

City of Isle of Palms, South Carolina

Requests for Proposals RFP 2026-02

Summary

The City of Isle of Palms is soliciting proposals from experienced branding consultants, design agencies, or marketing firms to create a comprehensive brand strategy that markets the City as a family friendly, beach vacation destination.

The brand will be in alignment with the City's [Strategic](#) and [Comprehensive](#) Plans; represent the City's unique strengths and assets; be transferable across City departments and operations; and be effective in multiple media applications.

Input from key City staff members and City Council must be included in the development process to ensure that the design reflects the vision of City Council and the community as a whole.

The Consultant selected will be expected to provide multiple branding concepts and be prepared for revisions of the chosen brand concept. The brand identity will need to be effective in representing the Isle of Palms in any context, enhancing the perception of the Isle of Palms, and ultimately marketing The City as a family vacation destination.

Upon project completion, the Consultant is expected to provide all materials available in editable files for use in websites, publications, etc. Any logos and materials will be owned by the City of Isle of Palms and its partners and may only be used for the purposes defined in the brand standards.

Background

The Isle of Palms is primarily a residential community with world-class resort amenities and a relatively large commercial base when compared to most other barrier island communities in the area. Of the approximately 2,880 acres on the island, approximately 40.6 acres or 1.4 percent of the island is zoned commercial, excluding resort amenities within the gated section of Wild Dunes. Only a small portion of the commercially zoned land remains undeveloped.

The island's ocean beach, tidal marshland, and marinas constitute the most important economic assets. They are the main reason residents and tourists alike are drawn to the area. The desirability of living near these natural resources has created relatively high property values, which in turn raises the tax base. These same resources attract tourists, which results in accommodations tax revenue. This revenue is essential in the support of services and infrastructure.

The gated community of Wild Dunes includes the major resort, conference, golf and tennis facilities, as well as single-family and multi-family dwelling units. Destination Wild Dunes Incorporated (DWD) owns and operates these facilities and also manages rental properties within Wild Dunes.

Short-term rental of units in season is reaching capacity while unoccupied units remain during the off season.

Project Description

Branding is more than just the logo; it touches every aspect of the City's visual representation and the ways in which the City describes itself as a government (exhibit 1), and markets itself as an island destination (exhibit 2). Inconsistent use of the existing logo, including misuse of design elements such as color palette, not only weaken the City's brand identity, but it can also create doubt around official documents and City representatives. Presently, there are numerous preexisting graphic and textual representations of the City of Isle of Palms in official use that incorporate inconsistent design elements.

The project will include visual elements, messaging, and brand expression that reflects family vacation destination City of Isle of Palms and resonates with various stakeholders, including City Council and staff, residents and potential visitors. The Consultant selected will be expected to provide multiple branding concepts and be prepared for revisions of the chosen brand concept. The brand identity will need to be effective in representing City of Isle of Palms in any context.

Input from key City staff members, City Council, and the Charleston Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) must be included in the development process to ensure that the design reflects the vision of City Council and the community as a whole. The successful consultant will work closely with City of Isle of Palms staff and other identified stakeholders to create a new visual identity that captures the City's beach community character and has a family vacation appeal.



Exhibit 1



Exhibit 2

Scope of Work

The qualified Consultant will be responsible for the coordination of a fully completed brand and destination marketing. This work is to include project management, research, strategic planning, brand creative development, and an implementation plan:

A) Project Management

The Consultant will manage and lead all aspects of the project and coordination of any sub-consultants and all project activities, including meetings with staff, the CVB, and possible stakeholder groups. The Consultant will identify a project lead to act as the direct point of contact for City staff.

B) Brand, Vision, & Message Development

The firm selected will create a comprehensive brand strategy, including designing a seal and logo that effectively communicates the identity of the City, tagline, color palette, typography, iconography, and other essential branding elements that can be uniformly applied across departments and City communications including website, social media, official documents, etc.

The firm also will help the City with the creation of a vision statement aligning with the branding campaign. The design logo and messaging should allow for flexibility so that they may be used by all departments and for all programs and services.

C) Research

Research will be the basis for the development of a brand concept, creative elements and the overall brand initiative. The consultant will review strategies for the brand image and marketing campaign. In addition:

- a. Identifying the key elements of the City of Isle of Palms.
- b. Analysis of creative elements such as tag lines, slogans, mottos, and creative designs.
- c. Measures that will be used to determine if the branding effort is successful.
- d. Host at minimum one workshop with Isle of Palms City Council.

D) Deliverables

- a. An executive summary report with findings.
- b. All editable files and templates for common needs, such as signage, brochures, webpage layout, PowerPoint presentations, social media, report covers, letterheads, business cards, email signatures, etc.
- c. Create branding guidelines to ensure consistency in all communications and promotional efforts.

E) Strategic brand implementation and engagement

Guide the implementation of The City of Isle of Palm's new brand identity and identify ongoing strategies for communicating, maintaining, and enhancing the brand's value as a family friendly beach vacation destination over the first three years following introduction.

Identify both short- and long-term strategies and tactics for communicating the new brand, including a timeline, utilizing a variety of communication tools.

Provide guidance for the City of Isle of Palms team on how to implement and use the new brand.

Assist with creating a roll-out plan for the brand launch, including community events, digital campaigns, and other promotional activities.

F) Project Budget

The total budget for this project is \$50,000.

Deadline for Questions

2:00pm, Eastern Time, Wednesday, April 29, 2026.

Proposers should send questions regarding this Request for Proposals to Joshua Uys, Public Information Officer, in writing or email to juys@iop.net. Questions received before this deadline will be answered via addendum posted on the City's website at <http://www.iop.net/requests-for-bids-proposals>. Questions received after this deadline will not be answered

Submittal Instructions

Douglas Kerr
City Administrator
City of Isle of Palms
1207 Palm Boulevard
Post Office Box 508, Isle of Palms, South Carolina 29451

Deadline for Submissions

10:00am, Eastern Time Wednesday, May 6, 2026.

Proposals will be received at 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina 29451 in a sealed envelope. Sealed envelopes must be clearly marked "RFP 2026.02, City Branding" and include one (1) hard copy and one (1) electronic copy saved to a USB flash drive.

It will be the responsibility of the proposers to verify receipt by the City. Proposals may be delivered by hand or by mail, but no proposal shall be considered which is not actually received by the City at the place, date and time appointed by the City and the City shall not be responsible for any failure, misdirection, delay or error resulting from the selection by any proposer of any means of delivery.

All proposals submitted shall include a current e-mail address. Once selection is complete, Notice of Award shall be posted on the City's website. Notice of Award and notices of non-award shall be sent to all Proposers via e-mail. Proprietary and/or Confidential Information: Your proposal is a public document under the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), except as to information that may be treated as confidential as an exception to disclosure under the FOIA. If you cannot agree to this standard, please do not submit your proposal. All information that is to be treated as confidential and/or proprietary must be CLEARLY identified, and each page containing confidential and/or proprietary information, in whole or in part, must be stamped and/or denoted as CONFIDENTIAL, in bold, in a font of at least 12-point type, in the upper right-hand corner of the page. All information not so denoted and identified will be subject to disclosure by the City. Proposers acknowledge and agree that the City will not be liable for any costs, expenses, losses, damages (including damages for loss of anticipated profit) or liabilities incurred by the respondent or any member of the respondent's organization as a result of, or arising out of, submitting a proposal, negotiating changes, or due to the City's acceptance or non-acceptance of the proposal or the rejection of any and all proposals. Proposers are responsible for submission of accurate, adequate and clear descriptions of the information requests. Neither issuance of the RFP, preparation and submission of a response, nor the subsequent receipt and evaluation of any response by the City of Isle of Palms will commit the City to award a contract to any respondent even if all the requirements in the RFP have been met. Proposers must have or be able to procure an Isle of Palms Business License. Firms considering submission under this RFP will be expected to have read and be prepared to enter into the attached contract, which is a part of this RFP. The City of Isle of Palms reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals, or any parts thereof; to waive irregularities or informalities in any proposal received to allow the proposal to be considered; to negotiate terms and conditions with Proposers; and to select a Proposer or to cancel in whole or in part this RFP, if it is in the best interest of the City to do so. Those proposals determined not to be in compliance with provisions of this RFP and the applicable laws and or regulations will not be processed.

By signing its proposal, proposer certifies that it will comply with the applicable requirements of Title 8, Chapter 14 of the South Carolina Code of Laws and agrees to provide the City upon request any documentation required to establish either: (a) that Title 8, Chapter 14 is inapplicable both to Bidder and its subcontractors or sub-subcontractors; or (b) that proposer and its subcontractors or sub-subcontractors are in compliance with Title 8, Chapter 14. Pursuant to Section 8-14-60, "A person who knowingly makes or files any false, fictitious, or fraudulent document, statement, or report pursuant to this chapter is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be fined within the discretion of the court or imprisoned for not more than five years, or both." Proposer agrees to include in any contracts with its subcontractors language requiring its subcontractors to (a) comply with the applicable requirements of Title 8, Chapter 14 and (b) include in their contracts with sub-subcontractors, language.

Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Points
Company Qualifications/Experience	20
Project approach and proposed execution of the project and timeline	30
Clarity & Completeness of the proposal: Extent to which the instructions in the RFP were followed. Accuracy in reflection of the project's assumptions & requirements.	20
Total cost for branding designs, pallets, logos, research, and branding package/manual. Itemized cost and breakdown of services	20
Company references	10
TOTAL	100