

City of Grand Blanc, Michigan

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

Issue Date: Wednesday, March 27, 2019

Written Questions Due: Wednesday, April 10, 2019 by 2:00pm

Contact: Mary Hopkins – clerk@cityofgrandblanc.com; 810-694-1118

Proposals Due: Monday, April 22, 2019 by 5:00pm

All proposals must be received by the above deadline. Any proposals received after this time will not be considered.

Invitation to Submit Proposals

The City of Grand Blanc is accepting proposals from individual vendors to plan, develop, and implement a new website as specified within this Request for Proposals.

Physical Address

City of Grand Blanc
203 East Grand Blanc
Grand Blanc, MI 48439
Attention: Website Proposal
Mon – Fri, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

One (1) physical copy, and one (1) USB flash drive containing a digital copy of the proposal must be received in the City Office, 203 East Grand Blanc Road (physical address) by 5:00 pm. on Monday, April 22, 2019. The proposal and flash drive must be in a sealed envelope with “RFP – Website Development” and the vendor’s name written on the exterior of the envelope.

Project Summary

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

The City of Grand Blanc is a tax-exempt municipal government located in Genesee County. The City provides services to approximately 8,000 residents. The City’s website was originally established to provide public access to information about services and activities offered by the City and to communicate information about the City. To improve the site for users, the City would like to update and upgrade its website on a new platform and include additional online services and to utilize advances in technology as outlined in the specifications section of this document. This update would be a complete structural overhaul. The purpose of the Request for Proposal (RFP) is to assist in the selection of a Vendor that will provide the City with an improved website that will:

1. Continue to provide a clean and attractive design that reflects the community's character;
2. Be highly intuitive for residents and users to navigate;
3. Improve service to residents with additional and/or up-to-date features;
4. Utilize standardized module features designed for local governmental functions, while maintaining a consistent look that appropriately reflects the character of the community;
5. Be easy to maintain for staff using an intuitive content management system;
6. Provide for simple upload of documents, information, images, and videos;
7. Eliminate duplicative pages and information;
8. Provide advanced search capabilities.

During the evaluation process, the City reserves the right to request additional information or clarification from Vendors, or to allow corrections of errors or omissions. Selected vendors submitting proposals may be requested to make visual presentations as part of the evaluation.

Specifications

1. **Background** - The City of Grand Blanc's current website (<http://www.cityofgrandblanc.com>) provides residents, visitors, and those who do business within the City with up-to-date information about current events, news, services, and details about boards and commissions including meeting agendas, minutes, and agenda packets. Our current website was designed a few years ago to be a multi-functional point of contact; containing a variety of links, documents, and forms. We are looking for a new website with an easy to use format.
2. **Objectives** - The City has identified the following objectives for the website design and development:
 - A. **Development Objectives** - The City of Grand Blanc would like a customer-focused website using intuitive navigation controls that will allow for easy access to information by visitors to the site. The City would like a website utilizing the latest technology.
 - B. **Balance Municipal Look and Feel with Unique Community-Centric Web Presence** - Municipal sites are informative in nature and should clearly portray this purpose. The site should portray a unique web presence that is attractive, as well as functional, while retaining an obvious appearance as a "municipal" destination. The Vendor will be expected to work with City staff to develop the "look and feel" of the site to convey the City's unique character.
 - 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 be limited to, these strategies:
 - a. A menu or bread-crumbs system that shall remain consistent throughout the different areas of the site
 - b. Full site map
 - c. Limiting the number of clicks and sub-tiers to find desired information
 - D. **Functionality** – The new website will incorporate the following functions or programs:
 - a. **Content Management System** – The newly designed website will bring new technologies to the City, and new ways to utilize existing technologies. Since

the City of Grand Blanc does not maintain a traditional in-house information technology department, the City expects the Vendor to utilize a content management system that allows staff members to easily and intuitively update the website. The content management system should allow for straight-forward processes for: uploading or deleting documents; editing text and graphic content; adding or deleting images and videos; adding or deleting pages; and updating news and calendar items.

- b. Advanced Search Functionality**– The website’s search tool should provide users the ability to search for keywords within documents in addition to document titles with a high degree of accuracy.
 - c. Calendar Program** - The City is interested in a flexible calendar program. 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. Features that are desired include: the ability to view the calendar in either day, week, or month format; ability to add recurring events; and that the calendar maintain the look and feel of the new website.
 - d. News** – The website shall offer a news feature that will be used by City staff to keep residents up-to-date on City business.
 - e. Agendas, Agenda Packets, and Minutes** – The site shall contain pages that allow for the easy upload and management of Agendas, Agenda Packets, and Minutes for various Boards and Committees.
 - f. Integration with Other Technologies** – Through its website City provides access to information contained on other organization’s websites, this includes tax and utility bill look-up on BS&A’s website (www.accessmygov.com); the new website should allow for greater access to these and other tools.
 - g. E-Mail List Signup and Page Change Notification List** - Two other requested features are the ability for visitors to sign up for various e-mail lists and for users to sign up to be notified when changes are made to a page that is important to them. The City currently does not have this feature.
 - h. Permits and Forms** – The website will host a Permits and Forms section, it is desirable that the website allow users to search and filter to quickly and accurately find the permit or form that they are seeking.
 - i. Mobile Viewing** – The site should offer a mobile-friendly version that will allow visitors the option of accessing a simplified version of the site that remains clean on phones or tablets.
- E. Knowledge Transfer and Skills Training** - Through the implementation phase of the project, the Vendor will work closely with the City Staff to answer questions. The Vendor will provide demonstrations and training for Staff on the process for updating and maintaining the new site.

It is expected that the City will be maintaining and making enhancements to the site once initial development and implementation has been completed. City may request the Vendor to provide non-routine design or maintenance 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.

- F. Document Conversion Methodology** - The Vendor is required to specify a means for converting City approved existing content in the current City website into the new site, except where format, navigation, and information are intended to be updated. Updates will be identified during the Concept, Redesign, and Development processes.
- G. ADA Compliance** - The City desires that the website adhere 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).
- H. Long-Term Security and Migration** – The City expects that the website and its software will be maintained in a way that ensures it is secure from online threats and will receive patches and updates as are necessary to ensure its security in the long-term (at least 7 – 10 years). If necessary, the City expects that the Vendor will migrate the website to new platforms should existing platforms no longer be supported.
- I. Off-Site Hosting** – The City will accept proposals or recommendations with regard to off-site hosting, whether that be through the vendor or a 3rd party.
- J. Future Enhancements and Technologies** - The City expects its web presence to be constantly evolving as new technologies are developed. To adapt, the web strategy needs to be flexible enough to enable future additions to the site.

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. Responses to Request for Proposals Due – April 22, 2019 by 5:00pm**
- B. Vendor Interviews** – The City of Grand Blanc's Website Committee will review the proposals provided in response to this RFP and will invite select vendors to provide a demonstration of website similar in design to what is proposed; the vendor's Content Management System; and the vendor's module functionality.
- C. Vendor Selection**
- D. Pre-Development Meeting**
 - a. Verify Deliverables**
 - b. Set Project Timeline**
 - c. Set Specific Project Milestones**
- E. Design Exercises** – The City expects that the selected vendor will lead the City's Website Committee and/or Staff in exercises that will ensure a greater understanding of expectations relating to the look and feel of the site, including color schemes, graphic elements, and navigational tools. These exercises may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Wireframing**
 - b. Preference Exercises** - Compare and contrast the functionality and design of existing websites; and review likes and dislikes with regard to the City's existing website
- F. Concept**
 - a. Mock-Up of Templates**
 - i.** Create visual rendering of look and feel for home page, standard sub-heading page, and mobile versions
 - ii.** Create visual models of how the user interfaces will operate
 - iii.** Present to management
 - iv.** City staff to provide comments for incorporation – up to 3 rounds

- of edit and comment
- v. Implement suggestions made
- vi. Final Acceptance

G. Structure Design

a. Determine Content

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

b. Design Site Layout and Navigation Structure

- i. Determine the functional top level navigation tabs
- ii. Determine sub-level navigation options
- iii. Determine all the templates needed for various functions

c. Functional Specifications

- i. Detail exactly how the website will operate

d. Acceptance

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

H. Development

a. Create Templates

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

b. Design Online Services

- i. Page change notification and opt-out service.
- ii. Connection to E-Mail List Registration Software
- iii. Calendar Program
- iv. News Plug-In
- v. Advanced Search Function
- vi. Forms Filter

c. Testing

- i. Develop user testing
- ii. Usability testing

d. Acceptance

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

I. Conversion

a. Document Conversion

- i. Take City-approved current site content and modify for new site

J. Implementation

a. Set Up Online Services

- i. Page Change Notification
- ii. Connection to E-Mail List Registration Software
- iii. Calendar Program
- iv. News Function/Plug-In
- v. Advanced Search Function
- vi. Forms Filter
- vii. Mobile Version of Site

b. Site Testing

- i. Usability testing
- ii. Stress testing

c. Acceptance

- i. Present to management
 - ii. Implement suggestions made
 - iii. Final Acceptance
 - d. **Train staff**
 - i. Provide training to staff, including at least one full day of in-person training for site functionality and back-end maintenance
 - ii. Provide documentation that outlines content management system and maintenance process
 - e. **Go Live**
 - i. Old site is disabled
 - ii. New site is enabled
- K. **Support/Maintenance**
 - a. **Support**
 - i. Vendor will respond immediately to site emergencies and questions for at least two-weeks after site goes live
 - ii. Provide support documentation
 - iii. List support number and hours of operations
 - iv. Process for obtaining and installing updates

Proposal Response Format

In order to facilitate the analysis of response to this request for proposal (RFP), Vendors are required to prepare their proposals in accordance with the instructions outlined in this section.

One (1) physical copy, and one (1) USB flash drive containing a digital copy of the proposal must be received in the City Hall Office, 203 East Grand Blanc Road (physical address) by 2:00 p.m. on April 22, 2019. The proposal and flash drive must be in a sealed envelope with "RFP – Website Development" and the vendor's name written on the exterior of the envelope. Mailed copies received after the deadline will not be accepted.

Proposals should provide a straight forward and concise description of the Vendor's capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the RFP. The proposal should be organized into the following major parts:

1. **Executive Summary** - This part of the response to the RFP should be limited to a brief narrative describing the process used in a website redesign or development. The summary should contain as little technical language as possible and should be oriented toward non-technical personnel.
2. **Company Background** - Vendors must provide the following information about their company so that the City of Grand Blanc can evaluate the Vendors' stability and ability to support commitments set forth in the response to the RFP. The City of Grand Blanc, 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:
 - a. How long the company has been in business
 - b. A brief description of the company, including history, present status, future plans relevant to the continued provision of services, etc.
 - i. Note any parent/subsidiary relationships
 - ii. Note any name changes/acquisitions
 - c. Total number of employees. Number of full-time and part-time employees. Number of technical staff and certifications.
 - d. Experience working with government website redesigns or development, and websites supported

3. **Timeline and Implementation** - The Vendor must provide, as part of the response, a draft detailed timeline for the project. It should include evaluation, design and development processes, implementation, testing, conversion and training. The City reserves the right to determine the implementation timetable based on calendar and fiscal restraints. Implementation will not occur until all contract(s) are signed. A more detailed timetable will be discussed as part of the pre-project meeting with the selected vendor.
4. **Support** - Vendor must give a detailed description of the support options to be provided during and after the implementation of the proposed site. Support may refer to software support, updates, and any ongoing costs.
5. **Client References** - Vendors must provide at least 3 government client references, preferably local government clients. References must have currently functioning websites designed by the vendor. Please provide the following information:
 - a. Name of client and contact information of reference
 - b. Description of service provided
 - c. Internet address link to service you provided
6. **Detailed Cost Breakdown** – A Cost Breakdown Form is attached to this Request for Proposals.
7. **Web Hosting Options and Recommendations** - The City currently contracts for its web hosting, however, it would consider other options and recommendations. The Vendor should provide such information as an alternate to their proposal. If the options and/or recommendations involve a third party, please provide substantiating documentation.

Selection Criteria

Proposals received will be evaluated on the following selection criteria:

1. Proposed cost
2. Estimated timeline for completing the project
3. Demonstrated experience developing local government websites
4. Look and functionality of website examples provided
5. Demonstrated experience in all aspects of website development relevant to this project
6. Demonstrated understanding of the purpose and scope of this project
7. Demonstrated ability to coordinate resources, equipment and staffing for all work included in this Request for Proposals

Reservations

The City of Grand Blanc has the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to reject any proposals, waive informalities, or accept any proposal it deems to be in the City's best interests. The City of Grand Blanc has the right to modify any of the information provided with this request for proposal and the City has the right to provide the candidate firms with additional information at any time during the selection process.

Candidate firms shall review this Request for Proposals and all materials or addendums associated with this RFP, and shall prepare all materials for submittal and all presentations at their sole cost and expense, and the City of Grand Blanc shall not be responsible for any cost or expense incurred by the candidate firms in such reviews and preparations.