and publicly available tourism information to provide a high level understanding of opportunities for increasing visitation and engagement in the CBD.
- **In Depth Market Assessment**
This assessment should include a more detailed analysis of regional visitor behavior, target market segmentation, competitive positioning, and specific opportunities for Buchanan’s downtown businesses. This level of analysis may include deeper data analysis, stakeholder engagement, consumer surveys, comparative community analysis, or other research methods that would provide actionable insights to inform marketing strategy and future business recruitment efforts.

Respondents shall provide a separate scope of work and cost estimate for each level of market analysis so the DDA may evaluate and select the appropriate level of service.

2) Marketing Strategy Development

Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy designed to:

- Promote Buchanan’s downtown businesses, experiences, and events
- Target both local residents and regional visitors
- Identify and establish a differentiated brand identity for Buchanan’s downtown
- Recommend specific strategies for converting regional tourism traffic into visits to the CBD

3) Marketing and Promotional Campaign Implementation

Execute marketing and promotional activities which may include, but are not limited to:

- Designing, developing, constructing, and operating a dedicated promotional website titled DiscoverBuchanan.com, (THIS IS A PLACEHOLDER NAME UNTIL BOARD SELECTS WHAT THEY WANT IT TO BE) including content highlighting businesses and experiences located within the CBD
- Identifying and negotiating opportunities for internet, print, radio, television, and outdoor media placements that direct targeted visitors to the Discover Buchanan website

- Utilizing social media platforms as appropriate, including content development, posting, monitoring, and responding to interactions related to Discover Buchanan messaging and promotions
 - Developing and deploying brand messaging that supports the identity and positioning of Buchanan's downtown
- 4) Performance Tracking and Reporting
- Track key performance indicators such as audience reach, engagement levels, website activity, visitor interaction, and feedback from downtown businesses. Utilize available analytical tools to evaluate the effectiveness of marketing strategies and adjust campaign approaches as necessary.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must include:

- 1) Firm Background & Qualifications
- Overview of the firm or consultant, including history, team, and core competencies.
 - Experience with marketing, media purchases, promotions, website development and general business experience;
 - Relevant examples of similar work.
- 2) Approach & Methodology
- Description of your approach to conducting both the high level and in depth market analysis
 - Description of your approach to marketing strategy development, digital content strategy, platform selection, and advertising placement
 - Explanation of how your strategy will capture regional tourism traffic and convert it into visits and spending within Buchanan's downtown
 - Identification of the tools, data sources, and performance metrics that will be used to evaluate effectiveness
- 3) Market Analysis Pricing
- Provide separate pricing and scope descriptions for:
- High Level Market Assessment
 - In-Depth Market Assessment
- 4) Tiered Budget Options
- Proposals may outline deliverables and level of service provided at any of the following tiers:
- Tier 1: \$1,500 per month

- Tier 2: \$3,000 per month
- Tier 3: \$5,000 per month

Each budget tier should specify:

- Scope of work
- Frequency of social media content and engagement
- Extent of advertising or boosted content
- Reporting and analytics provided
- Additional services within the tier

REFERENCES

At least two references from previous clients for whom similar work has been completed.

TERM OF CONTRACT

The initial contract term shall be one year, with the option to renew for up to two additional one year terms based on satisfactory performance and mutual agreement between the parties.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated on:

- Demonstrated experience and qualifications
- Creativity and effectiveness of proposed strategies
- Understanding of Buchanan’s market and tourism potential
- Scope and value at each price tier
- Clarity and completeness of proposal
- References and past performance

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- **Deadline for submission:** [Insert Date]
- **Submit via email to:** [Insert Contact Email]
- **Subject line:** “DDA Discover Buchanan Proposal – [Firm Name]”

Please submit your sealed bid by to:

Kalla Langston-Weiss, City Clerk
302 North Red Bud Trail
Buchanan, MI 49107

**For any questions regarding the project,
please contact:**

Tony McGhee, City Manager
tmcghee@cityofbuchanan

PLEASE INCLUDE AS THE LAST PAGE OF PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

PROPOSAL SUBMITTED BY: (PLEASE PRINT)

Company Name

Phone Number

Address

City, State Zip code

Contact Person/Person Submitting Proposal

Email

Signature of Person Submitting Proposal

Date