

Request for Proposal for Branding & Design Services for a New Logo for the City of Akron

ORGANIZATION SUMMARY

The City of Akron, Ohio, is the fifth-largest city in the state and serves as the county seat of Summit County. Founded in 1825 along the Little Cuyahoga River, Akron is proudly celebrating its 200th anniversary this year. Historically known as the "Rubber Capital of the World," Akron's rise in the 20th century was driven by its leadership in tire and rubber manufacturing. Today, the city has evolved into a diverse economic hub, with key industries including manufacturing, education, healthcare, and biomedical research.

Akron is a vibrant, multicultural community with a thriving arts and entertainment scene. The city is home to a world-class museum, theaters, live music venues, and a minor league baseball team. Outdoor enthusiasts can explore Akron's extensive park system, which connects to the scenic Cuyahoga Valley National Park and the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail.

For more information, visit AkronOhio.gov.

GOAL

To create a logo for the City of Akron utilizing extensive public feedback with a final design that represents Akron's citizens and future as well as brand guidelines for logo use.

PURPOSE OF RFP

The Akron Bicentennial Commission is seeking a contractor (individual or firm) to develop a new logo for the City of Akron. This logo will replace the current "Rubber Worker" logo and will help shape the future branding of the City of Akron. The selected contractor will work with the Bicentennial Subcommittee overseeing this project to guide engagement efforts which will communicate the direction and creation of the logo.

SCOPE OF WORK

The selected contractor will guide the subcommittee's engagement efforts throughout the process and utilize the feedback received to begin crafting options for the new city logo. Steps include:

- A. Consult with subcommittee team on engagement efforts
- B. Utilize feedback from engagement to create several options for new logo
- C. Work with subcommittee to narrow down selections and incorporate public and subcommittee feedback to refine and revise the logo options
- D. Finalize logo to be presented at the Bicentennial closing ceremony on Dec. 6, 2025
- E. Create branding guidelines to be used in conjunction with new City logo

DELIVERABLES

The selected contractor will be expected to provide the following deliverables:

1. **Final Logo Files** – High-resolution logo files in multiple formats (EPS, PNG, JPG, SVG, PDF) for various applications (print, digital, merchandise, signage, etc.).
2. **Logo Variations** – Versions of the logo for different uses, including:
 - Full-color, black-and-white, and single-color versions
 - Horizontal and vertical orientations
 - Simplified versions for small-scale use (e.g., social media profile pictures, favicons)
3. **Brand Guidelines Document** – A comprehensive guide covering:
 - Logo usage rules (spacing, scaling, background restrictions)
 - Color palette (primary and secondary colors with HEX, RGB, CMYK, and Pantone codes)
 - Typography (primary and secondary fonts for print and digital use)
 - Iconography and graphic elements (if applicable)
 - Photography style and usage guidelines
4. **File Package for External Use** – A ZIP file or shared cloud folder with easy-to-access logo and branding assets for city employees, partners, and vendors.
5. **Mockups & Applications** – Examples of the logo in real-world applications, such as:
 - Letterhead, business cards, and official city documents
 - Website and social media graphics
 - Signage and city vehicles
 - Merchandise or promotional materials
6. **Public Presentation Materials** – A branded slide deck or presentation to introduce the new logo to stakeholders, the community, and media.
7. **Revision Rounds** – A structured process for feedback and refinement, ensuring the logo meets the city's expectations.

QUALIFICATIONS

Potential contractors should demonstrate a successful track record of working with partners ideally including municipalities. They should also provide evidence of their technical capabilities to perform the required services, including expertise in logo design and branding. Additionally, contractors should highlight relevant experience in incorporating community feedback into the design process.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

- This is a sealed-bid competitive process open to individuals or firms.
- Provide pricing for the full process with breakdown of cost.
- Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.
- The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the company submitting the proposal.

BUDGET

The successful submission will be awarded a contract not to exceed \$50,000.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proponents must submit a written proposal of no more than fifteen (15) pages, including the following:

1. **Team Experience & Qualifications** – Provide biographies or CVs of key team members who will provide services, highlighting relevant experience.
2. **Understanding & Approach** – Describe your approach to brand development, visual identity, and design, as well as your understanding of the City's needs.
3. **Relevant Experience & References** – List past and current clients relevant to this project, along with at least three (3) client references.
4. **Portfolio of Work** – Provide examples of relevant work, with a particular focus on:
 - a. Branding and design for businesses, locations, or communities
 - b. Projects of a similar scale and scope
5. **Community Engagement & Inclusivity** – Describe your experience with public engagement and how you will ensure inclusive participation in the process.
6. **Work Plan & Timeline** – Outline a proposed work plan and schedule that aligns with the City's timeline, including key milestones, review stages, and revision process.
7. **Deliverables** – Specify the expected project deliverables, such as logo files, branding guidelines, and presentation materials.
8. **Financial Proposal** – Provide a detailed cost breakdown, ensuring the total project cost does not exceed \$50,000.

PROPOSAL SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals that meet the RFP requirements, as stated above, will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **Suitability of the Proposal** – the proposed solution meets the requirements set forth in the RFP.
- **Expertise** in recommending and communicating appropriate technical and aesthetic solutions as evidenced by the proposal and references.
- **Aesthetic Capabilities** – Prior work demonstrates artistic and innovative, approach that engages communities, consumers and/or visitors.
- **Project management** approach and process- including incorporating public and committee feedback.
- **Candidate Experience** – Candidate has successfully completed similar projects and has the qualifications necessary to undertake this project.
- **Proposal Presentation** – The information is presented in a clear, logical manner and is well organized.
- **Budget** – Candidate's pricing for the project. Broken down for visual identity consulting, design work, and for consulting on engagement initiatives.

• **Bonus points** – Firms/individuals located in the City of Akron will be awarded 5 bonus points in bid process.

RFP PROCESS AND TIMELINES

April 7 - RFP Issued

April 29 - Deadline for questions to be submitted in writing to

smarsh@akronohio.gov

May 19 5:00pm - Proposal Deadline

Week of May 26 - Proposals evaluated

Week of June 2- Shortlist Interviews

Week of June 9 - Selection of best candidate & awarding of contract

June-September – Public Engagement and Initial Designs submitted to subcommittee

October – Finalize Logo and create branding guidelines

Dec. 6, 2025 – Unveil new city logo at closing ceremony of Akron Bicentennial

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE RFP

Any and all costs associated with responding to the RFP are solely the responsibility of the respondent. The response with the lowest cost will not necessarily be accepted. The City of Akron and the Akron Bicentennial Commission reserve the right to alter the dates or scope of work in this RFP. The vendor should not have any actual or potential conflict of interest or any type of unfair advantage in

submitting its proposal. Any vendor submitting a proposal that is deemed to be in a conflict of interest whether potential or actual, may be disqualified. The City of Akron shall not be responsible for any misunderstanding on the part of the vendor concerning this RFP or its process.

Proposals submitted to the Akron Bicentennial Commission in response to this request will become property of the City of Akron and subject to the laws regarding public records of the State of Ohio.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Please submit a PDF of your proposal no later than May 19, 2025 by 5:00pm to the attention of:

Stephanie Marsh, Director of Communications, City of Akron –
smarsh@akronohio.gov

Optional: One hard copy of your proposal may be submitted to:

Stephanie Marsh, Director of Communications, City of Akron
166 S. High St. Suite 200 Akron, OH 44308