

City of Lowell
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
For
Website Design and Development Services

INVITATION TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS

The City of Lowell is accepting sealed bid proposals from individual Vendors to provide website design and development services as specified within this Request for Proposal.

Sealed bid proposals should be sent to:

City of Lowell
Attn: City Clerk
301 E. Main St.
Lowell, MI 49331

All bid proposals must be received by 11:00 a.m. Wednesday October 11, 2017, after which time no further bids will be accepted, and at which time the bids received will be publicly opened and read. All bids must be in a sealed envelope identifying the item being bid as “**Website Update**”.

The City reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals received, waive informalities, or accept any proposal it deems to be in the City’s best interests. The City is not obligated to accept the lowest bid or bids.

The City is not obligated to reimburse responding Vendors for any expenses incurred in preparing or submitting proposals in response to this request, nor is the City responsible for such expenses. All such expenses are solely the responsibility of the Vendor.

Michael Burns
City Manager

ARTICLE II. - GENERAL

For purposes of this proposal the City will hereby be referred to as the “City” and the individual Vendor will hereby be referred to as “Vendor”.

The City is a tax-exempt municipal government located in Kent County. The City provides services to approximately 3,900 residents. The City’s existing web site, www.ci.lowell.mi.us, was established to

provide public access to information about services and activities offered by the City and to communicate information about the City. The City would entertain changing the website address in a setting where email addresses can align to new address. The existing website has served the City well but has become outdated and is in need of a new design that will more closely align with technological advances and user expectations.

In an effort to improve these services to users, the City would like to create a new design to include additional web services and to utilize advances in technology as outlined in the specifications section of this document. The purpose of the Request for Proposal (RFP) is to provide the City with an improved web site that will:

- Be intuitive for residents and users to navigate
- Improve service (e.g. subscriber notifications) and transparency
- Improve communication between the local government and its customers
- Promote community and economic development
- Improve public document access and document storage options
- Utilize standardized web-site features while maintaining a unique and consistent look
- Be easy to maintain, preferably internally, but possibly via an outside source
- Accommodate future technology expansions
- Easy to find on the internet and user friendly to mobile devices
- Potential to integrate video, audio, and social media
- Detailed analytics reporting

All pricing stated as a response to this request for proposals is not to exceed bid amount.

During the evaluation process, the City reserves the right where it may serve the City's best interest to request additional information or clarification from Vendors, or to allow corrections of errors or omissions. At the discretion of the City, Vendors submitting proposals may be requested to make oral presentations as part of the evaluation.

Both this document and the winning bid(s) will be considered contractual components.

EXAMINATION OF PROPOSAL MATERIALS

The submission of a proposal shall be deemed a representation and warranty by the Vendor that it has investigated all aspects of the RFP, that it is aware of the applicable facts pertaining to the RFP process and its procedures and requirements, and that it has read and understands the RFP. Statistical information which may be contained in the RFP or any addendum thereto is for informational purposes only.

INTERPRETATION

Request for additional information should be via email to: sullery@ci.lowell.mi.us

Such request for clarification of this RFP shall be delivered to the City via email at least seven business

days prior to the date for receipt of proposals and must include the name, phone number and email address of the Vendor.

PAYMENT PROCEDURES

Schedule of payment will be as follows:

- 15% of the project cost after acceptance of the concept phase
- 20% of the project cost after acceptance of the re-design and development phase
- 40% of the project cost after acceptance of the conversion and implementation phase
- 25% of the project cost after the all of the following conditions has been met: 1) the completion of the training and support phase; 2) resolution of all unresolved issues, and 3) 30 days has elapsed after the go-live date.

Acceptance is defined as the mutual agreement by the City and the Vendor of the acceptance of all of the criteria specified in the contract. Both this document and the successful bidder's response to this proposal will both be considered contractual components.

Any additional discounts that could be available by implementing a different payment schedule should be noted in the bid response.

PROPOSAL RESPONSE FORMAT

In order to facilitate the analysis of response to this RFP, Vendors are required to prepare their proposals in accordance with the instructions outlined in this document.

A sealed envelope containing one (1) unbound original and three (3) copies of the proposals must be received in the office of the **City Clerk, 301 E. Main, Lowell, MI 49331 by 11:00 a.m. on October 11, 2017.** Vendors whose proposals deviate from these instructions may be considered non-responsive and may be disqualified at the discretion of the City of Lowell.

Proposals should be prepared as simply as possible and provide a straight forward, concise description of the Vendor's capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the RFP. All parts, pages, figures, and tables must be numbered and labeled clearly. The proposal should be organized into the following major parts:

1. Executive Summary
2. Company Background
3. Experience in developing Municipal websites
4. Implementation Plan and Timeline
5. Support and Maintenance
6. Client References
7. Contract Terms and Conditions
8. Cost Quotations

Instructions relative to each part of the response to this RFP are defined in the remainder of this section. Failure to closely follow the proposal format shall be cause for rejection of the proposal.

Executive Summary (Section 1)

This part of the response to the RFP should be limited to a brief narrative describing the proposed project. The summary should contain as little technical language as possible and should be oriented toward non-technical personnel. The Executive Summary should not include cost quotations.

Company Background (Section 2)

Vendors must provide the following information about their company so that the City of Lowell can evaluate the Vendor's stability and ability to support commitments set forth in the response to the RFP. The City, at its option, may require a Vendor to provide additional documentation to support and/or clarify requested information.

The Vendor should describe the company's background including:

- How long the company has been in business
- A brief description of the company, including past history, present status, future plans, etc.
 - Note any parent/subsidiary relationships
 - Note any name changes/acquisitions
- Company size and organization
- Location of company headquarters
- Total number of employees. Number of full-time and part-time employees. Number of technical staff and certifications.
- Identify specific vendor representatives that will be assigned to this project.

Implementation Plan and Timeline (Section 3)

The Vendor must provide, as part of the response, a detailed implementation plan for the entire project. It should include evaluation; design process, development, testing, conversion and training. The Vendor shall provide a completion date and timeline based upon the enclosed specifications. -Implementation will not occur until all contract(s) are signed.

Support and Maintenance (Section 4)

Vendor must give a detailed description of the support options to be provided during and after the implementation of the proposed site. Support refers to software support, updates, and any ongoing costs. This section must include training opportunities for staff and how training will be handled prior to the new website going live and how it will be handled after the website is live.

The City expects to maintain the day to day operation of the site using City staff. Vendor is

required to provide in Section 7, support and maintenance costs for a period of at least three years following system acceptance.

Client References (Section 5)

Include in your proposal a list of three or more customers for whom the vendor has provided similar services. The City is particularly interested in local government related clients located in Michigan of comparable size and service model. Information must include the following information:

- Name of client with contact person with phone and email address
- Description and date of service that Vendor provided
- Internet link address to service you provided

Contract Terms and Conditions (Section 6)

The Vendor is to state any exceptions to the conditions listed and add any conditions/terms deemed important by the Vendor. Sample contract (license) and support (service) agreements should also be provided in this part of the Vendor's response. Any forms and contracts the Vendor(s) proposes to include as part of any agreement resulting from this bid between the Vendor(s) and the City must be submitted as part of the proposal. Failure to include a contract for such items will be interpreted as meaning that support for any items not specifically contracted for, and provided by said Vendor, are supported by the Vendor at **no additional cost**. This requirement includes, but is not limited to, the following types of forms: licensing agreements, maintenance contracts, and systems support agreements. Inclusion of contracts does not imply acceptance of that contract format and/or verbiage by the City.

Cost Quotations (Section 7)

The BID form included with this RFP must be completed and included on the first page of this section. See page 11 of this RFP.

All pricing stated as a response to this request for proposals is not to exceed bid amount. No additional charges, other than those listed on the bid form, shall be made. Prices quoted should include all costs for meetings, design time, conversion, training, and documentation. All prices quoted must include all that will be necessary to make the site fully operational for the purposes stated herein. Provisions for obtaining additional discounts (i.e. municipal discount, full payment within payment terms period, etc.) should be clearly explained. Any price rollback, rebates and/or lower price revisions during the time of the bid process and prior to final contract will be afforded to the City. All bids must be for the latest version of any product that may be provided. At the time of installation the City shall be afforded the advantage of the latest version of any hardware and software necessary without additional cost.

ARTICLE III. – SPECIFICATIONS

1. Background

The City seeks to provide a website that provides residents, visitors, and those who do business within the City with updated information about current events, news, and details about boards and commissions including current and historical meeting agendas and minutes and that the site provides an explanation of services the City offers and provides details on how to obtain these services. The current site contains pages for each of the City departments that provide answers to frequently asked questions along with documents and forms that each department has available for distribution. The site also serves as a repository for ordinances, news releases, and links to other service organizations.

2. Objectives

The City has identified the following objectives for the Web Site design:

A. Development Objectives

The City of Lowell would like to create a customer focused web site using intuitive navigation controls that will allow for easy access to information by visitors to the site. The City would like to redesign the current website utilizing the latest technology but make it easy to update for staff.

B. Balance Municipal Look & Feel with Unique Web Presence

Municipal sites are informative in nature and should clearly portray the purpose of the City web site. The site should also portray a unique web presence that is attractive as well as functional to fulfill the municipal government service model of on-line services. The Vendor will be expected to work with City staff to develop the “look & feel” of the site to convey the City’s unique character. This shall include a cohesive graphic design that incorporates the City’s municipal color, logo, culture, etc.

C. Site Navigation and Organization

The site navigation should use modern tools/techniques to help guide visitors to their desired information. The site should incorporate, but not limited to, these strategies:

- a. A menu system as the primary navigation tool that shall remain static
- b. Each department will have its own main page that will guide visitors to department specific news and services
- c. Full site map and site specific search capabilities available on every page

D. Calendar Program

The City is looking for a flexible calendar program. Features that are desired include the ability to view the calendar in either day or month format. In addition, the ability to add events to specific days with hyperlinks from those events that can lead to either a web page or a document (such as a PDF) is required. It is preferable that the calendar maintain the look and feel of the new web site.

E. E-mail Subscription

Another feature that is requested is the ability for visitors to sign up to mailing lists for various communications. Subscriptions would include, but are not limited to, the various boards and

Commissions, departments, and general information. These lists would be setup by staff and would allow visitors to subscribe to the desired list.

F. Knowledge Transfer and Skills Training

The newly designed website will bring new technologies to the City, and new ways to utilize existing technologies. The City expects the Vendor to closely work with the City Manager and other key staff members to answer questions and give demonstrations on the new site features.

The City seeks a proposal whereas the City will be maintaining and making enhancements to the site once initial development and implementation has completed. The Vendor should provide training to three to five individuals so they are able to maintain the site. The City would also like to review a second option whereas the vendor will provide maintenance of the site. While it is not the intent of the City to enter into a continuous maintenance relationship with the Vendor, the City may request the Vendor to provide maintenance of the site or another non-routine design tasks in the future at the request of the City.

The Vendor will be expected to provide a document that outlines the maintenance and support process.

G. Document Conversion Methodology

The Vendor is required to specify a means for converting the existing pages in the City website into the new site format.

H. ADA Compliance

The City requires that the web site adheres to the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative to provide a website that will be compliant with the current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

I. Future Enhancements and Technologies

The City expects its web presence to be constantly evolving as new technologies are developed. In order to meet these changes, the web strategy needs to be flexible enough to enable any future additions to the site. The City is interested in creating a mobile app, and notification and alerts system.

J. Website hosting

In the event that the website developer does not also host the website, the vendors proposal must provide for the City to take over any hosting responsibilities. Associated costs for web hosting or hosting assistance must be included in the proposal.

K. Document Storage and Accessibility

The City is seeking to improve the availability and access of documents to the public. The ability to store and easily search and locate documents via keyword search is imperative to a successful new website development.

3. Website Project Phases

The following website project phase outline is provided to demonstrate what the City anticipates the project will involve. This outline shall be further discussed with the awarded Vendor.

A. Concept

a. Determine Content

- i. Evaluate existing web content for inclusion with the new site
- ii. Brainstorm & identify new content
- iii. Document all content for the new site
- iv. Document relationships between content for use later during site layout

b. Navigation Structure

- i. Determine the functional top level navigation tabs
- ii. Determine sub-level navigation options

c. Acceptance

- i. Concept report of findings and recommendations
- ii. Present to management

B. Design

a. Functional Specifications

- i. Detail exactly how the website will operate
- ii. Specify all deliverables
- iii. Set specific milestones

b. Design Site Layout

- i. Organize the site structure
- ii. Determine all the templates needed for various functions
- iii. Determine a look & feel for the site, including color schemes, graphic elements & navigation tools

c. Mock-up Templates

- i. Create visual models of how the user interfaces will operate
- ii. External web pages

d. Acceptance

- i. Present to management
- ii. Implement suggestions made
- iii. Final Acceptance

C. Development

a. Create Templates

- i. Code user interface templates for staff to add, change, or delete content

b. Design Web Applications

- i. Develop server side objects and components
- ii. Develop client side scripts and controls

c. Testing

- i. Develop user testing
- ii. Usability testing

d. Acceptance

- i. Present to management
- ii. Implement suggestions made

- iii. Final Acceptance
- D. **Conversion**
 - a. **Document Conversion**
 - i. Take current site pages and modify for new layout
- E. **Implementation**
 - a. **Install Web Applications**
 - i. Install object and components developed
 - b. **Site Testing**
 - i. Usability testing
 - ii. Stress testing
 - iii. Load testing
 - c. **Acceptance**
 - i. Present to management
 - ii. Implement suggestions made
 - iii. Final Acceptance
 - d. **Go Live**
 - i. Replace current site with new site
- F. **Training and Support/Maintenance**
 - a. **Train staff**
 - i. Provide training to three to five staff personnel
 - ii. Provide documentation that outlines maintenance process
 - b. **Support**
 - i. Provide Support Documentation
 - ii. List support number and hours of operations
 - iii. Process for obtaining and installing updates

ARTICLE IV - TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. This Request for Proposals is not an offer of contract. Receipt of a proposal neither commits the City to award a contract to any vendor, even if all requirements stated in this proposal are met, nor limits the City's right to negotiate in its best interest. The City reserves the right to contract with a vendor for reasons other than lowest price.
2. Expenses incurred in the preparation of proposals in response to this Request for Proposals are the bidder's responsibility.
3. No work performed by the contractor that is out of the scope as defined by the vendor's proposal will be reimbursed unless specifically authorized by the City in writing.
4. The contractor, subcontractors and their employees shall be considered independent contractors and shall not be deemed employees of the City for any reason.
5. All proposals are subject to the Michigan Freedom of Information Act. Once bids are opened, the information contained therein becomes freely accessible by the public.

6. For the duration of the contract, the contractor and all subcontractors must maintain the following insurance coverage at the stated amounts below and must name the City of Lowell as additionally insured.

Type of Insurance:

Workmen's Compensation Insurance and Employer's Liability
Limit: As required by laws of State of Michigan

Public Liability & Property Damage:

Bodily Injury: Each Occurrence: \$1,000,000
Aggregate: \$2,000,000
Property Damage: Each Occurrence: \$1,000,000
Aggregate: \$2,000,000

Owner's and Contractor's Protective Liability & Property Damage:

Bodily Injury: Each Occurrence: \$1,000,000
Aggregate: \$2,000,000
Property Damage: Each Occurrence: \$1,000,000
Aggregate: \$2,000,000

Motor Vehicle (including Owner, Hired and Non-Owned Vehicles):

Bodily Injury: Each Occurrence: \$1,000,000
Property Damage: Each Occurrence: \$1,000,000
Combined single limit: \$2,000,000

Thirty (30) days advance written notice of insurance cancellation, non-renewal, reduction and/or material change in coverage, will be provided to the CITY. Notice of cancellation, material change or reduction must be attached to the Certificate of Insurance, or otherwise evidenced as in effect under the policy listed.

7. Bids submitted may not be withdrawn or modified for sixty (60) days following the date on which they are opened by the City and must remain valid for sixty (60) days.
8. Non-Assignability: There shall be no change, modification, or alteration of the agreement, except in writing, signed by both of the parties. Neither party shall assign any of the rights under the agreement without prior approval, in writing, of the other.
9. Indemnity: The contractor agrees to the fullest extent permitted by law to defend, pay on behalf of, indemnify and hold harmless the City of Lowell, its elected and appointed officials, employees and volunteers and others working on behalf of the City of Lowell against any and all claims, demands, suits or loss, including all costs connected therewith, and for any damages which may be asserted, claimed or recovered against or from the City of Lowell, its elected and appointed officials, employees, volunteers or others working on behalf of the City of Lowell by reason of personal injury, including bodily injury and death and/or property damage, including loss of use thereof, which arises out of or is in any way connected or associated with the contract.

CITY OF LOWELL WEBSITE RFP BID FORM

TO BE COMPLETED BY SUBMITTING FIRM.

Firm/Bidder Name: _____

Both Unit Price and Total Bid Price must be fully completed in order to be considered.

Item	Total
Concept	\$
Design/ Development	\$
Conversion/Implementation	\$
Training	\$
TOTAL BID AMOUNT	\$
Support (per year)	\$
ALTERNATE = Maintenance (per year)	\$

BIDDER'S AGREEMENT

In submitting this proposal, as herein described, the bidder agrees that:

1. They have carefully examined the specifications and all other provisions of this form and understand the meaning, intent, and requirement of same.
2. They will enter into written contract and furnish the item or items in the time specified in conformance with the specifications and conditions contained therein for the price quoted by the proponent on this proposal.

SIGNED BY: _____ *TITLE:* _____

COMPANY/FIRM: _____

ADDRESS: _____ *DATE:* _____