



The Woodlands Township Mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting Minutes

PROJECT:	Website Development: Redesign, Content Management System, Hosting, and Engagement Tools for the official Township website
CONTRACT NO.:	C-2023-0273
VIRTUAL MEETING LOCATION:	https://bit.ly/Township-Website-RFP-Mtg
DATE/TIME:	Monday, September 18, 2023, at 10 a.m.

Meeting started at 10:20 a.m.

INTRODUCTIONS

- LeaAnn Petersen, Director of Communications
- Mary Connell, Communications Manager
- Kacie Gurney, Senior Communications Specialist
- Perry Frank, Communications Specialist
- Tamara Bean, Communications Specialist
- Barbara Ryan, Senior Administrative Assistant

This meeting was recorded, and the attendees' statements serve as the record of attendance. This is a mandatory pre-bid meeting. Bid proposals will only be accepted from those bidders who attended this meeting.

RECORD OF ATTENDEES

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abdullah Ahmed, HiperLeap • Alex Jagodzinski, Get Online NOLA • Alheli Santos, Invitado • Ali Naseer, HiperLeap • Allyson Bidy, Granicus • Ana Mengote Baluca, Sinosinno Design Lab • Ankur Agrawal, V3iT Consulting • Ashley Simper, Triton Consulting Group (The Woodlands, TX) • Ashley Williams, Liam Crest | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Erwin, App Maisters • Aparna Bichu, V3iT Consulting • Cassie Reyes, Promet Source • Chris Visit, Frank & Victor Design • Christopher Brown, FCB Technical • Darpan Varodra • Francis Bedzo, LAB Information Technology Inc., dba LABUSA • Georgina, Ingenia Agency • Haseebullah Kalwar, Consult America Inc. |
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- Imtiaz Kalwar, Consult America Inc
- Jagiprasad Yadav
- Jay Prasad, Tech Brains Solutions, Inc.
- Jeremy Rachel, Victory
- Jim Tormey, Jessie James Creative
- Jonathan Dwinell, Presley Design Studio, Belton, TX
- Joseph Nagrant, Revize - Conroe, Texas Office
- Josiah Partin, The Valley List. Marietta OH
- Julius Rainey Jr., Strategic Pixels
- Justin Abrams, Cause of a Kind
- Kalyan Yenneti, ITVibes
- Lauralee Belisle, Appddiction Studio LLC
- MacKenzie Campbell, Granicus
- Mario Morales, CivicPlus
- Matt Howitt, TwoThirtySix Labs
- Michelle Harris, FaithLake Solutions LLC
- Mike Rispoli, Cause of a Kind Innovation Studio, NY
- Mir, Bluespark
- Mobikasa
- Navjeet Singh, Net Scribe
- Nicolas Siciliano, Alpha Co. Marketing & Media
- Nidhi Suman, RightIT Solutions
- Nimit, Yajatssoft
- Nobel Anthony, App Maisters
- Nurul Huda, SJ Innovation LLC.
- Patrick Mullins, Infolob Global, Inc.
- Robbie O'Quinn, BBG&G Integrated Marketing
- Sajid Hussain, Park Inc.
- Sam Mazzaferro, Squiz Inc.
- Sameer Khan
- Samidha Mopkar
- Satoya Clanton, Appddiction Studio LLC
- Selciya Judieth K, Intellectyx, Inc
- Siddhesh Jayawant
- Siddiqur Rahman, SJ Innovation LLC
- Swathi B, Intellectyx, Inc
- Tom Conlon, North Street Creative
- Siva Yenneti, ITVibes
- Shantanu Singh, Mobikasa LLC.
- Kashif Hussain, Consult America Inc

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Woodlands Township is seeking proposals from professionals, and qualified website and content management firms to redesign the Township's official website, www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov. A full redevelopment of the Township's official website is a strategic priority identified by the Township Board of Directors. We have the intent to redesign every four to five years. Proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria set forth within this RFP. One or more professional firms may be selected to provide the requested services outlined in this RFP.

The redesign must include a robust Content Management System (CMS) allowing staff to update the website easily and should be responsive and mobile-friendly. Recent analytics indicate 86% of website visitors access the site from a mobile device. The redesign should be easy to navigate, beautifully designed and functional for all users.

BACKGROUND

The Township is an unincorporated community, with 120,000 residents in Montgomery and Harris counties, operating as a special purpose district. We are not a municipality. The Township serves as the primary service provider for the community and is funded by property tax, sales/use tax, hotel occupancy tax and other programs. It has one of the lowest property tax rates in the state.

The first design of www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov was launched in 2010. Since then, the website has undergone one website redesign in 2016. Both the original and the redesign were implemented by CivicPlus. Additional engagement and online tools provided by CivicPlus include Monsido, ChatBot and ArchiveSocial (Social Media). Additional 3rd-Party applications supplement and enhance the website, such as AgendaQuick for our public meeting agendas.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Replacement of the current Township website with a website that offers the latest in technology to government organizations.
- A website that utilizes current web-based and mobile technologies to engage with the community.
- A well-designed, easy to use website that provides a positive end user experience.
- Development of internal department/micro/subsites for the Fire, Parks, and Transportation departments.
- An intuitive system for content creators that are publishing to the website.
- Implementation of electronic workflow for website postings.
- Redesign of the information architecture and navigation of the Township’s website.
- Replacement or upgrade of the existing website CMS software
- Functionality with currently integrated programs, such as Tyler.
- Easy integration with future programs, particularly those that allow for virtual services and engagement tools.
- Creating a brand-recognizable website using the Township’s logo and branding guidelines.
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance and accessibility consistent with federal, state, and local requirements. Using an add-on from CivicPlus right now - Monsido.
- Capability of website translation.
- Security in compliance with local, state, and federal standards.
- Identify and provide web-based information management tools to comply with the Township’s retention and access to public information requirements.
- Identify and provide web-based management tools to enhance website services for the community.

Key Dates	Activity
Thursday, August 31, 2023	Distribute RFP.
Monday, September 18, 2023, at 10 a.m. (CST)	Mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting.
Friday, September 22, 2023, by 4 p.m. (CST)	Deadline to submit written questions.
Friday, September 29, 2023, by 4 p.m. (CST)	Township to provide posted answers on website.
Friday, October 6, 2023, by 4 p.m. (CST)	Deadline to submit Proposals and all required forms.
Wednesday, November 1, 2023, and Thursday, November 2, 2023 - Times TBD	Shortlist selected firms to provide onsite or web-based demonstrations. <i>Day/time is subject to change.</i>
Wednesday, November 8, 2023 - Times TBD	Selected finalists’ interviews. Additional demonstrations may be scheduled if deemed necessary. <i>Days/times are subject to change.</i>
November 15 through December 31, 2023	Contract negotiation.
Thursday, January 18, 2024	Anticipated bid awarded to selected firm. <i>Date subject to the negotiation of contract terms and Board of Directors meeting schedule.</i>

SCOPE OF WORK

Project phases include Discovery, Design, Development, Content Migration, Review and Testing, Training, Launch, Support and Hosting, and Website Analytics.

DISCOVERY: Meet with Township staff to identify and understand the Township’s mission, vision and branding and how these criteria will impact the website. Conduct a website audit and review audit findings with Township’s internal audit.

Identify and analyze the effectiveness of online resources and 3rd party applications. Review historic website analytics and data and develop a detailed project schedule. We are anticipating between 9 to 12 months for completion of this project.

DESIGN: Create a mock-up design based on the Township's branding guidelines and collaboration with staff. Design internal micro/sub-sites for three internal departments (currently identified as Parks, Transportation and Fire). Ensure pricing per micro/sub-site is included in the proposal. Ensure mock-up designs include versions for mobile, tablet and desktop views. Design should include three revision cycles, can be more, but at least three. Develop new and refined site information architecture to prioritize content, simplify discoverability, provide an optimal user interface. Develop a comprehensive Style Guide for the website design. Ensure new design complies with ADA requirements and the fundamentals of Universal Design to provide optimal accessibility to all users.

INSPIRATIONAL EXAMPLES:

- Silverthorne, Colorado - silverthorne.org
- Anna, Texas - annatexas.gov
 - [Parks Department Site](#)
 - [Fire Department Site](#)
 - [Police Department Site](#)
- Township of Abington, Pennsylvania - abingtonpa.gov
- Miami, Florida - miami.gov
- Syracuse, New York - syr.gov
- DuPage County, Illinois - dupagecounty.gov
- Cedar Park, Texas - cedarparktexas.gov
- Lufkin, Texas - cityoflufkin.com
- West Hartford, Connecticut - westhartfordct.gov

DEVELOPMENT: Develop a fully operational, responsive and functional website framework (staging site) using a comprehensive CMS solution as developed. CMS features should include: Content Editor, Content Management, Navigation. Calendar Functionality, Forms, Security/Authorization. Additional Functionality should include: RSS, CSS, social media sharing, easy integration for 3rd party apps, internal search engine, ability to manage design features, content tagging.

While the development of the website is the primary objective, the Township does encourage vendors to provide additional features that will enhance website services, such as Chatbots, accessibility testing, citizen requests, online permitting, recreation registration, applications, email and texting notification systems. These features should be priced separately in the proposal.

CONTENT MIGRATION: The development phase should result in a full staging site so that content can be easily migrated. During this phase: Migrate all content from www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov, upload and add content provided for micro-sub-sites, ensure migrated content is optimized for search engines and in compliance with ADA requirements, and create user roles, groups, permission and approval levels as outlined by staff. Our goal is to launch all these sites at the same time.

REVIEW & TESTING: During this phase, validate the integrity of the site to ensure that it is safe and secure, ensure site themes and style sheets display correctly on ALL pages, define testing objectives to include performance, compatibility testing, accessibility testing and security testing. We are also requesting testing scenarios for user groups (independent and Township staff) to perform testing. Please create user testing groups for residents, staff and community partners and organize and administer usability testing sessions. Feedback should be analyzed and the results provided reported to Township staff. And of course, implement changes based on the feedback of testing and analysis.

LAUNCH: Develop a soft launch between one to four weeks prior to the official launch. Launch on the agreed-upon launch date. Provide additional technical support during soft launch and after official launch.

SUPPORT & HOSTING: The vendor is responsible for hosting the website and micro-sites. (Host and connect primary and micro/department/subsites to domain names.) Work with the Township's IT Department for domain and DNS record management. Provide technical report outlining hosting and support features. Provide technical assistance with website-related technical issues, such as server errors, broken links, database problems, and other technical glitches. Regularly update the website software (CMS, plugins, themes) and implementing security measures to protect against vulnerabilities and hacking attempts. Create and maintain regular backups of the website's data to ensure quick recovery in case of data loss or system failure. Develop redundancy plans and identify where and how backups are conducted, stored, and scheduled. Optimize the website's speed and performance to improve user experience and search engine rankings. Address and resolve any bugs or issues that may arise on the website. Manage and maintain web servers including hardware management, server updates, and security configurations. Ensure the website remains accessible to users with minimal downtime. Provide sufficient bandwidth and storage space to accommodate website traffic and data needs. Implement security measures to protect the website and data from cyber threats.

We are also requesting that the website is mapped to Google Analytics 4 (GA4) to gather website data. Please include instructions on how staff would access and create analytic reports.

PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals must be received no later than 4 p.m. (CST) on Friday, October 6, 2023. All submittals, including vendor questions, must be submitted electronically to LeaAnn Petersen, Director of Communications, and Mary Connell, Communications Manager, at the emails listed below. Questions will not be accepted or responded to over the phone.

Submit proposals and questions to:

lpetersen@thewoodlandstowship-tx.gov AND mconnell@thewoodlandstowship-tx.gov

All vendor questions that are not asked during the Mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting must be received in writing by Friday, September 22, 2023, by 4 p.m. (CST). Answers will be posted to <http://www.thewoodlandstowship-tx.gov/bids> by 4 p.m. on Friday, September 29, 2023.

Proposal submissions shall contain a thorough description and analysis of the following information in the order presented below.

1. Cover Letter/Letter of Introduction
2. Executive Summary
3. Lead Project Contact
4. Project Team
5. Firm Experience and Qualifications
6. Scope of Work including Tasks and Deliverables
7. Budget Estimate (by phase and feature)
8. Project Schedule (9 to 12 months)
9. General Contract Requirements and Forms

Proposals must be received no later than 4 p.m. (CST) on Friday, October 6, 2023.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSAL

Evaluation Criteria	Points
Website CMS functionality and development capabilities	25
Digital tools/applications and capabilities to connect and sync with third-party technology	20
Design and functionality of municipal organization website; references	20
Support & Training	20
Costs & Fees	10
Technical Compliance with RFP Requirements	5
Total Points	100

DEMONSTRATIONS

Up to four finalists will be selected to give software and program demonstrations. These demonstrations may be held in person or virtually. Demonstrations are slated to occur on November 1-2, 2023. Times will be provided to selected vendors. Vendors should be able to demonstrate all products and solutions as outlined with their proposal.

RIGHT TO REJECT

The Woodlands Township expressly reserves the right to: (1) reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, received in response to this RFP; (2) accept any proposal(s) that it determines shall best meet the Township's goals, objectives, and standards, regardless of whether or not said bid/proposal is the lowest priced option; (3) waive any non-material defect, informality, or irregularity in any proposal or proposal procedure; and/or (4) negotiate separately the terms and conditions of all or any part of the proposals as determined to be in The Woodlands Township best interest and at its sole discretion.

NOTIFICATION OF BID AWARD

Upon conclusion of final negotiations with the successful candidate, all candidates submitting proposals in response to this RFP will be informed of the name of the successful candidate. At this time, the bid is anticipated to be awarded on Thursday, January 18, 2024.

QUESTIONS

Questions typed into the Chat feature of Teams were read aloud and entered into the meeting record, along with the answers to questions received during the meeting. Minutes will be posted online at www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/bids within three business days following the meeting.

Questions and answers will be posted to the related documents within [RFP Website Development Redesign, Content Management System](#), Bid No. C-2023-0273, Friday, September 29, 2023, by 4 p.m. (CST).