

COAHOMA COUNTY TOURISM RFQ DESTINATION MARKETING AGENCY SERVICES

Tourism Industry Recovery, ARPA II



Proposals due by 5:00 p.m. CDT on December 12, 2024.

OBJECTIVE

This RFQ has been issued to seek qualified firms who have a deep understanding of the tourism industry and can demonstrate the necessary experience to provide destination and marketing strategy, with a focus on domestic and international leisure travel marketing. In addition to strategy, the agency will place and manage the destination's marketing and advertising.

Coahoma County Tourism Commission intends to contract with a qualified agency to support its continued recovery efforts, stemmed from the negative economic impacts of COVID-19. This contract will be funded through federal ARPA dollars for Mississippi Tourism Recovery, II.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Coahoma County Tourism Commission wishes to employ an outside agency to produce an overall destination and marketing strategy through December 31, 2026. As agency of record this would include destination marketing and messaging; design and creation of print and digital collateral; and integrated marketing activities, including digital marketing, social media strategies, traditional print, broadcast media and other relevant components. Further, agency should provide a destination strategic plan to guide growth for the next 3-5 years as well as a strategic marketing plan through December 31, 2026.

The agency should recommend an overall media strategy to clearly position Clarksdale and Coahoma County to visitors as an affordable and attractive open destination for those who enjoy traveling, specifically in its top markets.

The selected agency's responsibilities will include the below:

- Develop marketing strategy, tactics and performance metrics.
- Oversee the development of all marketing materials to execute the marketing strategy.
- Create a portfolio of new marketing assets, as needed.
- Create campaigns for niche visitor segments based on behavior and travel trends (the Blues, road trips, girlfriend getaways, etc.).
- Work with Coahoma County Tourism to develop new tourism product as determined.
- Destination Strategic Plan for 2025-2027.
- Strategic Marketing Plan for 2025-2026.

- Execute digital, print, broadcast, and social media marketing campaigns through location and behavioral targeting.
- Target potential visitors searching for Coahoma County Tourism or a competing market through programmatic buys.
- Create and place billboard ads in key visitor markets.

ABOUT COAHOMA COUNTY TOURISM

Coahoma County Tourism Commission is a research-driven destination management and marketing organization with annual collections of approximately \$450,000, derived from the collection of a 2% lodging tax on the gross proceeds from hotel overnight room rental and 1% food and beverage tax.

DESTINATION WEBSITE: www.visitclarksdale.com

DESTINATION BACKGROUND & STATE OF ECONOMY

Coahoma County is geographically located in the Mississippi Delta with a population of 14,000. Known as the Blues Capital of the World, The Crossroads in Clarksdale, MS, is the home of the Blues and many Blues music legends including Muddy Waters and Sam Cooke. Guests can immerse themselves in the Blues by exploring the Delta Blues Museum and enjoying live Blues music every night at local juke joints and clubs. Canoeing on the Mighty Mississippi, Tennessee Williams, African American and Civil Rights history, shopping and dining options and more than 12 annual events round out the experience.

The COVID-19 pandemic created significant disruption to businesses in the hospitality sector including hotels, restaurants, and small businesses. Additionally, many tourism attractions experienced sharp declines in revenue and visitation.

TARGET AUDIENCE DETAILS

As the Blues Capital and the home of the famed Crossroads, Clarksdale and Coahoma County attract music lovers and dedicated blues fans from all over the world. More than roughly 30% of all visitors are international. Domestic guests hail from primary feeder markets of Chicago, St. Louis, New Orleans, Nashville and Atlanta. Many Memphis guests also make Clarksdale and addition to their trip.

AVAILABLE FUNDS

BUDGET: Coahoma County Tourism will fund this contract at a **maximum of \$248,750**. This budget is based on creative production, strategy execution, media planning and placement (both online and offline), media placement fees, account management fees, and out-of-pocket expenses. Coahoma County Tourism reserves the right to adjust both the budget and related services.

TIMELINE

RFQ available to agencies.	November 25,2024
Proposals due by 5:00 p.m. CDT.	December 12,2024
Agency selected.	December 16,2024

EVALUATION & SELECTION

SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals meeting all requirements of the RFQ will be evaluated by a review committee and ranked based on the following selection criteria. Top agencies will be chosen for Step 2.

- Tourism Industry Experience [35%]
- Qualifications to execute the plan of work, including costs of services [40%]
- Agency’s understanding of destination management & strategy [15%]
- Familiarization with the Destination [10%]

DELIVERY REQUIREMENTS

Please submit your responses electronically to crossroads@visitclarksdale.com with the subject line: "RFQ: Destination Marketing Agency."

Submittals received in any manner not specifically set forth above shall not be accepted or considered. Submittals received after the deadline will not be considered.