

Request for Proposal For Cable Consultant City of Arlington

A non-exclusive television cable franchise agreement between the City of Arlington and Comcast has recently expired. The City would like to begin renewing this franchise. To facilitate the renewal process, the City is seeking the guidance and assistance of a Consultant experienced in the field of cable communications and franchise renewals.

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

The Consultant will be expected to:

1. Conduct a technical review of the existing system to ascertain the requirements to be met in order to bring the system up to a standard compatible with cable systems in similar-sized cities, the requirements needed to ensure the system in good, current standing, and recommend the technical requirements City government would need to request or purchase to make use of an interactive cable communications system.
2. Provide the City with expertise during franchise renewal negotiations and provide assistance with financial analysis of the information provided by the cable company and/or legal review or assistance in re-writing the master cable/telecommunications ordinance and new franchise ordinance to ensure they are complete and represent the best interests of the City. The City Attorney will provide the bulk of the legal review; initial drafting of the franchise ordinance and revisions to the master ordinance would be done by the consultant.

PROPOSAL FORMAT

Prospective Consultants shall clearly address all of the information requested herein. Since the written proposal will weigh heavily in the evaluation process, information submitted should be complete and make a convincing case that the consultant can perform high quality work within schedule and budget constraints as demonstrated by previous work history. Prospective Consultants are asked to:

1. Describe in depth the proposed strategy to be used in meeting the requirements of this RFP, including preparation of a work plan that outlines the work to be performed, how it will be carried out, who will be responsible for managing the work flow, and a schedule that presents a proposed timeline for completing the work.
2. Describe all resources the City will be asked to provide in order to complete this project. City departments and staff will make every effort to provide access to readily accessible information.

3. Provide the professional resumes of all individuals who will be assigned to this project. The proposal should indicate the person who will serve Consultant project manager.
4. Describe where the proposed work will be performed, including address and phone number.
5. Provide a description of prior work experiences that were similar to the proposal described in this RFP.
6. Submit a specific account of the costs that will be incurred during the performance of each phase of the contract. Costs for each phase of the project should be explained.

SCOPE OF WORK

Cable television has been available in the Arlington area since 1960. The City and its citizens are participants in the evolution of cable and telecommunications technologies and wish to ensure that the cable system is ready for the future. The City would like to ensure during the franchise negotiations process that all future needs of the City are considered and the model cable franchise ordinance is structured in a way that assures that a high-quality, innovative and versatile cable system is constructed and kept current during the next franchise period.

This project will be divided into two phases:

Phase I:

1. Review of current and future cable operations and access provisions. The Consultant shall assess the current cable operations in the City and recommend future cable operation requirements in the City to include:
 - a. An assessment of current subscriber services
 - b. Company responsiveness to consumer-related information such as installation, service repair, rates and subscriber-requested programming.
 - c. Potential future uses of a cable communications system including the entire spectrum of feasible communications services such as video, data and voice.
2. Technical Review. The consultant shall review the present cable system to ascertain the requirements necessary to elevate the existing system to a standard consistent and compatible with the latest developments in cable technology, including:
 - a. Consideration of requirements necessary to ensure the system undergoes periodic technical reviews and upgrades
 - b. Consideration of technical requirements City government would have to require upon franchising, purchase or meet by some other means, to utilize an interactive cable communications system.

- c. Recommendations for the City to require and use a system offering two-way communication, pay-per-view and system interconnection including the cost of such services and when the City should expect those services to come on line or expand.
3. Public, Education and Government (PEG) Access Assessment. The Consultant shall assess the needs and interests of the City PEG programming, services and facilities.

Phase II: Negotiations and Financial and Legal Analysis. The Consultant shall assist the City during franchise renewal negotiations and shall take the lead in ordinance drafting. It shall also include provisions for financial and legal analysis of the new model cable franchise ordinance, taking into consideration that the majority of legal review will be performed by the City Attorney.

PRELIMINARY REPORTS

The Consultant shall submit to the City a preliminary report summarizing the results of each phase of the project. The preliminary report for Phase I shall be delivered to the City within 90 days of the effective date of the contract. Delivery dates for preliminary reports regarding Phase II will be based upon work and time schedules established in Phase I.

Preliminary reports shall first be submitted to the City in draft form. Follow-up comments and questions from the City shall be submitted to the Consultant within 10 working days of receiving the draft report. The Consultant shall address those comments and questions within five days of receiving the comments.

FINAL REPORT

The Consultant shall provide the City with final reports, incorporating and responding to submitted questions or recommendations from the City within 15 days of submitting the preliminary report. The City reserves the right to change the direction of the scope of work.

As part of this contract, the Consultant shall assist in presentations to the Mayor and City Council to explain the final report and to assist the City in incorporating the report recommendations into the model franchise ordinance agreements.

PAYMENT

The Consultant should submit a specific outline of the costs that will be incurred during the performance of each phase, including Consultant's fees, subcontractor fees and all other project costs and charges.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

Interested firms and individuals may obtain further information necessary to understand the required documentation by contacting Kristin Banfield, Assistant City Administrator, by phone at 360-403-3441 or e-mail to kbanfield@ci.arlington.wa.us.

SUBMITTAL INFORMATION

RFP's are due at the City of Arlington (addresses below) no later than 5:00 p.m. on June 17, 2005.

Kristin Banfield, Assistant City Administrator
City of Arlington
238 N. Olympic
Arlington, Wa 98223