



Wednesday, December 23, 2009
The Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition
Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area
#1 Old State Capitol Plaza
Springfield, IL 62701
(217) 782-6817

To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you for your many questions regarding the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area, Management Plan RFP. Please find the attached PDF listing, with answers to all relevant questions submitted. The Looking for Lincoln (LFL) Heritage Coalition has attempted to answer these questions to the best of our ability.

The formatting for the questions and answers is as follows:

- 1) The questions were copied and pasted from the submitted queries, with the repeated/duplicate questions removed.
- 2) The relevant page numbers were cited before each question, so the original passage in the RFP may be located with ease.
- 3) The questions were answered as directly and succinctly as possible by the LFL.
- 4) This email was generated and sent to all parties expressing interest in the RFP, in a blind copy format.

We sincerely hope this information is helpful to each of you as you begin to formulate your proposals, due by close of business, February 1, 2010, at 5PM CST.

Sincerely,

Hal Smith
Executive Director
Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition
Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area

Enclosures: (1)



List of Compiled Questions from Bidding Agents or Agencies

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Page 2

Introduction

“For the purposes of this request for proposal, an environmental assessment is considered appropriate.”

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Question:

If an Environmental Impact Statement is determined to be needed instead of an Environmental Assessment, will contract be amended to reflect the additional services and associated costs?

Answer:

At this time, only an environmental assessment is required. However, if an impact statement is later required by the NPS, the contract may be amended to reflect as such.

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Page 2

Introduction

“Each applicant will present evaluations they conducted on their last three contracts as well as...”

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Question:

Please explain what is meant by “evaluations.”

Answer:

A presentation whereby the bidder offers detailed examples of their past contracts in a critically analyzed way.

Question:

In addition to contract work, is practical experience in National Heritage Area management acceptable for presentation purposes?

Answer:

It is indeed encouraged.

Question:

In the presentation of evaluation of three contracts, may one example be given from each team member?

Answer:

This may be divided amongst the bidder’s team members entirely at their discretion.



Question:

Is there a comprehensive archive available that documents the planning steps that have taken place so far?

Answer:

There is not currently a comprehensive archive, though some of the steps have been recorded/assembled.

Question:

What kinds of civic engagement have been completed, and how are the methods documented? How has public input been recorded?

Answer:

For more than a decade, the LFL has operated as a state heritage tourism project and, as a result, the LFL has had on-going interactions with various communities and sites, however, the civic engagement, as outlined, in the RFP has not taken place.



Page 2

“The contractor shall . . . with the inclusion of hiring a part-time subcontractor local to the LFL and the assemblage of primary documents . . .”



Question:

Does the contractor select this sub-contractor? If sub-contractor is selected by the LFL, how do we factor in their scope of work, time and cost?

Answer:

Yes. The bidder may offer as many candidates as it determines and the LFL will offer additional names to the list. The final determination will be made by the LFL following a joint discussion between the LFL and the contractor.

Question:

Is the sub-contractor to do the assemblage?

Answer:

The contractor is responsible for the final assembled product, following all revisions/addenda and approval by the LFL.



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Page 2

Regarding the evaluations of the last three contracts:
“Each applicant will present evaluations they conducted on their last three contracts . . .”
.....

Question:
Are these contracts to be with the NPS specifically or will other contracts be considered?

Answer:
Others may be considered.

Question:
Do you have any criteria as to the extent of such an evaluation?

Answer:
The evaluation committee will establish a criterion that takes into consideration the quality of the work, the efficiency of the coordinated effort, the satisfaction by previous contracting bodies, as well as other elements. Critical analysis is essential.

Question:
Do you have a format or preferred outline of an evaluation?

Answer:
No, but it is encouraged that the bidder should offer a quality presentation.

Question:
Would you please share any additional information you have relevant to your expectations regarding the content of the evaluations?

Answer:
We are intentionally leaving this open to interpretation, but recommend that bidder include best examples of previous work.



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Page 5

**National Heritage Area Establishment and Background
(Interpretive Programming)**

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Question:

Who generates this programming? Do the sites generate the programming? Do they present programming developed by LFL?

Answer:

Currently the programming is developed by each individual site and community with assistance proffered by the LFL as needed. For event specific programming, the LFL has generated programs.

Question:

The RFP mentions that LFL “creates new links between sites and programs.” Can you share some examples of these linkages?

Answer:

Currently, the majority of these linkages are promotion-based. However, we also have sponsored events and programs at specific sites; educational, historical, and entertainment-oriented.

Question:

Typically a management plan would not include interpretive or educational programming. Do you hope that the consultant for the management plan will assist in developing educational programs and/or interpretive programming? If so, can you please tell us more about what you envision?

Answer:

We fully expect that the contractor will facilitate in the development of strategies and ideas to better interpret and educate. We are leaving this open for more creative approaches.



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Page 5

**National Heritage Area Establishment and Background
(The Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition)**

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Question:

What is the current organizational structure of the coalition?

Answer:

There are 16 board members representing a wide array of sites and communities. It is a loose arrangement of agreed upon communities and sites within Central Illinois, bound by the purpose of preserving, promoting, developing, and interpreting the Lincoln Legacy.

Question:

Are there professional staff in addition to the Executive Director?

Answer:

Yes, a Project Director and the Project Coordinator.

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**National Heritage Area Establishment and Background
(Communities and Sites)**

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Question:

The number of communities and sites will be a significant driver for any consultant's work and budget. How many sites currently participate in the LFL consortium?

Answer:

The specific Site information and partner communities are available on the LFL website at www.lookingforlincoln.com

Question:

The feasibility study projects continued growth for LFL and its efforts. What are the organization's goals for expanding offerings and adding new communities and sites?

Answer:

We wish to expand our partnerships and offerings in a codified way. We look to be an organic organization and experience growth and development in these two areas, amongst others.



Question:

May we review a copy of the Interpretive Standards Manual and Implementation Plan?

Answer:

The LFL possesses no such manual.

Question:

We would like to learn more about the criteria a community and/or site must meet to join LFL, and how long that process typically takes.

Answer:

There is no established time-frame; currently our partner communities are encouraged to consider the following before an evaluation is made:

- *The stories and history that make your site unique.*
- *The resources that you currently have to interpret those stories.*
- *Potential for creating an interpreted experience where none exists.*
- *The existing community support for this project.*
- *The ancillary amenities that your community can offer visitors*
- *The benefits that could accrue by your participation in this program.*



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Feasibility Study



Question:

Did a consultant complete the feasibility study? If so, who was the consultant?

Answer:

Our Feasibility Study was completed by Dr. Bryon C. Andreasen, a research historian at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and was with the IHPA at the time of the development of the study.

Question:

Is the list of partners in the Feasibility Study complete, or do other partners need to be identified? Do partners sign a formal agreement to support/participate in the region?

Answer:

The list of partners in the Feasibility Study should not be considered exhaustive and additional partners should be identified. As well, some type of formalized agreement should be arranged.



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Planning, Purpose, and Scope
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Question:

Other than the feasibility study are there any existing planning documents that will inform the development of the management plan?

Answer:

There are a number of planning documents available from the NPS. In addition, our complete records will be made available.

Question:

For example, do key attractions within the NHA have interpretive and/or management plans that could inform the development of an overarching framework for the NHA?

Answer:

Yes, one example would be the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

Question:

Normally a management plan outlines the agreements that need to be secured. Once planning is complete, work can begin to develop those agreements. However, this RFP requests that the planning process establish a network of resources and establish partnerships between the Park Service and private entities. This suggests that planning and implementation are happening simultaneously. Would you accept a proposal which separated the planning from the agreements more specifically?

Answer:

It is acceptable that this proposition be made in the bid; however, the management plan should include the cooperative agreements with identified partners.



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Page 6

Planning Purpose and Scope

“The plan should strengthen the value of units of the NPS with communities, governments and organizations...”

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Question:

Does the Lincoln Heritage Coalition have regularly scheduled meetings?

Answer:

Yes. Quarterly meetings are the standard for the Board, but as the process becomes more involved, additional meetings or focus committee meetings may be scheduled.

Question:

Can these meetings be used as one venue for establishing the network and partnerships?

Answer:

Yes, among other venues.

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Planning Purpose and Scope

“The contractor would work closely with the LFL and the NPS to ensure these requirements are met.”

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Question:

What is the decision-making/approval hierarchy for the plan’s development?

Answer:

The primary hierarchy is the LFL Board, with recommendations and oversight by a duly-appointed NPS liaison, in order better facilitate meeting federal requirements.



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National Heritage Area

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Question:

What is the hierarchy between the LFL as coordinating agency, and the National Park Service as the regulator?

Answer:

According to the National Park Service: "The National Park Service (NPS) provides technical, planning and limited financial assistance to National Heritage Areas. The NPS is a partner and advisor, leaving decision-making authority in the hands of local people and organizations."

Question:

While we understand the Secretary of the Interior will grant final approval of the management plan, who on the client team has final approval of work products and deliverables, and approves the plan for submission to the Secretary?

Answer:

The LFL Board and their duly appointed Executive Director, Hal Smith.

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National Heritage Area

"The plan must also contain adequate assurance from the appropriate state and local officials whose support is needed. That assurance includes commitment from each agency that the effective implementation of state and local aspects of management plan will be accomplished."

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Question:

Who will constitute the "appropriate" state and local officials? What state agencies are included?

Answer:

This is an open-ended question dependent entirely upon the circumstances. For example, while a state historic site might be used in one case, thus involving the IHPA; in another case, educational programs might be utilized, thus requiring the involvement of education officials. At the community level, certainly such agencies as the local CVB or Chamber of Commerce might be recommended. The short answer is that the more assurances that are received, the better developed the plan becomes.



Question:
What constitutes “adequate assurances”?

Answer:
Some type of formal arrangement agreed to by both parties (e.g. a formal letter, legal document, etc.). For example, the letters contained in the Feasibility Study with some type of endorsement –as contained—with some type of obligational pledge of support.

Question:
Given the large scale of this project, it will take a great deal of time simply to communicate with all the interested parties, including federal, tribal, state, and local officials. The consolidation of community support is a long-term process. The proposed work schedule allows one year from the project inception to production of a draft report. Do you expect that such negotiations can be successfully concluded in this brief time period?

Answer:
While there seems rather limited in time-frame, securing partnership assurances should be on-going throughout the process.

Question:
What role would the LFL play in negotiating and securing these assurances?

Answer:
The Executive Director will be available for assistance in both negotiation and in securing these assurances.



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Management Plan Contents

“4) Include an inventory ...”



Question:
Many sites and communities are described in the feasibility study. Is there an existing computerized database inventory based on the study that can be updated or enhanced or will a new inventory need to be created?

Answer:
It is currently in development by the LFL staff and can be expanded by the same, dependent upon the needs of the contractor and will be made available for same.



Question:

If an inventory exists, what format is it in?

Answer:

Currently it is in development and exists both in Word Document and spreadsheet format. Each is organized according to county and agency in both a physical filing system and electronically.

Question:

Could you please summarize the status of existing available historic resource inventories and GIS mapping within the boundaries of the heritage area?

Answer:

As is mentioned in the above, most of our inventories are currently being developed and we do not currently have a GIS map developed.

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Management Plan Contents

“8) Include a business plan...”

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Question:

At present, funding for newly designated National Heritage Areas has not been determined. What kind of annual operating budget (range) would the LHC anticipate for the coordinating entity?

Answer:

Unknown at this time.

Question:

If this is not known, how will the LHC determine the projected budget and at what time in the management plan process would this information be available to the consultants for the purposes of developing the business plan?

Answer:

It will become available to the contractor within 10 business days of our receiving. Our past financial records will be available for assistance in the completion of the aforementioned task, as well. Both percentage-based and potential budgetary issues/outcomes should be addressed by the requested business plan.

While our current budget will be available to facilitate in the development of a business plan based on current numbers; adjustments should be offered in the aforementioned plan based on potential budgetary increases.



Local Area Subcontractor
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Question:

Does LFL view this position as primarily administrative? (Scheduling meetings, making contacts to invite stakeholders to meetings, distributing project updates, maintaining stakeholder database, etc.)

Answer:

This position is partially administrative and would also provide some services as liaison with local communities, sites, and stakeholders.

Question:

How many hours per week constitutes part-time?

Answer:

20 to 30 hours average per week.

Question:

Where would the staff person be housed?

Answer:

Space would be provided within the LFL offices.

Question:

Should office overhead and expenses be included in the budget?

Answer:

Yes. While office space will be provided by the LFL, individual expenses (e.g. laptop, mobile phone, mileage, etc.) should be included in the budget.

Question:

What do you mean by “local to the LFL”?

Answer:

As stipulated in the RFP it is “defined as a qualified person with residence within the coverage area, to be approved by the LFL....”



Question:

Must this subcontractor be based in Springfield, where the LFL is headquartered, or is any location satisfactory as long as it falls within the forty-two county National Heritage Area?

Answer:

While it is not essential that this individual be from Springfield, it is essential that they are from the coverage area. Additionally, their workspace will be offered at the LFL office, where the subcontractor will perform regular duties, as needed.

Question:

Can we budget for a local consultant and then jointly interview people for the position with your organization?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

My understanding from the RFP is this position will be a contracted employee of the consultant team? Is that correct?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

Will the consultant be the direct supervisor, or will you have some supervisory role?

Answer:

The LFL will have a supervisory/advisory role, but the subcontractor is still bound to the contractor and they are the direct supervisor.

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**Contractor Information
General Planning Project Tasks**

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Question:

What level of staff support can be provided by LFL? Scheduling and coordinating of public meetings? Scheduling and coordinating group-specific meetings i.e. stakeholders, local officials, attraction operators or local tourism agencies? Coordinating consultant fieldwork, site visits and tours?

Answer:

Some staff support will be available, but the majority of the aforementioned tasks should be completed by the local area subcontractor.



Question:

Will interpretive specialists and subject matter experts be made available to the planning team by Looking for Lincoln, or should they be included as part of the bidders' teams?

Answer:

An interpretive specialist is strongly encouraged and should be included in the bid. Subject matter experts will be made available to the planning team.

Question:

Has an email contact list been established that is updated regularly, and used to communicate with members of the public, or would creating such a contact list be a part of the contract responsibilities? Is there a list of stakeholders, or would the contractor have to develop it?

Answer:

The current contact list held by the LFL is extensive, but not exhaustive and should be expanded. While the LFL has a partner relationship with a number of counties, communities, and sites; the LFL is looking to develop more formalized relationships with the same and the contractor would be expected to develop this.

Question:

To what purposes will this list be used?

Answer:

The purpose is for updates and communications regarding the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area and the Plan process.

Question:

Do you anticipate distributing items to the members of this list during the project, or only after?

Answer:

The LFL would like to keep the members updated and informed throughout.

Question:

Who is responsible for distribution of materials to the mailing list, the client or the consultant?

Answer:

The assembling of approved materials is the responsibility of the contractor, however, the LFL staff may assist with the disbursements of said materials.



Question:

Should the bidder's budget include money for publicizing the civic engagement aspects of the project, or will Looking for Lincoln take care of that?

Answer:

The LFL will aggressively pursue the use of free media (e.g. interviews, press releases, etc.), but advertising costs incurred by the contractor should be included.

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Contractor Products/Deliverables

"The contractor will work closely with the LFL".

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Question:

Will there be a designated liaison at LFL?

Answer:

The Executive Director will operate in this capacity, as will the local area subcontractor.

Question:

Will it likely be the same person for the duration of the project?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

Will there be more than one designated contact person?

Answer:

While the Executive Director will be the designated authority for the duration of the contract, his staff will be available to field additional inquiries.

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Foundation Statement (vision, mission, purpose, national significance, interpretive themes....)

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Question:

Are the themes described in the feasibility study agreed upon by all stakeholders and expected to be included in the management plan?

Answer:

Yes, with agreed upon revisions/updates.



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Page 11

Develop the Management Plan
“Comprehensive goals, strategies, and actions”

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Question:
Have demographic studies, market research, and strategies for reaching new audiences been completed, or will that be part of the planning process? Are data available for existing audiences?

Answer:
It will be part of the planning process. Data in this regard has not yet been compiled.

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Page 11

Develop the Management Plan
“Partner roles and commitments”

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Question:
Are the development of criteria for partner readiness (for visitation) a part of the scope of work?

Answer:
Currently we have assessment materials. They should be revisited, analyzed, and potentially updated as needed.

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Page 11

Business Plan and Economic Development Regional Plan
“What are the most important actions the LFL can take to encourage economic development in the national heritage area?”

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Question:
Is the economic development component of the plan intended to encompass tourism marketing strategies and identification of partners for tourism promotion?

Answer:
Yes.



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Develop the Management Plan

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Question:

You indicate that an Interpretation and Education Plan should be included in the management plan. Has LFL already begun developing such a plan?

Answer:

No.

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Page 11

Develop the Environmental Document

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Question:

Are local tribes involved in the project? If so, what does their involvement consist of?

Answer:

There are no federally recognized tribes in Illinois.

Question:

Is there a need for archaeological surveys in the study?

Answer:

No.

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Page 12

Contractor Project Management and Communication Procedures

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Question:

Is there a complete list of NHA contacts for attractions and tourism agencies? Desired information would include name, address, telephone number and email address.

Answer:

Yes. The information is available.



Question:

Is there an existing advisory committee/task force for the management plan? If so, who is on this committee/task force?

Answer:

No, though in some capacity, the LFL Board will assist in this regard a task force/ advisory committee has not yet been established.

Question:

How often do you anticipate the consulting team meeting with the advisory committee/task force?

Answer:

As needed.

Question:

What staff members will be working on the management plan and what will their roles and responsibilities be in the process? Who is the client manager for this project?

Answer:

The LFL staff, under the Executive Director, Hal Smith, will assist as needed. The primary authority in the development of this plan will be the Executive Director. The LFL staff may assist as needed.

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Contractor Roles and Responsibilities

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Question:

Should there be an IT consultant on the team who will administer and regularly update the Heritage Area's website, including core language and interface?

Answer:

No. The LFL staff and a current contract-holder shall be responsible for the uploading of approved supplied materials and suggested alterations to existing site.



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Contractor Roles and Responsibilities
“...production review and approval of the management plan/environmental document.”
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Question:
What is the desired final format for the plan?

Answer:
Printed and Electronic.

Question:
Are printed copies needed? If so, how many?

Answer:
10 bound copies.

Question:
Is an Executive Summary required?

Answer:
Yes, in both electronic and printed form.

Question:
If so, will this be part of the final management plan or a separate document?

Answer:
All of the portions of this document will be separate chapters of a single document.

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Page 12

Information Supplied to Contractor
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Question:
Please describe the available inventory data for the existing attractions. Is there complete information on size and scale of attraction, number of visitors, admissions fees, operating season?

Answer:
Information is currently being compiled by LFL staff and will be available to contractor.



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Page 13

Contract Evaluation Process and Criteria

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Question:

Do you have an evaluation rubric/framework for proposals? Is this something you can provide to bidders?

Answer:

While the LFL possesses a rubric, it will not be supplying this information to the bidders in the sincere hope that this will not limit their creativity, as there always exists both avenues not yet considered and creative processes that were not directly underscored.

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Contractor Evaluation Process and Criteria

“...present evaluations they conducted on their last three contracts...”

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Question:

Can you please clarify what you mean by “evaluation”? Would this be an in-house evaluation of our work, or a formal evaluation we produced for our client as part of our work scope?

Answer:

A contractor evaluation would be a critical analysis of past performance. This evaluation can take a variety of formats and the contractor’s presentation will be evaluated by our committee.

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Page 13

Contract Planning Process Schedule and Budget

“The contractor shall develop a yearly schedule for completing the plan by June 1, 2012.”

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Question:

The contractor can control the process and schedule up to the submittal of the draft plan to the NPS region and the state for review and revision. At that point, what assurances are there that the government agencies will review the document in sufficient time to meet the balance of the schedule?

Answer:

While we are a non-profit entity with close ties to state and federal agencies and foresee no difficulties in the cooperative efforts with said agencies, we remain cognizant of the fact that situations may arise though no fault of the contractor



and are amenable to discussing adjustments with the referenced time-frame as needed.

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Page 13

**Contract Planning Process and Budget
“...supply a cost proposal...”**

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Question:

National Heritage Area management plan development costs vary widely across the country. Can LFL provide an expected budget range for this plan?

Answer:

The LFL has chosen to engage in a blind bidding process. While we recognize the difficulty this creates for the bidders, it was advised that contractors were able to conduct independent research outside of our recommendations or advisement. It is our sincere hope that contractors will take into direct consideration both the quality of the end product and the efficiency of cost.

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Draft Management Plan/Environmental Document Schedule

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Question:

Several meetings both with partners, stakeholders, government entities, and the public are required as part of the process for developing the Management Plan and completing environmental document. With 42 counties within the Abraham Lincoln NHA, the public involvement process could be a significant undertaking. Is there an assumption or understanding of how many public meetings within the 42 counties will be required?

Answer:

It is assumed that there will be a total of 3 meetings in 6 locations, though this may be altered, depending upon agreed upon needs. For now, it would be safe to assume somewhere in the range of 15-20 meetings.

Question:

Is there also an understanding of how many meetings will be required with the lead agency, and the partners, stakeholders, and government entities?

Answer:

The LFL would do its best to coordinate these meetings to coincide with the scheduled larger meetings taking place, so as to ease the process. As it stands, we are unable to commit to an exact number of individual meetings, though we have afforded this through the local area subcontractor and are able to conference via phone.



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Project Orientation

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Question:

Is there an opportunity to meet the Heritage Coalition in a pre-bid?

Answer:

Not at this time. The LFL is engaged in a closed-bidding process.

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Draft Management Plan/ Environmental Document

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Question:

The schedule on page 14 of the RFP indicates that “public scoping” begins in June 2010. Can you define what you mean by “public scoping?”

Answer:

A public review of our process up to said date including questions/concerns from the communities.

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Legislation

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Question:

The management plan must be completed within three years of appropriation of federal funding. Have funds already been appropriated?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

If so, what was the date of appropriation?

Answer:

September 30, 2009



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Legislation

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Question:

The organization has been operating as a state heritage area for a number of years—how much do you envision the organizational structure will change as you transition from a state heritage area to a national heritage area? Are there other state heritage areas that have transitioned to a national heritage area that you regard as an effective model?

Answer:

In this regard, the evolution of an organic entity is a natural process and we will be receptive of suggested structural changes, though we currently have only a few models, as contained within the NPS National Heritage Areas, which are available for viewing on the NPS website.

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Appendix 2: Resume Format

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Question:

Other than the resume format, is there any particular format the proposal should take?

Answer:

No. We are leaving the format open.

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ADDITIONAL: Lincoln Expert

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Question:

Is a Lincoln expert or an historian needed on the consulting team to provide original research, check facts, or other?

Answer:

An historian is not necessary, though one may be included.



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ADDITIONAL: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum and the Lincoln Home
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Question:

What is the relationship between these entities and LFL? Do these entities develop programming which is used in the coalition communities?

Answer:

Yes. The ALPLM and the Lincoln Home have been two of our longest partnerships and we have engaged in a number of programs both with them and on their behalf.