

NORTHEAST PUBLIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

northeastpda.com · 509.795.0290

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Marketing Services — Phase One (2026–2027)

Submission Deadline: June 22, 2026 · 5:00 p.m. · kelly@northeastpda.com

Introduction

The Northeast Public Development Authority (NEPDA) invites qualified marketing professionals and firms to submit statements of qualifications in response to this Request for Qualifications. We are seeking a skilled, collaborative partner to help us implement Phase One of our Strategic Marketing Plan for the Hillyard District of Spokane, Washington.

This is not a traditional marketing engagement. NEPDA is a mission-driven public development authority, and the work we are asking for goes beyond content and campaigns. We need a partner who understands that trust is earned slowly, that communities are not target markets, and that the most powerful marketing we can do is tell true stories about real progress. We need someone who is as comfortable presenting to a room of skeptical property owners as they are writing a press release for a groundbreaking.

While this procurement covers Phase One through December 2027, NEPDA’s intent is to build a longer-term relationship with the right partner. The selected contractor will grow with the organization, deepen their knowledge of Hillyard, and help shape the marketing program as it evolves beyond Phase One.

Contract Start	Anticipated July 2026
Initial Term	Through December 2027 (Phase One)
Submission Deadline	June 22, 2026 by 5:00 p.m.
Submission Format	PDF via email
Contact	Kelly McGinley Ashe, Administrative Manager — kelly@northeastpda.com

Organization Overview

The Northeast Public Development Authority is a municipal corporation formed under RCW 35.21.730–.757, created to provide focused economic development services to a 3,500-acre portion of northeast Spokane centered on the historic Hillyard neighborhood. NEPDA is not a chamber of commerce, a business improvement district, or a neighborhood association — it is a public development authority with the legal authority, funding mechanisms, and mission focus to catalyze meaningful, lasting change.

NEPDA’s work is guided by three core service pillars: Advocate — representing client and community needs and reducing friction in the development process; Catalyze — clarifying opportunity, rallying stakeholders, and accelerating visible progress; and Steward — building community confidence and ensuring growth is informed by and accountable to the people who live and work in Hillyard. These pillars are not just organizational language; they are the lens through which every marketing decision should be made.

NEPDA is funded in part by incremental tax revenues generated by activity within the district. This means that NEPDA’s marketing success is directly tied to its economic outcomes: more visible opportunity and trust leads to more investment, which leads to more tax revenue, which leads to more capacity to reinvest in the community. Marketing here is not a soft function — it is a driver of the organization’s financial sustainability.

Project Context

Hillyard is one of Spokane’s oldest neighborhoods built around the Northern Pacific Railway car shops and still defined by that industrial character today. Light industrial land, working warehouses, fabrication shops, and maker-economy businesses give it density and identity unlike anywhere else in the region. Paired with a historic commercial corridor, relative affordability, and Spokane’s projected growth of 100,000+ county residents by 2046, Hillyard is at a genuine inflection point. The question is not whether the neighborhood will change, but whether that change will be guided intentionally.

NEPDA’s core challenge is a perception gap: Hillyard’s real assets — available land, adaptive reuse potential, affordability, community foundation — are not yet visible to the developers, investors, and businesses who should be paying attention. Closing that gap requires consistent, honest, evidence-based communication. Not spin. True stories about real progress, told to the right audiences at the right time.

To that end, NEPDA recently completed a comprehensive strategic marketing planning process. The resulting plan defines our brand position, target audiences, priority channels, objectives, and a phased roadmap for execution. The selected contractor will not be starting from scratch, they will be stepping into a defined strategy and helping us bring it to life, while contributing their expertise to refine and build upon it as the work evolves.

NEPDA also works in close partnership with the Hillyard Creative District (HCD), a complementary organization focused on community activation and cultural programming. The two organizations coordinate messaging and share resources, creating a unified presence in the neighborhood while maintaining distinct roles.

Scope of Work

The selected contractor will serve as NEPDA’s primary marketing partner, working closely with the Executive Director and relevant staff to execute the following services. This is an integrated scope — the channels and activities listed below are most effective when managed in a coordinated way, not as isolated tasks.

Website Management & Optimization

- Maintain and update the NEPDA website as the central information hub for developers, investors, and community members. Be prepared for the possibility to create a full website rebuild in the future.
- Support content updates related to projects, opportunities, and resources
- Collaborate on SEO improvements to increase visibility to external audiences
- Monitor and improve user experience and task completion

Content Development

- Produce clear, accessible, and engaging content including project updates, opportunity highlights, stakeholder stories, and transparency-focused communications
- Maintain a consistent content cadence (monthly or as defined) that keeps audiences informed and engaged
- Write in a voice that is knowledgeable and professional without being inaccessible — plain language is a priority

Email Communications

- Manage quarterly newsletter production and distribution
- Support list growth through website opt-ins, events, and direct outreach
- Track and report performance metrics including open rate, CTR, and list growth

Social Media (Limited Scope)

- Maintain a light but consistent presence (1–2 posts per week) across LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook
- Share relevant updates, milestones, and news in a way that reflects NEPDA's voice and values
- Monitor engagement and flag issues or opportunities for response

Public Relations Support

- Identify and promote key milestones including project launches, groundbreakings, and infrastructure wins
- Coordinate with local media outlets including the Spokesman-Review, Spokane Journal of Business, the Inlander, and local broadcast news
- Support development of press materials including releases and media alerts

Community & Stakeholder Engagement Support

- Assist with communication materials for meetings, open houses, and events
- Support outreach to developers, property owners, and community partners
- Help ensure messaging is clear, consistent, and accessible across all touchpoints

Reporting & Analytics

- Track key performance indicators including website traffic, newsletter performance, stakeholder inquiries, and media coverage
- Provide quarterly summary reports
- Contribute to annual Phase One impact reporting

Expected Deliverables

The following deliverables are expected over the course of the engagement. Exact cadence and format will be refined collaboratively during onboarding.

- Ongoing website updates and improvements with a possible full website rebuild.
- Monthly or periodic content pieces (articles, project spotlights, updates)
- Quarterly email newsletters
- Social media posts at a sustainable, agreed-upon cadence
- PR materials and media coordination support as milestones warrant
- Quarterly KPI reports
- Contribution to annual / Phase One impact reporting

Statement of Qualifications Requirements

Statements of qualifications should be clear and direct. No more than three pages. We are looking for evidence that you understand this work and have the experience and approach to execute it well. Please include the following:

Firm or Individual Overview

- Background and relevant experience
- Experience with economic development, public sector, or place-based marketing (preferred)

Minimum Qualifications

- Website project management (coordinating a redesign/development, not necessarily building it themselves, but managing the contractor/agency)
- SEO fundamentals sufficient to oversee planning and implementation
- Email marketing platform management
- Social media content creation across LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook
- Press release writing and media relations
- Community engagement/event facilitation
- Basic analytics and KPI reporting
- Familiarity with public sector or economic development organizations
- Existing relationships with Spokane-area media and business community would be a significant advantage

Proposed Approach

- Your understanding of the project and its goals
- How you would approach executing within a limited budget and capacity
- Your communication and collaboration style
- Your proposed approach to the Scope of Work described above

- Estimated time allocation by activity
- Any recommended refinements or additions

Experience

- Examples of similar work including links or samples of websites, content, campaigns, and public-facing communications
- At least three professional references with specific knowledge of work performed.

Fee Proposal

- Total proposed cost for the engagement
- Breakdown by service or deliverable
- Hourly rate (if applicable)

Evaluation & Selection Process

All statements of qualifications received will be evaluated for responsiveness to this RFQ and ranked by NEPDA staff. Qualified firms may be invited for formal interviews with NEPDA Board representatives. NEPDA reserves the right to select the most qualified firm or team directly following written statement of qualifications review, without conducting interviews.

One firm will be selected for contract negotiation. NEPDA reserves the right to reject any and all statements of qualifications, waive irregularities, and accept the statement of qualifications deemed most advantageous to the organization’s interests.

Evaluation Steps

- **Step 1:** Statements of qualifications reviewed for compliance with RFQ requirements
- **Step 2:** Compliant statements of qualifications evaluated and scored by the Evaluation Committee
- **Step 3:** Highest-scoring respondents interviewed by Board representatives
- **Step 4:** Reference checks conducted for finalists; Executive Director notifies the winning respondent
- **Step 5:** Contract negotiations commence with the selected firm

Submission Details & Requirements

Deadline	June 22, 2026 by 5:00 p.m.
Format	PDF via email
Subject Line	2026 NEPDA Marketing RFQ Response — [Firm Name]
Submit To	Kelly McGinley Ashe, Administrative Manager — kelly@northeastpda.com

Validity	Proposals must remain valid for a minimum of 60 calendar days from the due date
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Clarifications: Any requests for clarification must be submitted at least five business days prior to the deadline. Clarifications and modifications will be distributed electronically to all responding firms. All communications must be directed to Jesse Bank at the contact information above.

Late submittals may be deemed nonresponsive and rejected.

Certification: By submitting a statement of qualifications, the individual or firm certifies that (1) it has examined, read, and understands this RFQ; (2) it has taken steps reasonably necessary to ascertain the nature and location of the work and has satisfied itself as to general and local conditions that may affect the work; and (3) it meets all required business and licensing criteria, including active registration with the Washington Secretary of State, an active business license issued by the Washington State Department of Revenue, and an active Worker’s Compensation account with the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries.

Contract Terms

The NEPDA anticipates an initial contract term of one (1) year with the possibility of and extension thereafter. A sample contract form is available upon request.

Note: The NEPDA expects all submitting firms or sole practitioners to consent to the NEPDA contract, terms and conditions. The NEPDA reserves the right to revise the stated contract terms and conditions prior to contract signature.

Public Records & Disclosure

Statements of qualifications submitted to NEPDA become the property of NEPDA and will not be returned. Pursuant to Chapter 42.56 RCW, submitted statements of qualifications are considered public records and may be available for public inspection and copying following the award of an agreement, except to the extent protected by state or federal law.

If a disclosure request is received, NEPDA will notify the submitting firm and allow five (5) business days to take protective action pursuant to RCW 42.56.540. To the extent NEPDA withholds materials at a firm’s request, that firm agrees to fully indemnify, defend, and hold harmless NEPDA, the City and County of Spokane, their elected officials, agents, and employees from all damages, penalties, attorneys’ fees, and costs related to withholding information from public disclosure.

NEPDA reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to reject any or all statements of qualifications, waive informalities, modify or cancel the RFQ, extend the submission deadline, request additional information, or award the contract in the best overall interest of NEPDA. By submitting a statement of qualifications, the firm consents to this process and shall have no claim against NEPDA because of any action or inaction taken. If negotiations fail, NEPDA reserves the right to negotiate with other respondents at its sole discretion.



Northeast Public Development Authority · northeastpda.com · 503.908.3606
Kelly McGinley Ashe, Administrative Manager · kelly@northeastpda.com