

(matter)

Market Less. Matter More.

**Proposal for City of Isle Palms -
RFP 2026-0 "City Branding"**

Submitted by:

LEAP FIVE, LLC dba (matter)

Point of Contact:

Michael Noble

Government Business Development Manager

2500 Technology Drive

Louisville, KY 40299

GovRFPManager@leapgroupnetwork.com

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“This proposal includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the Government and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed in whole or in part for any purpose other than to evaluate this proposal. If, however, a Contract is awarded to this Offeror as a result of or in connection with the submission of this data, the Government shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting Contract. This restriction does not limit the Government’s right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to the restriction is contained in all sheets of this proposal.”

Cover Letter

Please provide a cover letter

Leap Five LLC dba (matter)
2500 Technology Drive Louisville, KY 40299
502-648-5149
govrfpmanager@leapgroupnetwork.com

04.23.2026

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

Subject: Proposal for RFP 2026.02, City Branding

Dear Douglas Kerr,

On behalf of (matter), I am pleased to submit our proposal for RFP 2026.02, City Branding. At (matter), we believe impactful solutions are built on human insight, strategic creativity, and technical excellence. With over 25 years of experience and a team of 13 professionals, we specialize in delivering branding, creative, marketing, digital, and web solutions that engage audiences, elevate experiences, and drive measurable results. We are excited for the opportunity to bring this expertise to City of Isle of Palms and support your goals with a thoughtful, results-driven approach.

We understand that this project is more than just an initiative—it is a key touchpoint for the community, shaping how residents, businesses, and visitors interact with The City of Isle of Palms.

We know that Isle of Palms prides itself on being a family-friendly beach community, where residents and visitors alike can find comfort and joy. A special place that balances “live, work, play” values. We know this project will require a team that understands the heart of the community and the nuances we need to bring to the fore.

Our team’s deep expertise in branding, creative development, marketing strategy, digital design, UX/UI, analytics, and technology ensures that we can not only meet but exceed expectations. Our experience working with public agencies, municipalities, and organizations of all sizes has prepared us to navigate the complexities of government projects while prioritizing accessibility, innovation, and long-term sustainability.

In the following proposal, we outline our approach to delivering a solution that is not only aligned with The City of Isle of Palms vision but also forward-thinking, user-focused, and built for lasting impact.

We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate with The City of Isle of Palms to bring this vision to life. Please feel free to reach out with any questions or to discuss our approach further.


Sincerely,

(matter)

MICHAEL NOBLE

Government Business Development Manager



 502-648-5149

 502-212-1391

 govrfpmanager@leapgroupnetwork.com

A) Project Management

Our technical approach to successfully completing the tasks outlined in the Scope of Work is rooted in clear planning, transparent communication, and efficient execution.

We will ensure that all milestones are met on time and that the City receives a seamless and professional experience throughout the project.

Project Management and Scheduling.

Our project management process will begin with an in-depth discovery phase to fully understand the City's objectives and priorities. We will assign a dedicated Project Manager who will be responsible for tracking project progress, managing timelines, and ensuring resources are allocated efficiently. We utilize project management software to ensure transparency, allowing all team members and stakeholders to track tasks, timelines, and progress in real-time. We will set weekly check-ins with the City to ensure alignment and address any issues proactively.

At (matter), we utilize Workfront, a leading project management software, to ensure seamless coordination, transparency, and efficiency across all projects. Workfront allows us to manage tasks, track progress, and collaborate in real time, ensuring that all deliverables align with the City's timeline expectations, deliverable deadlines, and broader branding and marketing goals.

Data Delivery Timelines and Methods.

We will provide data and progress updates to the City in a clear, concise, and timely manner. During our initial kickoff meetings, we will establish specific timelines for each deliverable, ensuring that the City receives regular updates (e.g., bi-weekly or monthly) and expectations are clearly set. We will utilize secure file-sharing platforms like Google Drive or Dropbox for document delivery and ensure all data is formatted according to the City's preferences. For more complex deliverables, we may host virtual review sessions to discuss the data and ensure clarity.

Communication and Coordination

Clear and consistent communication is a cornerstone of our approach. We will designate a project point of contact at both our firm (Kaity Hilton) and the City to ensure smooth communication. Our team will send out weekly status updates to keep the City informed on progress, and we will hold bi-weekly meetings to discuss the project's status, address any concerns, and adjust schedules if needed. Additionally, we will maintain a shared digital space for document storage and review. Our goal is to minimize the number of touchpoints while ensuring that all parties stay fully informed.

Partnership.

We view our collaboration with the City as a true partnership. To ensure smooth coordination, we will encourage open dialogue and foster a collaborative working environment where feedback is welcomed at every stage. We will work closely with City staff to ensure their needs are being met, their priorities

are addressed, and they have the resources they need to make informed decisions. We will align our team’s work to fit into the City’s established processes, providing flexibility while meeting deliverable deadlines.

Our Philosophy.

At the heart of our firm’s philosophy is a commitment to understanding and serving every client’s needs through creative and data-driven strategies. We believe that collaboration, innovation, and accountability are key to delivering outstanding results. We prioritize our client’s vision while ensuring that all tasks are executed on time, within budget, and to the highest quality standards. Our focus is on maintaining long-term relationships with clients through transparent communication, excellent service, and measurable results. We bring this approach to the City's RFP.

Our goal is not only to meet the immediate objectives of the project but to set the City up for sustained success.

By leveraging Workfront, utilizing a dedicated Project Manager and Account Manager, and setting clear expectations for our team and yours, we ensure that all aspects of the project—creative development, media planning, campaign execution, and performance tracking—are managed efficiently. We minimize confusion, maximize alignment, and keep the City of Isle of Palms’s marketing initiatives on time, on budget, and optimized for success.

Subcontractors

(matter) is not proposing use of any subcontractors for this project.

Brand, Vision, & Message Development

Approach and Methodology

At (matter), we take a strategic and structured approach to brand development—one that blends research, creativity, and execution to create a lasting impact. Our process ensures that every step, from discovery to deployment, is intentional and tailored to meet The City of Isle of Palms' specific goals.



1. Discovery + Research

Before we can start re-vamping a brand, we first need to understand it—inside and out. Discovery and Research is where we get to the heart of the matter, peeling back the layers of the brand to uncover what truly drives it. We dive deep into the market, the people, and the forces shaping the landscape, all while keeping one goal in mind: clarity. We take a sophisticated, methodical approach, blending data with human insight, using everything from AI to community feedback. It’s about finding the story, the pulse, the edge that’s often hidden beneath the surface. Armed with this knowledge, we can create an IOP brand story that’s not just believable but undeniable.

Main Takeaways:

- We begin by uncovering the truth, seeing the brand as it is.
- Research isn’t just about numbers—it’s about understanding people, culture, and opportunity.
- Let’s get our feet wet (or at least get our toes in the sand dunes!)
- The goal is to craft insights that lead to a clear, actionable direction.

2. Brand Strategy

Now that we know the lay of the land, it's time to chart the course. Brand Strategy is where we turn knowledge into power. It's the blueprint that will guide everything from messaging to design, giving the brand a clear sense of direction and purpose. At this stage, we identify the brand's soul—the essence that will define its voice, its personality, and its uniqueness.

We ask ourselves the hard questions:

What makes this brand stand out? Why should anyone care?

We'll see what works and what doesn't work with the current brand (tag lines, slogans, mottos, creative designs, etc.).

With our findings, we begin crafting positioning statements that will serve as the foundation for everything that follows. We create mood boards, or “Brandscapes,” to explore potential directions, each one a visual metaphor for the brand's future. The strategy doesn't just inform—it inspires, paving the way for a brand that feels authentic and meaningful.

Main Takeaways:

- A brand is nothing without a purpose. Strategy gives it one.
- We define what makes the brand unique and create a roadmap that tells its story.
- Positioning statements and visual concepts anchor the brand, making it memorable.

3. Brand Development

Here's where the magic happens. Brand Development is the process of breathing life into the strategy we've built. This is where we take the words, the ideas, the vision, and everything else we're developing for IOP, and translate them into something tangible—something people can touch, see, and feel.

A logo isn't just a logo; it's a symbol of everything the brand stands for. The color palette? It's the visual voice of the brand, a language that speaks without words.

Each element is crafted meticulously, tested, refined, and aligned with the original strategy. It's an artful balance between design and meaning, where every detail counts. And once we've crafted the visual identity, we don't leave it to chance. We create brand guidelines to ensure that every touchpoint, from websites to billboards, speaks with the same voice. Consistency builds trust, and trust is everything.

We're creating a unified civic and destination brand that is multi-faceted. So we will make sure all sub-brands (city departments, agencies) fit within the unified brand while giving each a unique visual identity, tailored templates, graphics, etc. We'll specifically focus on the Recreation Department and Public Works (possibly rebranding to “Public Services”). We will make sure our expected deliverables are aligned with IOP staff before during pre-contract meetings.

Main Takeaways:

- This is where ideas become real, and the brand is given its face and voice.
- Every element of design is crafted to reflect the brand's essence.
- Guidelines are the secret to consistency—and consistency builds credibility.
- We'll build out all other deliverables discussed with the IOP team during the Discovery + Research phase; editable files and templates for common needs (as signage, brochures, webpage layout, PowerPoint presentations, social media, report covers, letterheads, business cards, email signatures, etc.)

4. Brand Activation

It's one thing to create a brand; it's another to make it come alive. Brand Activation is the moment when strategy and design meet the real world. This is where we take everything we've created for IOP and turn it into experiences that connect with the audience(s). Whether it's a campaign, an event, or a social media push, every activation is crafted with the goal of sparking a genuine response.

We want to make people feel something. To get them to act. To make them loyal to the brand. We want this to excite residents and families that live in the city and inspire local pride. And we want the brand to intrigue and create curiosity with tourists.

But it doesn't stop there. We're constantly measuring, refining, adjusting. The work never ends—it's an ongoing conversation between the City and its audiences. And like any good conversation, it's all about timing. We make sure the brand is speaking to the audience at just the right moment, with the right message.

Main Takeaways:

- Activation is where the brand truly meets the world—and it's where the magic happens.
- We craft experiences that engage, excite, and inspire loyalty.
- Measurement and refinement ensure we're always hitting the mark and creating real impact.

5. Deploy + Measure

The final act is just as critical as the opening. Deploying new IOP brand into the world isn't a one-time shot—it's an ongoing process. We're pushing out of the marina, and that requires lots of planning and multiple points of execution.

Content must reach the right people at the right time, through the right channels. The question isn't just "Is it out there?"—it's "Is it working?" This is where measurement comes in.

We don't just toss a brand project like this into the ocean and hope it floats. We track performance, analyze results, and measure ROI, adjusting the approach as needed to keep the brand on track. But we don't do it alone. We work hand-in-hand with our clients, making sure everyone is aligned on what success looks like. Every campaign, every post, every ad is a chance to further refine the strategy, ensuring the brand continues to grow and thrive.

Main Takeaways:

- Deployment is just the beginning—the real work is in making sure the message lands.
- Continuous measurement ensures that the brand is performing at its peak.
- Collaboration with clients is key to aligning on goals and adjusting the strategy for success.
- We'll measure resident sentiment, brand awareness, website traffic, and social media engagement; which can all fuel long term goals like brand recognition and attracting more folks within the key target audience (family beach visitors)

By adopting a structured and collaborative approach, we ensure The City of Isle of Palms's goals are met with precision and excellence, delivering high-quality results that enhance customer engagement and drive business growth.

Research

(matter) will manage discovery and stakeholder engagement through a carefully structured, end-to-end process that ensures broad participation, methodological rigor, and clear translation of insight into strategic guidance. Our approach is designed to minimize burden on Isle of Palms' staff & team while maintaining transparency, consistency, and momentum throughout the engagement.

Discovery, Alignment, and Research Design (Phase 1)

The engagement will begin with a structured kickoff meeting with Isle of Palms' project team to align on goals, success criteria, priority audiences, and decision-making processes. During this session, we will confirm project governance, communication cadence, review timelines and milestones, and clarify approval processes for research instruments and deliverables. We will also address any institutional considerations related to data security, IT compliance, etc.

Following kickoff, (matter) will conduct a comprehensive review of all existing research and brand materials provided by Isle of Palms. This includes economic impact studies, prior brand and market research, recent marketing or communications assets, the Amended Comprehensive Plan, and Strategic Plan 2022-2027. This step is critical to avoid duplicative research, identify knowledge gaps, and ensure new insights build upon Isle of Palms' existing institutional intelligence.

Your team has already provided some of these materials (Strategic Plan, Comprehensive Plan, etc.). But during Discovery and Alignment, we can really dive beneath the surface with the IOP team.

Insights from this discovery phase will inform the development of a research framework that defines key learning objectives, hypotheses, and lines of inquiry. Based on this framework, (matter) will design tailored qualitative discussion guides and quantitative survey instruments for each audience group. All instruments will be shared with the Isle of Palms team for review and refinement prior to fielding.

Stakeholder Meetings (Phase 2)

All stakeholder meetings will be conducted virtually to maximize accessibility and efficiency.

Stakeholder meetings will be conducted in close coordination with the Isle of Palms team. We will focus on discussions with key City staff members, City Council members, and folks from the Charleston Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) to inform our brand strategy development.

(matter) will work closely with City of Isle of Palms staff to coordinate stakeholder meetings.

Stakeholders will receive clear information in advance regarding session format, expectations, confidentiality (if applicable), and time commitment to support thoughtful and productive engagement.

Workshop with Isle of Palms City Council (Phase 3)

An interactive workshop will be conducted virtually to maximize accessibility and efficiency.

Expected time commitment is at least 2 hours.

The session will be moderated by senior (matter) creatives and/or researchers to ensure consistency across audiences and depth of insight.

Moderators will follow structured discussion guides while allowing flexibility to explore emergent themes. The session will be recorded (if permitted) and documented through detailed notes to ensure accuracy and completeness.

Analysis and Insight Development (Phase 4)

Following fieldwork, qualitative data will be systematically analyzed using a structured thematic framework. Interview notes and transcripts will be coded to identify recurring patterns, points of alignment and divergence, emotional drivers, and life-stage-specific needs. Particular attention will be paid to how different audiences experience IOP, what language they use to describe it, and where perceptions are unclear, inconsistent, or differentiated.

Quantitative data will be analyzed in parallel to measure awareness, perception, and attribute strength at scale. Results will be segmented by audience type, life stage, and geography to identify where perceptions converge and where tailored approaches are required. Qualitative and quantitative findings will be integrated to validate insights, prioritize opportunities, and assess relative impact on enrollment, consideration, and advocacy.

Synthesis, Reporting, and Delivery (Phase 5)

Insights from all research phases will be synthesized into a cohesive narrative that identifies a clear brand core for City of Isle of Palms—grounded in what is most authentic, distinctive, and meaningful—while defining how that core should flex across audiences and moments of engagement.

(matter) will deliver findings through a comprehensive research report that documents methodology, key insights, and strategic implications. Executive-level summaries and visual frameworks will be developed to translate complex findings into clear, actionable guidance for leadership. These materials will focus on alignment, decision support, and practical application rather than abstract theory.

Findings and recommendations will be delivered through a report provided to IOP leadership and City Council members.

This discovery and stakeholder engagement process ensures City of Isle of Palms receives not only rigorous audience and brand research, but a shared foundation of understanding that can be activated consistently and meaningfully across the institution.

Deliverables

Brand Guidelines & Asset Development:

Following logo approval, we will extend the new identity into a comprehensive set of brand guidelines, establishing clear standards for logo usage, color application, typography, tone of voice, and overall visual consistency.

These guidelines will be designed to empower City staff and City Council to confidently apply the brand across all touch-points. In addition, we will develop a suite of digital assets and promotional materials (templates, collateral, images, etc.) ensuring the new logo was ready for immediate rollout across communications, marketing efforts, and community-facing initiatives.

(matter) will also deliver executive summary, brand audit, and other reporting.

Project Budget

Fee Proposal

(matter) agrees to provide the City of Isle of Palms with professional consulting services associated with a Branding and Marketing Services as outlined in the Request for Proposals.

Fee Structure by Project Phase

Project Phase	Scope of Work	Fee	Est. Hours
Discovery & Brand Assessment	Project kickoff, review of current brand style guide, stakeholder input, and assessment of typography and color system.	\$1,850	10
Research, Discovery, City Council Workshop	Research and discovery, quantitative analysis, hosting virtual interactive City Council workshop	\$1,850	10
Brand Strategy & Positioning	Ideation, brand audit, brand identity design, brand positioning, taglines, design system, citywide visual language	\$9,250	50
Logo Refresh	3 initial logo concepts, including horizontal/vertical layouts; presentation of design options	\$6,475	35
Sub-Brands Development	Develop sub-brand visual elements, graphics, themes and other deliverables (Parks Department, Public Works, most especially)	\$1,850	10
Tagline Development	Up to 3 original tagline options aligned with brand positioning	\$925	5
Brand Refresh	Development of updated primary, secondary, and grayscale color palettes compliant with WCAG 2.1 accessibility standards and compatible with digital platforms.	\$5,550	30

Brand Activation	Delivery of comprehensive brand book, logo usage, typography, color palette, templates, website brand integration guidance, accessible design standards	\$2,775	15
Revisions & Collaboration	At least 3 rounds of revisions to refine the selected concept	\$1,850	10
Brand Guide Document	Usage rules for logo, colors, fonts, and brand elements	\$925	5
Post Launch Support + Measurement	Early-stage rollout support, Measurement (social listening, sentiment analysis, website visits, brand awareness), Deliver executive report/audit/other reporting	\$4,300	20

Subtotal – Brand & Logo Refresh: \$34,825

Service	Description	Frequency	Monthly Rate	Project Estimate
Account Management & Project Management (AM/PM)	Tier II AM/PM Fee	Monthly	\$2,700	\$10,800

Project Management: expected timeline 4 months: \$10,800

TOTAL: 45,525

Reimbursable Expenses

(matter) does not anticipate reimbursable expenses for this project. If necessary, reimbursable costs may include:

- Specialty font licensing
- Stock photography or illustration assets requested by the City
- Printing or proofing outside the project scope
- Travel for in-person meetings if requested
- All reimbursable expenses will be **pre-approved by the City and billed at cost with no markup.**

Additional Details

Timeline: estimate 16-20 weeks from kickoff to final delivery

Delivery Format: All logo files delivered in vector, raster, and web-optimized formats

Rights: Full rights and ownership transferred upon final payment

Proposal Validity: 30 days from date of submission

We appreciate the opportunity to support City of Isle of Palms in building a bold and unified visual identity.

Our team is committed to creative excellence, responsive collaboration, and delivering assets that serve the community for years to come.