



NOTICE

Knoxville-Knox County Planning is soliciting proposals from qualified firms for a media plan for the City of Knoxville's Comprehensive Plan process called "What's Next Knoxville?"

Proposals are due August 25th by 4:00 pm ET. More detailed instructions are outlined in the scope of work section of this document.

Knoxville-Knox County Planning retains the right to reject any and all proposals and may re-advertise, waive formalities in the request for proposals, or abandon the project.

Contact Information

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Knoxville-Knox County Planning

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OVERVIEW

Knoxville-Knox County Planning (Planning) invites firms (Consultant) to submit proposals for a media plan that will support the public engagement process of "What's Next Knoxville?" – the process of creating the City of Knoxville, Tennessee's (City) new comprehensive plan. Planning serves as the [agency](#) responsible for long-range planning and administration of subdivision and zoning regulations for the City of Knoxville and the unincorporated areas of Knox County.

BACKGROUND

The City of Knoxville and Planning are embarking on a collaborative process to update the community's Comprehensive Plan. The process began this spring with listening sessions in all City districts followed by a robust outreach campaign in which staff participated in 110 events, meetings, presentations, and office hours at the headquarters located at 30 Market Square to encourage participation and gather feedback in the process.

The round 1 engagement summary and survey results are available for review and that feedback will be used to inform the draft vision statement and goals for the Comprehensive Plan. These will be presented, along with land use scenarios, during the next round of public engagement this fall.

Project Purpose

A targeted promotional plan that increases direct participation in activities associated with the What's Next Knoxville? campaign. The promotional plan will target City of Knoxville residents and emphasize impactful approaches to reach a broad cross-section of residents, including traditionally underrepresented populations, with effective, measurable participation.

Call to Action Priorities and Timeline

- 1) Online survey and interactive feedback activities – September 21 – November 22, 2026
- 2) Attendance at six City Council District meetings – events are the weeks of September 21 and 28, 2026
- 3) Visiting a booth at events, meetings, etc. – October 1 – November 22, 2026

Budget

The total budget for all planning, creative development, media placement, and reporting shall not exceed **\$24,999**. Proposals should clearly itemize labor, media placement, creative production and reporting costs.

Promotional Plan

Production

Production should be built off the existing What's Next Knoxville? brand materials, look and feel and website already developed and in use for the initiative. Assets will be provided.

Target Audiences

Proposals should identify priority audiences across the city including underserved populations, key demographics to target, recommend key messages, media placement mix, direct messaging (SMS) and calls to action by demographic. A recommended media budget mix should be included.

Deliverables

- Create and execute a plan for placement, direct messaging based on target audiences
 - Approximately three-month placement and run schedule
 - Digital assets (and any others recommended as a part of the media mix)
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Performance Tracking and Optimization

Proposals should detail how plan effectiveness will be monitored, tactics adjusted and examples of detailed reporting. Performance measures should be robust with details on impressions/views, CTR, conversions by source and demographic, etc. at a minimum. Detailed reporting is required for all placements.

Deliverables

- Weekly progress reports
- Mid-campaign adjustment recommendations
- Final outreach performance report

Proposal Submission Must Include

- Identify project lead and contact information
- Project team members, role and contact information
- Due to the timeline, a detailed plan based on the Target Audience section of this Scope of Work
- Detailed budget breakdown
- Proposal page limit – ten pages

Schedule

- RFP Released 8/12/26
- Questions received by 8/18/26
- Responses to Questions by 8/19/26
- RFP Closes 8/25/26
- Selection by 8/27/26
- Work to commence no later than September 1, 2026

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Evaluation of each firm will be based on the following criteria:

Project Approach (30 Points)

- Consultant's overall approach to the project
- Scope of services including a timeline depicting the expected duration of the process
- Detailed description of key deliverables

Project Team Qualifications (20 Points)

- Description of firm and expertise as it relates to the project scope
- List of project staff, their responsibilities, and resumes highlighting relevant experience

Experience (20 Points)

- List of at least four (4) projects of similar size and scope
- Include a minimum of three (3) references for projects of similar size and scope

Project Management (15 Points)

- Project schedule and anticipated timeline
- Team's approach to developing and managing the project schedule
- Proposed project manager's experience leading projects of similar scope

Local Knowledge (15 Points)

- Demonstrated understanding of the City of Knoxville
- Awareness of opportunities and constraints of this process
- Firm's demonstrated understanding of local conditions and project needs

Submission Requirements

Please see the list of items the submission must include on page three of this document.

Only submittals conforming with the provisions set forth in this RFP will pass the initial screening. Any submittal failing to satisfy the minimum requirements set forth in this RFP may be rejected without consideration. The review committee may request in-person interviews and additional information.

Submission Instructions

- Proposal should be submitted digitally in PDF format.
- Submittals must be delivered to the following addressee no later than 4:00 p.m. ET on Wednesday, August 25, 2026.

Knoxville-Knox County Planning
ATTN: Becca James
400 Main Street, Suite 403
Knoxville, TN 37902
Becca.james@knoxplanning.org

Late submittals will not be accepted.

Rejection Rights and Cost of Proposal Preparation

A selected consulting firm shall provide professional services in full accordance with federal, state, and local regulations, policies, and/or standards specific to the project's funding source, where applicable. Knoxville-Knox County Planning reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted, to advertise for new proposals, or to accept any submitted proposal deemed to be in the best interest of Planning. Further, all costs incurred by consulting teams in the preparation and submittal of proposals, including interview travel (if held), are not reimbursable by Planning. Additionally, any costs incurred by a selected consultant prior to a notice to proceed are not reimbursable by Planning.

Compliance with Laws

The consulting firm(s) shall conduct all operations under contract in compliance with all applicable laws. The consulting firm(s) shall comply with all state and federal regulations pertaining to minimum wage and fair labor standards. The consulting firm(s) shall not discriminate in hiring or any other practice with respect to gender, race, age, creed, religion, or nationality. Knoxville-Knox County Planning and its officers, officials, agents, and employees shall be indemnified and held harmless for any failure by the consulting firm(s) to comply with any applicable laws, rules, and/or regulations.

Addenda and Supplements to RFP

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP or if additional information is necessary to enable the respondent to make adequate interpretation of the provisions of this RFP, a supplement to the RFP will be posted on the Planning website.

Proposals to be in Effect

Each proposal shall state it is valid for a period of not less than ninety (90) days from the date of receipt. All proposals shall become the property of Knoxville-Knox County Planning and will not be returned.

Inquiries

Questions about our project or the RFP process are to be submitted in writing (email) prior to August 18, 2026, and answers may be posted to Planning's website. Origin of the questions will not be identified. Please direct questions via email to Becca James at becca.james@knoxplanning.org.