

Farmington
DDA
Website
RFP

2010

The following is a Request for Proposal to redesign the Farmington
Downtown Development Authority's website.



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Summary

The Farmington Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is accepting proposals to design and/or develop a replacement for the organization's website. This will be a concept to completion production. The purpose of this RFP is to provide a fair evaluation for all candidates and to provide the candidates with the evaluation criteria against which they will be judged.

Proposal Guidelines and Requirements

This is an open and competitive process.

Proposals will be received until March 19, 2010 at 4:00pm. Proposals received after March 19, 2010 at 4:00pm will not be considered.

The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the company submitting the proposal. Six (6) printed copies of your proposal in addition to an electronic copy should be submitted.

If you wish to submit alternate solutions, please do so. Please identify these in an addendum.

You may quote on the graphical design (hereby referred as "design") portion of this project, the technical programming platform (hereby referred as "development") portion of this project, or both. The price you quote should be inclusive. If your price excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.

If the execution of work to be performed by your company requires the hiring of sub-contractors you must clearly state this in your proposal. Sub-contractors must be identified and the work they will perform must be defined. In your proposal, please provide the name and address of the subcontractor. The Farmington DDA will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of sub-contractors; however we retain the right to refuse the sub-contractors you have selected.

Provisions of this RFP and the contents of the successful responses are considered available for inclusion in final contractual obligations.

Contract Terms

All contracts are subject to review by Farmington DDA legal counsel, and a project will be awarded upon signing of an agreement or contract, which outlines terms, scope, budget and other necessary items.

Purpose Description and Objectives

Purpose

The Farmington DDA intends to re-engineer the site to better reflect the mission of the Farmington DDA and incorporate the latest web technology. The Farmington DDA would like to retain ongoing services from the selected service providers to provide additional ongoing support, training, and updates. All content, coding and graphics will become the sole property of the Farmington DDA.

Description

Create a flexible, informative web site that is easy to maintain. We must develop a user friendly site that can deliver large amounts of constantly changing information to our key audiences. In addition to designing a user friendly site, we must also develop a web-based, database-driven administration tool that allows key management personnel to easily update content without directly accessing source code.

The Farmington DDA will maintain editorial control of content. The ability to update content must be password protected to allow users selected by the Farmington DDA to update website content.

To be effective, our website must be:

- Easy and intuitive
- Visually pleasing
- Informative
- Consistent with our brand
- Safe and secure
- Quick to load and operate

Objective

Our primary Internet objective is to continue to build brand identity, awareness, and interest in the organization and the services it provides to promote the downtown community and businesses.

Our Vision

- Maximize web-based technologies
- Build loyalty and enhance community relationships
- Improve community communication
- Provide focused web-based solutions
- Increase market awareness

Specific Strategies

- Relevant search engine rankings by optimizing page structure content
- Increase awareness of the Farmington DDA mission and promote involvement through programs
- Gain and retain website visitation by users
- Strength and relationship with community stakeholders
- Attract volunteers
- Present comprehensive information and resources in an easy-to-use format
- Integrate brand messaging and deliver a consistent image
- Deliver a scalable and easy to maintain foundation

In short we must engage our audience through the use of compelling visuals, intuitive navigation, and concise messaging.

Make it easy – Redesign the site to deliver intuitive navigation, and improved graphical user interface, and easy-to-find content organization.

Make it compelling – Develop tools to deliver timely, relevant information to our target audience.

Make it happen

Timeline

This RFP is dated February 26, 2010. Prospects can retrieve a copy of the RFP from the current website at <http://www.downtownfarmington.org/>. Prospects may also request a copy be sent via email by contacting Annette Knowles at <mailto:aknowles@downtownfarmington.org>.

A meeting may be held to allow all prospects to ask questions and clarifications at the same time.

Proposals are due no later than 4pm Eastern Time on March 19, 2010.

Proposals will be evaluated immediately thereafter. During this time we may require interviews at our office with our evaluation team near the end of April. You will be notified if this is requested.

The candidate firm will be selected on May 24, 2010 and this information will be posted on the current website within 3 days.

Budget

Proposals with various cost options may be submitted for the design, development, or both portions of the RFP. The budget must encompass all design, production, and software acquisitions necessary for development and maintenance of the website.

The Farmington DDA has currently budgeted approximately \$12,000 to \$15,000 for the total website redesign including both the design and development portions of the project.

Background of Organization

Our Mission

To promote and enrich a vigorous downtown business and residential district while retaining and enhancing our main street atmosphere.

About the DDA

The Downtown Development Authority, or DDA, was established in 1986 to correct and prevent deterioration in the business district, encourage historic preservation and to authorize the creation and implementation of development plans in the district and use tax-increment financing within the DDA

district. The theory is that investment in downtown will stimulate property value and the taxes on growth would be reinvested in the downtown.

An eleven-member Board of Directors governs the DDA and, in turn, provides direction its Executive Director.

Audience

Stakeholders and audience groups:

Businesses, residents, sponsors, volunteers, investors, business patrons, and downtown visitors.

Scope and Guidelines

The scope of this project is to redesign the existing Farmington DDA web site. A firm that can handle the design and/or development of the new website is required. The site must include a technology solution that allows the in-house staff to easily and cost effectively update content and modify site design after the initial launch.

Although the firm providing the proposal will also be providing a timeline, our desired timeline for this project is as follows:

Site Mock Ups – End of June

Site Testing – End of August

Site Launch – Beginning of October

We understand that unforeseen events can cause a project from following the planned timeline. In the event that this happens, good communication of revised time estimates is expected.

Discovery

Confirm audiences, objectives, graphic look and feel, navigation, site marketing, technology issues and assumptions, required functionality, and budgetary constraints, resulting in a creative brief.

Design Guidelines

Graphic look and feel, home page and main navigation templates for each of the main navigation links.

- Convert substantial amounts of existing content to new web site.
- Visually Appealing – The site must have an attractive mix of text and graphics.
- Common Theme – Each section of the site should have a common look and feel. The Farmington DDA logo should be prominently displayed on every page as a common header.
- Consistent Design – As stated above, each section of the site should have a common look and feel. The use of photographs, fonts and layouts should be consistent throughout the site.
- Once the web site has been completed and accepted by the Farmington DDA, the web site design and all of its contents, software and architecture become property of the Farmington DDA.

Development Guidelines

Web site information architecture and user site navigation.

- Create a content management system that will permit non-technical Farmington DDA staff to instantly update web site content on specific pages.
- Easily Updated – Once the site has been completed and accepted by the Farmington DDA, site content will be maintained by the Farmington DDA.
- Easy to Navigate – The site should be easy to navigate. Information should be grouped and presented in a logical manner and require no more than three levels of “drill down” for the user to find the desired information.
- Development of web pages to accommodate the proposed navigation scheme.
- Provide search capabilities using key words or phrasing that will identify content from throughout the site.
- Allow users to subscribe to a newsletter mailing list.
- Feature to send out an email newsletter to the subscriber mailing list.
- Project Management – An assigned project manager will be made available to present information and coordinate with Farmington DDA staff, including a reasonable number of meetings to present design and/or development solutions.

Site Specifications

The Farmington DDA encourages creativity in the proposals submitted; however there are certain requirements for the web site project. Your proposal must account for all of these requirements.

- Site must be compatible with the most popular web browsers currently in use.
- Web site must not require plug-ins as a default.
- Meets ADA Requirements – The site should be developed to meet all Federally-mandated access requirements adopted by the Federal Access Board under section 508 subsection 1194.22 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- Fast Loading Pages – The web site must be designed with a balance of text and graphics such that each page loads reasonably quickly over standard broadband connections.

Testing

Testing of site on all applicable platforms to ensure web site works as promised. Explain testing plan through development process (i.e. focus groups, etc.).

Delivery

Delivery and uploading of site for hosting by an outside third party or consultant (to be determined).

Tracking

Implementation of tracking software to produce user defined site log reports. We need a tool to help us better understand and measure web visitor behavior and improve web site performance and availability. (This may be offered through hosting service.)

Web traffic analysis

- Path analysis and page referrals
- Visitor trends
- Page views
- Entry pages
- Top pages
- Exit pages
- Page – length of stay
- Technical analysis: browsers and platforms

Post Launch Support

- Farmington DDA desires a technical contact to be available after the launch to assist with technical updates to the site beyond simple content management such as adding new pages, menus, or site features as needed. Costs incurred for this additional service after launch will be billed to Farmington DDA as services are rendered. An hourly rate for post launch technical services should be included in the proposal.

Available Technology Resources/Integration Issues

We will use much of our existing web content. New content will be identified through interviews and user focus groups.

It will be important to have the features of our existing website available as a minimum feature set of our new website, and we encourage that the existing website be reviewed for existing functionality and features for consideration when preparing their proposals.

There are existing databases that need to be integrated from the current website. These are:

- Email Subscriber List
- Business Subscriber List
- Business List Database

We do not have existing e-Commerce systems, web forums, banner advertising, embedded videos, surveys, or other tools that the new site should be connected to. However, we are considering adding features like these in the future, and desire a system that will be able to integrate these without unreasonable difficulty.

Point of Contact

Annette Knowles will be the primary point of contact for the Farmington DDA, and any questions or communications can be directed through her.

Qualifications

- List the five web sites your firm has produced that best reflect your work and relevancy to this project. Briefly list the role your firm played in each project. The URL should be submitted. Only sites that are live will qualify during evaluation.
- Describe your experience, if any, in producing sites for non-profit and/or community-focused projects.
- Provide current reference information for three former or current clients.
- Briefly describe your firm's organizational capacity to produce our web site (e.g. staff, equipment, software, physical space, office location, etc.).
- How many full-time staff does your firm employ?
- Provide a company profile, length of time in business and core competencies.
- What type of team will be assigned to this project? What will each person's role be? Please include a brief background summary for each key staff member assigned to this project.
- Briefly describe your firm's project management process.
- Please discuss your testing and support plan.
- Please explain your service level agreement (SLA) structure.
- Time frame for completion. The time frame for completion of the project will be evaluated. In addition, time frames will be part of the contractual agreement; therefore, a realistic time frame for completion is requested.
- Process to include input from all program areas. Please state how you intend to communicate with all program areas to gather all of the required information.
- Terms and conditions.

Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will form the basis upon which the Farmington DDA will evaluate proposals. The mandatory criteria must be met and include:

Six (6) printed copies of your proposal in addition to an electronic copy must be received no later than 4:00pm Eastern Time, March 19, 2010. Your proposal must include a cost proposal as described above.

All costs associated with the delivery of the project should be presented in a flat rate, fee for service format.

Deliver proposals to the attention of:

Annette Knowles
Farmington DDA
33316 Grand River Ave
Farmington, MI 48336

Proposals that meet the mandatory requirements, as stated above, will be evaluated with the following criteria:

- Suitability of the Proposal – the proposed solution meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP.
- Expertise in successful delivery of appropriate technical and aesthetic solutions as evidenced by the proposal and references.
- Aesthetic Capabilities – Prior work demonstrates artistic and innovative, user friendly interfaces that engage communities and viewers.
- Candidate Experience – Candidate has successfully completed similar projects and has the qualifications necessary to undertake this project.
- Value/Pricing Structure and Price Levels – The price is commensurate with the value offered by the proposer.
- Depth and Breadth of Staff – The candidate firm has appropriate staff to develop the site in the time frame needed.
- Proposal Presentation – The information is presented in a clear, logical manner and is well organized.
- Demonstrated commitment to high service level agreements (SLA).

Format for Proposal

Your proposal should identify whether you are quoting for design, development, or both.

Please use the following as a guideline to format your proposal:

Length and Font Size

Please use fonts no smaller than 10 point. Proposal should include title page, cover letter, executive summary, proposal, qualifications and budget, and proposed hosting information.

Title Page

Farmington DDA, Web Site Development Proposal, your company name, address, web site address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address and primary contact person.

Cover Letter

Signed by the person or persons authorized to sign on behalf of the company.

Executive Summary

Briefly describe your company, a summary of your proposed solution, and estimated project cost.

Proposal

Discuss your proposed solution, including the features, benefits and uniqueness of your solution. You should also touch on your ability to deliver the project in the timeframe.

Qualifications

Provide the information as requested above.

Budget and Fees

List budgets as requested above. Identify staff you anticipate working on the project and their hourly rates. List fees for post launch technical services.

Attachments

Hosting options/information:

- Do you provide website and FTP hosting? If so, please provide answers to the following questions.
- How often do you backup?
- How often do you have down time?
- How often do you upgrade software/hardware?
- Please describe your technical support.
- Please describe your security.
- Do you have a high-speed, direct connection to the Internet?

- Please describe your methodology and service level agreements.
- Pricing, terms and conditions.

If you do not provide hosting, you may suggest a vendor/partner to provide this service and provide answers to the above questions.