
Request for Proposals

City of Albert Lea Website Redesign and Webpage Updates

June 14, 2024

Project Overview

The purpose of this RFP is to retain a vendor (Vendor) to redesign the menu structure of the City of Albert Lea (City) website at cityofalbertlea.org, update its webpages, migrate webpages to the new structure, and train City staff on how to maintain the new structure.

The City currently uses WordPress as its content management system. While the City would prefer to keep using WordPress, it is open to considering other content management systems.

The current website consists of 45 main pages and 255 sub-pages. The website experiences a total of 20,000 pageviews per month. 60% of users are accessing the website on mobile devices and 37% are accessing the website on desktop computers.

Currently, the City employs a full-time Communications Coordinator whose duties include maintenance of the website and making the majority of changes. A few other staff members have access for making changes and uploading documents such as meeting agendas and minutes.

With the hiring of a Community Engagement and Enrichment Director in 2022, the City is striving to use its website to its full potential as a source of accurate information for residents, visitors and prospective businesses. In addition, the City updated its logo in 2023 and is working to be consistent in all its branding, including the website.

This project will include:

- A new menu structure for the City website
- Reorganization of webpages to adhere to the new menu structure
- Removal of unneeded webpages
- Recommendations for additional webpages
- Updating of remaining webpages

City Background

The City of Albert Lea, population 18,500, is in Freeborn County in south-central Minnesota. Built around a chain of lakes, the City offers a variety of recreation and a beautiful park system. Its historic downtown is the largest of its kind in Minnesota. The City is facing a worker and housing shortage, and is working with several partners to address those issues. Its immigrant and minority populations are increasing at a faster rate than the rest of the state. The local economy is also diverse with Mayo Clinic Health System being the largest employer, followed by ag-based businesses, food processors, and manufacturers of various goods. Albert Lea was the first Blue Zones certified community in the United States (Blue Zones is a global initiative to make healthy choices the easier choices for everyone). In addition to being affordable for many people, the community is safe and offers an excellent school system.

Goals

The City wishes to reorganize its website to make it easier for browsers to find the information they're seeking.

Secondary goals include using the website to:

- Engage residents in City decisions, programs, projects and events
- Recruit employees and volunteers for boards and commissions
- Promote the City to potential residents and visitors

In addition to reorganizing the structure of the website, the City wishes to remove pages no longer needed, add webpages if needed, and update the remaining pages.

Scope

The City is seeking a Vendor to do the following:

- Recommended and implement a new menu structure for the website.
- Interview key City staff to make recommendations on which webpages to delete, webpages to add, and existing webpages to keep.
- Provide templates and a style guide for webpages that are consistent with the City's branding and its use of fonts, font sizes, images and overall layout.
- The new menu structure and webpage templates should be designed:
 - For mobile optimization
 - With accessibility in mind, in terms of ADA standards and with limited English skills
- Update webpages based on information from City staff. City would provide photos as needed.
- Train City staff on how to maintain the new structure and keep information current.

Timeline

June 14, 2024: RFP opens to vendors

July 15, 2024: Proposals due by 5 p.m.

July -26, 2024: City completes review of proposals and follows up with proposers as needed

July 29, 2024: Vendor selected

Aug. 12, 2024: Awarding of contract (including timeline for project milestones, status reports and completion)

Dec. 31, 2024: Substantial completion of project (open to negotiation)

Section A: Company Profile and Experience (20 points)

Please provide the following:

- Brief description of your company, including name, address, contact information, number of years in business, key personnel, and services provided.
- Summary of your experience in designing and maintaining local government unit websites. Include a list of current clients that are cities under 50,000 in population, along with their web addresses. Limit the list to 10 clients or less.
- Resumes or career summaries, including position titles, of personnel who would work on this project, including redesign of the menu structure, migration of webpages to the new structure, copywriting, interviewing City staff, training City staff and any ongoing support.
- Contact information for at least 3 customers to serve as references.

Section B: Platforms and Processes (15 points)

Provide answers to the following questions:

- What content management system do you use for designing and maintaining websites, and is it proprietary?
- Is there an ongoing fee/subscription for this CMS? If so, please list the annual fee/cost and what that fee/cost includes, i.e. ongoing support, version updates, training, fixes, etc.
- What processes do you use to test and review a website?
- Do you usually meet with clients in person or online, i.e. Webex or other platform?
- What hosting service do you use/recommend and what are the fees for using it?
- What additional services do you offer? For example, do you offer “add-ons” for public engagement, online registration and reservation platforms, etc.?

Section C: Training and support (15 points)

- Describe the training you would provide to City staff to maintain the website structure and keep the webpages updated.
- What after-service support do you provide, and for how long?
- What services do you provide should the City website be hacked or otherwise experience problems? Does your system offer the ability to revert to a previous version?

Section D: Project approach (30 points)

After a review of the City’s existing website at cityofalbertlea.org, describe the following:

- Steps you would take to accomplish the redesign and update (may be a broad outline)
 - Include milestones and status reports in your outline
- How your content management system/platform would help the City achieve its goals stated above
- Overall impression of the website as far as being appealing, user-friendly and accessible
- Additional information about your company and/or services that would help the City in choosing a Vendor

Budget (20 points)

Please break out your fees/charges by:

- Redesign of web structure, development of style guidelines and templates, and migration of webpages to new structure
- Interviewing City staff, recommending removal of unneeded webpages, updating remaining webpages, and adding recommended webpages
- Training of City staff in maintaining website
- Ongoing maintenance and support

Contact

For more information, please contact:

Cathy Malakowsky
Director of Engagement and Enrichment
City of Albert Lea
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cmalakowsky@ci.albertlea.mn.us

Submittal

Please email your proposal as a PDF by July 15, 2024, to Cathy Malakowsky at the email listed above.