




A Proposal

TO: Greg Davis
OSU Extension / Community Development

FROM: Donald S. Van Meter 

DATE: February 21, 2014

RE: Marketing OSU Extension's Community Development Initiatives

OSU Extension's Community Development program strengthens neighborhoods and communities through a series of partnerships with businesses, associations and community organizations. It works with community leaders to apply cutting-edge research and knowledge to improve local businesses and community initiatives. And the resources it bring to communities provide a foundation for knowledge-driven decision making, in contrast to decisions that often are based on intuition and experience.

Community Development is part of a broader Extension agenda, which also includes 4-H youth development, family and consumer services and the agriculture and natural resources program. While each of these program areas serves unique, yet overlapping constituencies, they all share a commitment to research, education and outreach.

For Community Development's performance to match its aspirations, the **visibility** of county extension programs must be raised. **Public awareness and understanding**, particularly among public policy decision makers and community opinion leaders, must be improved. And **public support and funding** for Extension programs must be strengthened.

This explains Community Development's interest in launching a new marketing initiative, and VMC Consulting Group is excited by the prospect of being part of and contributing to it.

During the past two years, VMC has worked with Extension programs throughout the state, particularly in counties that are experiencing severe financial difficulties. In several of these counties, Community Development has not be part of Extension's local portfolio, often because resources are not sufficient to support it. Raising Community Development's visibility and building a local constituency for it should provide the groundwork for expanding the program into new counties.

In this context, VMC advances the following proposal:

1. Services To Be Provided by VMC Consulting Group

- Facilitate the development of a "message map" that can be used to define the content of marketing communications, within the context of "better lives, stronger communities
- Assist Community Development personnel in crafting a comprehensive marketing plan with clear strategies and the tactics/action steps needed to implement that plan

2. Deliverables

- A **“message map”** that can be used to define the content of marketing communications
- A **focused message** that communicates clearly and concisely the benefits of family and consumer services
- A **marketing plan with clear strategies** designed to reach and mobilize target audiences
- **Well-defined tactics or action steps** to implement these strategies
- **An initial set of fact sheets or a flyer** that can serve as the first step in implementing the marketing plan.

3. Duration of the Agreement

The duration of this proposed relationship will be from March 15, 2014 to June 30, 2014. VMC is open to shifting this timeline a bit if it serves Community Development’s needs. Community Development will retain the right to terminate the agreement for cause or due to the non-availability of funds. In such an event, Community Development will give VMC 30-day notice in writing.

During the duration of this relationship, the scope of work and terms of compensation can be modified by written agreement of both parties. And by mutual agreement, Community Development and VMC can terminate this relationship with 30-day written notice.

4. Compensation

As compensation to VMC for the satisfactory performance of these services, Community Development will agree to pay VMC \$175 per hour with the total fee payments under this agreement not to exceed \$7,500 (approximately 43 hours). Payments will be made upon receipt of monthly invoices submitted by VMC. Within these parameters:

- It is understood that VMC will only be paid for the work it performs and for the time committed to the project. The fee cap set above will **not** obligate Community Development to pay VMC the full amount unless justified by the services that are provided.
- It is understood that VMC Consulting Group also will be reimbursed for its expenses, at cost, with the specification that these expenses must be approved by Community Development in advance. Reimbursed expenses will include travel outside Franklin County. Normal photocopying, telephone, fax and e-mail expenses will **not** be reimbursed.

5. Independent Contractor Status

- It will be understood and agreed that VMC will perform all duties defined in this proposal as an independent contractor and not as the agent of Community Development. VMC will not have any authority to negotiate or sign agreements, notes and/or obligations or to make purchases and/or dispose of property for or on behalf of Community Development. It will be further understood and agreed that VMC is not the employee of Community Development and will not be eligible for benefits including unemployment and worker’s compensation coverage.

While this is the extent of the proposed agreement, VMC is very much interested in exploring opportunities – through a separate or modified agreement – to assist in developing the core marketing tools, beyond the initial fact sheets and/or flyer. that will give life to messages, strategies and tactics that are developed during this initial two-month period.

But that is another conversation, another agreement and another step in Community Development's efforts to convey the benefits of it services to neighborhoods, communities and organizations across the state.