# Request for Proposals

## RFP#EP1516-18

## City of East Providence Economic Development Website Design

The City of East Providence seeks a consultant to design the City's new economic development webpage.

Tentative website name: www.EastProvidenceBusiness.com.

**Submission Timeline and Format**

April 08, 2016: RFP advertised

2:00PM Thursday, May 5, 2016: Deadline for submitting proposals

May 23, 2016: Initiate selected firm interviews

June 6, 2016: Award contract

The coordinator for this project is:

James Moran, Principal/Economic Planner
East Providence Planning Department
145 Taunton Ave., Room 201
East Providence, RI 02914
401-435-7531 x11153
jmoran@cityofeastprov.com

Submissions must be in PDF format and may be delivered via e-mail to the RFP coordinator. All questions should be directed to the RFP coordinator. All submissions received after the due date will not be considered. The City may request an interview with vendors with the highest rating by the selection review committee. For ease of reference, each firm receiving this RFP is referred to as a "firm" and the firm selected to provide services for us is referred to as the "selected firm." This RFP states the instructions for submitting proposals, the procedure and criteria by which a firm may be selected.

**Organization Overview**

The East Providence Office of Economic Development is housed within the City's Planning Department. The primary duties of the Office of Economic Development are to promote and market the City's economic strengths and assets, maintain and administer the City's economic development programs including the City's Commercial Loan Program, Microloan Program and Tax Stabilization, promote major milestones and economic development accomplishments in the City utilizing web-based and social media platforms and act as a resource for information to the public on economic development activities in the City. The City currently utilizes the City's

municipal webpage for economic development promotion with the economic development webpage embedded within the site (www.eastprovidence.com).

**Project Details**

The Planning Department seeks an experienced firm to design a new stand-alone City of East Providence economic development webpage with a domain name tentatively identified as www.EastProvidenceBusiness.com. The design and implementation of this web design will involve the utilization of current technologies and software products to meet the internet based marketing and promotion objectives outlined within this RFP. This project will be a concept to completion initiative, from initial scoping to platform architecture, design, development, and deployment. The target viewers of the economic development website include developers and land use professionals, commercial real estate professionals, local current and potential business owners, the general public, public officials, and planning and design professionals.

Content for the website will include much of the current economic development content provided in the City's existing webpage, but will also potentially include: news, events, blog posts, monthly e-newsletter or e-magazine reports, publications, and/or interactive maps, active real estate listings, local business directories and other items that support economic development. The website will also include portals that allow the public to complete and submit online permit applications, via proprietary permit system software utilized by the City (ViewPermit/ViewPoint (http://viewpointcloud.com/product/). Municipal data that could be of benefit to those in the business community seeking a variety of information resources could also be part of the webpage's features. Other proprietary software may be also be proposed, to increase and improve the website's functionality. The redeveloped website should be easy to use and intuitive for a variety of end-users. There is also the potential to consider the use Constant Contact to send email blasts and monthly newsletters to subscribers. The website and Constant Contact will need to be integrated in terms of design and function.

The **primary goals** of the new website include:

- An Internet presence that professionally represents the economic development marketing and promotional goals of the City;
- An active easily managed page that provide users with up-to-date information about the City's economic development programs, major projects and milestones, economic development data including real estate and demographic data and information to assist in permit processing within the City's permitting system;
- Design and functionality that provides tools to encourage users to interact through easy access to blog, social media, publications, research and other resources;
- Provide seamless ability to utilize City's permitting system via ViewPermit/Viewpoint permit software;
- A site that is easily managed and maintained by non-programmers through a web-based interface;
- Administrative capability for website and managed data;
- Retain information and information relationships from current website systems;

- A responsive website design that adapts the site for optimal viewing across a variety of devices and platforms.

## Budget

The proposed budget for this website design project is approximately $12,000. Responses beyond the identified budget should present a very compelling argument for the additional investment. The fee for the work performed will be paid in three installments: 25% upon signing the contract, 50% upon submission of the draft page and 25% upon completion of the contract.

## Current Situation

The City currently maintains its economic development page within the City's municipal webpage, www.eastprovidence.com. Amendments to the website content are accomplished through the City's IT Department in cooperation with staff from the Planning Department. While this arrangement has been satisfactory in promoting the City's programs, incentives, advantages and other pertinent economic development related information, the City is now interested in moving to a stand-alone economic page that is closely linked, but separate from the City's municipal webpage and provides a more comprehensive an interactive experience for a visitor to the website seeking information on economic development information for East Providence.

## Design Requirements

The following are overall requirements for this project:

- Intuitive and easy to navigate website

The website design should be based on meeting the needs of the target audience, should be visually appealing, with a unified look and feel, and provide easy navigation throughout.

- Modern web design

Website should be developed utilizing modern web design and standards, compatible with modern browsers while providing functional usability for older browsers. Website URLs should predominantly be clean URLs. The design should also be mobile device friendly.

- Use of innovative add-on software products

The website should explore the use of innovative web tools and apps that could be incorporated into the page to enhance the experience for visitors to the website. The use of site location database products such as ZoomProspector and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) products such as ProsperWorks or SalesForce may also be considered as options.

## Deadline

The City would like to have the website up and running by November, 2016. A compelling case may be made for a different deadline if circumstances dictate.

## Proposal Format

Proposals should include information outlined in this section:

**1.** Describe in detail the firm's proposal to address the requirements outlined in this RFP. This should include plans for:

- **a.** how the website design will prioritize space and content to the target audiences identified in this RFP.
- **b.** how primary audiences will be motivated to engage through email subscriptions, petitions, etc.

**2.** Provide a timeline for the completion of the project outlined in this RFP.

**3.** Provide a brief history of the firm and its experience providing services for municipal governments, particularly as it relates to economic development promotion.

**4.** Document examples of the firm's experience in designing/developing similar functionality to each of the project requirements including addresses of live sites.

**5.** List the project team (including programmers and designers) and short biographies of each team member. Indicate any portions of the work, if any, which will be sub-contracted and to whom.

**6.** Identify City resources required to complete the project.

**7.** Identify Economic Development Commission resources to complete the project.

**8.** Provide a list of the firm's clients comparable the content requested in this RFP indicating the length of service of each account. Include contact name, telephone number and website URL. A minimum of three references that may speak to projects of similar scope is requested.

**9.** Describe the project process and methodology including sample deliverables from past projects of similar size and scope.

**10.** Explain methodology for demonstrating to and training Planning and Economic Development staff in use of new website.

**11.** Describe the fee structure and how the City will be charged. The costs involved may be categorized separately as redesign, implementation costs, maintenance costs, and software licensing costs. Also include the firm's plan for post-deployment maintenance, support and upgrades including hourly rates for services. 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.

**12.** If hosting services may be provided, clearly identify cost as well as description of the hosting platform, uptime, server location, data backup and integrity plan.

**13.** Document choice of content management system. If proprietary, the firm is expected to explain reasons this choice is superior to non-proprietary systems.

**14.** Document experience illustrating expertise in:

- Providing design services for non-profit organizations, associations and government entities
- Developing/deploying content management systems with custom components which allow for self-management by an organization.
- Developing services using third party APIs
- Geo-location and visual map integrations

**15.** Proposal must contain signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the company submitting the proposal.

**16.** Please provide three references.

## Evaluation of Proposals

Price will be a significant, but not the only, criteria in evaluating the proposals.
Consideration will also be given to the following:

- Ability of the same respondent to provide all aspects of the proposal: design, infrastructure, hosting, etc.
- Compliance of the vendor and proposal with the proposal format outlined above.
- The extent to which the proposed system provides the functional requirements outlined above.
- Responses to requests for additional information submitted to the respondents.
- Experience with organizations similar to the City of East Providence.
- Degree to which the proposed system fits the existing information technology infrastructure at the City of East Providence.