

**Request for Proposal Cover Page**

<b>Solicitation Issue Date: Tuesday June 30, 2026</b>			
<b>Solicitation Closing Date: Friday July 24, 2026</b>		<b>Solicitation Closing Time 2:00PM (EST)</b>	
<b>Issued By: Downtown Partnership of Baltimore</b>			
<b>Address: 20 S Charles St #600 Baltimore, MD 21201 6<sup>th</sup></b>			
<b>Telephone Number: 410-244-1030</b>			
DPOB is a non-profit organization in Baltimore, MD founded in 1983 and exempt from all state, federal and local taxes.			
Responses must be received on or before <b>July 24, 2026</b> , by 2:00 PM (EST).			
<b>Electronic Responses:</b> Please submit your Proposal to <a href="mailto:bidfers@dpoB.org">bidfers@dpoB.org</a> referencing “Public Relations RFP#2026-01” in the subject line.			
For questions/information, please email <a href="mailto:mevora@dpoB.org">mevora@dpoB.org</a> referencing “PublicRelationsRFP#2026-06” in the subject line. Questions/information must be emailed no later than <b>Friday July 10, 2026</b> . All questions received by the designated date will be answered within three (3) business days and will be made available to all respondents. Questions sent to <a href="mailto:bidfers@dpoB.org">bidfers@dpoB.org</a> will not be answered as this email address is not monitored on a regular basis. This is meant to receive proposals only.			
DPOB reserves the right to waive informalities or irregularities, to reject any or all proposals received, to accept the proposal deemed best for the organization, and/or request new proposals if necessary.			
Any objection to the above conditions must be clearly indicated in the proposals.			
In compliance with this RFP and to all the conditions imposed herein, the undersigned offers and agrees to furnish the services in accordance with the attached signed proposal or as mutually agreed DPOB by subsequent negotiation.			
<b>VENDOR IDENTIFICATION</b>			
Company Name:			
Address:			
Telephone:			
Email:			
Federal ID:			
<b>Print Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Authorized Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

## Public Relations Services

*Downtown Partnership of Baltimore / Downtown Management Authority*

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**Issue Date:** June 30, 2026

**Proposal Deadline:** July 24, 2026

**Questions Due:** July 10, 2026

**Submit To:** [bidfers@dpob.org](mailto:bidfers@dpob.org)

### 1. About the Organization

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The Downtown Partnership of Baltimore (DPOB) has been building a better Baltimore for over 40 years. We are the convener and connector for downtown's progress — bringing together residents, businesses, civic organizations, and government to make the urban core a place where people want to be.

DPOB operates as two entities working together for all of downtown's neighborhoods. The Downtown Partnership of Baltimore is a nonprofit organization responsible for marketing, events, economic development, advocacy, and community outreach across the broader downtown area. The Downtown Management Authority (DMA) is Baltimore's oldest and largest business improvement district, focused on delivering clean, safe, green, and hospitality services within the 106-block downtown core. Together, these two entities give DPOB a broader and more powerful set of tools to serve the full downtown community.

Our vision is for downtown Baltimore to be the economic and creative heart of the region — a dynamic city center where residents, businesses, and visitors thrive together. Our mission is to steward and promote a clean, safe, and thriving urban core, collaboratively enhancing the vitality of all of downtown's unique neighborhoods.

DPOB's work spans four strategic priorities: the physical and experiential transformation of downtown; financial sustainability and resource development; organizational effectiveness; and collaborative leadership. On the ground, this means running programs like the Clean Sweep Ambassadors, Downtown Baltimore Guides, and Park Stewards; supporting small business growth through the Downtown BOOST Program and grant initiatives; and producing major public events including the Charles Street Promenade, Courthouse Market, Baltimore Restaurant Week, and the annual State of Downtown Baltimore. DPOB also leads on advocacy, alley improvements, capital investment, and issues that affect the broader downtown community.

We are seeking a public relations partner who understands not just what we do, but why it matters — and who can help us tell that story compellingly to media, stakeholders, policymakers, and the public.

## 2. Purpose

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The Downtown Partnership of Baltimore is seeking proposals from qualified public relations firms or communications professionals to provide strategic communications and public relations services. The selected vendor will help DPOB build broad public awareness of its work, strengthen its relationships with key stakeholders, and ensure that accurate and compelling information about downtown Baltimore reaches the right audiences.

DPOB operates in a public-facing environment where perception matters. We are looking for a partner who can support both proactive storytelling and responsive communications as situations arise.

## 3. Scope of Services

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Proposals should describe the vendor's approach and capabilities across the following areas. DPOB does not prescribe a specific methodology — we welcome each firm's best thinking on how to achieve the objectives below.

### **Strategic Communications**

- Develop and maintain an overarching communications strategy aligned with DPOB's organizational priorities
- Advise leadership on messaging, positioning, and communications decisions
- Ensure consistency of message across all channels and audiences

### **Media Relations**

- Build and maintain relationships with local, regional, and national media contacts
- Pitch and secure earned media placements including news stories, features, op-eds, and broadcast opportunities
- Draft press releases, media advisories, talking points, and other media materials
- Manage inbound media inquiries and prepare spokespeople for interviews

### **Media Monitoring & Performance Reporting**

- Ongoing monitoring of print, broadcast, digital, and social media for coverage of DPOB, its programs, and downtown Baltimore
- Regular reporting on media sentiment, volume of coverage, and key narrative themes
- Metrics that demonstrate the reach and impact of communications efforts over time
- A system for flagging significant or negative coverage requiring prompt attention

### **Digital & Social Media**

- Support DPOB's social media presence with strategy, content direction, and best practices
- Advise on digital communications tools and platforms appropriate for DPOB's audiences
- Provide analytics and performance tracking for digital efforts tied to PR activity

### **Stakeholder & Community Engagement**

- Identify and help engage key stakeholders including business leaders, civic organizations, community groups, and elected officials
- Support outreach to constituencies within and beyond the downtown district
- Assist in building coalitions and mobilizing third-party voices on behalf of DPOB initiatives

### **Government Affairs Communications**

- Support DPOB in communicating with and educating public sector partners at the city and state levels
- Prepare materials for elected officials, agency partners, and policy audiences as needed
- Monitor policy and legislative developments relevant to downtown Baltimore and advise on communications implications

### **Crisis Communications**

- Develop and maintain a crisis communications plan and rapid response process
- Provide counsel and support during reputational or operational challenges
- Be available to respond quickly when situations require immediate attention

### **Events & Programming Support**

- Support communications around major DPOB events and public programs
- Coordinate media outreach and provide post-event coverage recaps

### **Legal and Public Engagement Awareness**

The selected vendor shall demonstrate experience supporting public agencies, quasi-public organizations, or nonprofit organizations operating in highly visible public environments and a working knowledge of the Maryland Open Meetings Act and other applicable public transparency requirements. The vendor shall provide strategic communications guidance to DPOB leadership and designated spokespersons regarding public engagement during open meetings, public hearings, media events, and other official proceedings.

Services should include, at a minimum:

- Advising on media access considerations and public transparency requirements applicable to open meetings and public proceedings.

- Recommending appropriate engagement protocols for interactions with reporters, journalists, stakeholders, and members of the public.
- Supporting leadership and designated spokespersons in preparing for public meetings and high-profile public engagements.
- Assisting with message development and communications strategies for legally sensitive, high-profile, or publicly scrutinized matters while coordinating, as appropriate, with DPOB's legal counsel.
- Providing recommendations for communications planning before, during, and after public meetings or other public-facing events.

The vendor should also develop internal guidance, training materials, and/or workshops to prepare staff and leadership to communicate effectively, maintain message consistency, and operate in accordance with applicable public transparency requirements and organizational communications protocols.

#### **4. Proposal Requirements**

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Interested firms should submit a proposal that includes the following:

- Overview of the firm, including history, size, and relevant areas of expertise
- Description of experience working with organizations similar to DPOB — nonprofits, business improvement districts, civic organizations, or public-private partnerships
- Proposed approach to this engagement, including how the firm would structure the work and staff the account
- Biographies or profiles of the specific team members who would be assigned to DPOB
- Description of media monitoring capabilities and sample reporting format
- At least three (3) professional references from comparable clients
- Proposed fee structure, including monthly retainer and any services billed separately

#### **5. Evaluation Criteria**

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Proposals will be evaluated based on the following:

- Demonstrated experience in public relations and strategic communications for mission-driven or civic organizations
- Knowledge of and relationships within the Baltimore media and civic landscape
- Quality and clarity of the proposed approach
- Strength and relevance of the assigned team
- Media monitoring and reporting capabilities
- Overall value and fit with DPOB's needs and culture

## 6. Contract Terms

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- The initial contract term is one (1) year, with the option to renew upon mutual agreement
- Either party may terminate the agreement with thirty (30) days written notice
- All work product developed under this engagement is the property of the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore
- The selected vendor shall maintain confidentiality of non-public organizational information
- Additional services beyond the scope of the retainer — such as video production, paid advertising, or print materials — will be negotiated separately and require prior approval

## 7. Submission Instructions

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Proposals must be submitted by to [bidder@dpob.org](mailto:bidder@dpob.org) with PublicRelationsRFP#2026-06 in the subject line. Late submissions will not be considered. DPOB reserves the right to request follow-up presentations, negotiate with one or more firms, or decline any or all proposals received.

Proposals should be informative, yet concise and not exceed 15 pages (excluding appendices). Submissions should use a standard 11- or 12-point font and be formatted for readability.

Questions regarding this RFP may be directed to [mevora@dpob.org](mailto:mevora@dpob.org) with PublicRelationsRFP#2026-06 in the subject line no later than July 10, 2026. Responses to questions of general interest will be shared with all firms who have expressed interest.