

**Request for Proposals for
City of Decatur, Georgia
Website Redevelopment and Update**

INTRODUCTION

The City of Decatur invites you to submit a proposal to re-develop the City website to include both a new, restructured website and a new content management system. Potential respondents should have expertise in developing large websites with high functionality and are asked to prepare a proposal including the format for accomplishing the work, the time frame for accomplishing the work, the fee required to perform the work, and references listing previous comparable assignments. The City reserves the right to award a consultant contract to the firm whose proposal and any resulting negotiations are deemed to be in the best interest of the City.

A required pre-bid meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 17, 2009 at 10 a.m. at the City Commission meeting room in Decatur City Hall. **Proposals will be accepted until 3 p.m. on Thursday, January 21, 2010** at Decatur City Hall located at 509 N. McDonough Street in Decatur, Georgia 30030 addressed to the attention of Catherine Lee, Development Services Coordinator, Community & Economic Development Department.

BACKGROUND

The City of Decatur is the second oldest incorporated community in the Atlanta region. Located 6 miles east of downtown Atlanta, Decatur is a highly urbanized small city of about 18,000 residents. The City of Decatur covers 4.2 square miles of area and is one of the most densely populated cities in Georgia. The active downtown district maintains its small town character while supporting over 200 restaurants and shops.

The City of Decatur is home to highly-educated, forward-thinking and technology literate citizens many of whom are professors, media personnel, lawyers, and medical professionals. Fifty-five percent of Decatur residents have a bachelor's degree or graduate degree and sixty-six percent are under the age of forty-five. The City values public input and embraces opportunities to connect with and inform its citizens. The City of Decatur is often recognized for its innovative and creative approach to providing local government services. Decatur recently implemented a city-wide WiFi system through a grant from the Governor's Wireless Communities Georgia Program.

The current City of Decatur website, located at www.decaturga.com, houses a vast amount of valuable content for all audiences. The site loads quickly and is bandwidth friendly. It is popular with citizens, has an established audience and generates an average of 3,956 page views a day. Decatur's website has not been significantly updated since 2001 and while it has its strengths, there are an increasing number of challenges that can be addressed with a website rebuild. This is also an ideal point in the site's evolution to build a better, more scalable infrastructure to house the content. With the dependency on the internet increasing and new web applications being developed daily, a website rebuild will better serve the audiences and take

advantage of new technology. As the website continues to emerge as a primary tool that Decatur constituents use to interact with the city and city government, it should be built around the needs of those users.

The City has explored interactive and virtual technology options and is looking for ways to incorporate this technology in a meaningful and useful way in order to expand its ability to communicate with and engage the public. This interactive approach could also be useful in educating citizens and giving them an opportunity to visually experience proposed developments, transportation projects and similar infrastructure projects. It could also allow citizens to participate in meetings and public forums. However, this technology should be viewed as an opportunity to engage and encourage active public participation without replacing face to face interaction.

The City of Decatur recently conducted a Website Audit using an outside consultant. The audit included identifying primary audiences, usability research, best practices review, basic technology review and recommendations. The research, findings, and recommendations from that audit provide the framework for this Request for Proposals and are available for viewing.

OBJECTIVE

The City of Decatur is currently looking to update and redevelop its website to become an interactive, user-centric, flexible tool. The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals from organizations with expertise in developing large websites with high functionality. The website redevelopment involves a wide range of technology so experience and project management are an integral aspect the project. The rebuilding of Decatur's website is a large task because of the high functionality that is required for both the end user and the backend users. Thus, the rebuild should include both a new, restructured website and a new content management system.

A number of technologies and solutions will be required for the project. The redeveloped website should also include a database that allows website content to be specified for different audiences, making it user-centric. It is also critical to provide some type of forum functionality to connect the community that gathers at the Decatur site by taking advantage of Web 2.0 and open source technology. The site needs a strong, adaptable framework including document management and archiving capability along with updated technology to allow for future growth and expansion. Once the infrastructure is in place, the City of Decatur will have more flexibility to expand online services and incorporate up-to-date functionality.

The City of Decatur wants its website to incorporate the best practices of successful, interactive commercial and municipal sites with a focus on the end-user experience to create the best possible source of information for its main audiences including residents, businesses, visitors, and media.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

User-Centric Issues:

The Website Redevelopment Proposal should address the following user-centric issues including but not limited to:

- organizing content by task rather than by department
- creating logical pathways to content that mirror user tasks
- keeping page design relatively simple
- having a “bookmark-able” homepage
- helping users “self-assist”
- mechanisms for user feedback
- getting found by and opening up site to search engines
- building a website on a strong, adaptable framework with a content management system that allows for real-time updating, flexibility in design and sensible workflow
- document management and archiving capability
- monitoring meaningful metrics to determine whether the site is achieving objectives

Architecture Development:

The website architecture is a key element in development and implementation and ensures that site organization and design remain consistent and effective. The website audit recommended that we change to wire frames rather than the current tables. The proposal should address architecture development, particularly as it relates to the use of wire frames or to the recommendation of a different architecture that would address our needs effectively.

Foundation:

A new foundation should include a replacement of the current content management system (CMS) to allow for real-time updating, design flexibility and incorporation of up-to-date tools. The CMS should also allow for detailed and relevant search results along with improved navigation and content delivery.

Process Design:

The proposal should include a method to develop content standards to give publishers clear and consistent templates for new content as well as defining content management processes, document management and archiving guidelines.

Content Redevelopment:

The current website contains a vast amount of content. The redevelopment should include a process by which to rework the current content into the new site with additional functionality and content that will assist both the site visitors and the City of Decatur staff

Examples for site users include, but are not limited to, search function on all pages, ability to allow visitors to ask questions and get answers on a serial basis with issues that are not time-sensitive, ability to provide page-level feedback mechanism (*example* “Was this (page) helpful?”), printer friendly option for longer content, option to send content to a friend through

email, social bookmarking links, ability to implement RSS feeds, universal log-in system, simple accessibility to downloadable forms, and more.

Additionally, the City of Decatur is interested in exploring opportunities to incorporate virtual and interactive technology into the website. Responses to this RFP should address the ability to incorporate third party software, which may include virtual environments or other interactive programs. Respondents with particular knowledge or experience in this field are encouraged to provide suggestions as to how these technologies could be used to expand the City of Decatur's ability to communicate with and engage the public in a meaningful way. Examples could include displaying a proposed building development in a three-dimensional format.

Examples of additional functionality for City of Decatur staff include, but are not limited to, ability to check status of content that is in the process of being placed or uploaded, ability to approve content submissions and assign content to multiple staff members, ability to pre-set archive activities, update content by content/template types, ability to update content by mobile device for emergency/breaking news updates; emergency and breaking news to multiple devices, automatic posting of long content passages to multiple pages, and more.

Implementation:

Proposals should include a timeline for design and implementation of the website redevelopment including technology/platform build-out, incorporation of CMS solution and databases, page-level coding, customization of application and tools, content redevelopment, content publishing, testing, and launch.

Long-Term Management:

Responses to this RFP must include a strategy for the long-term management of the website architecture and Content Management System including:

- Maintenance of website architecture
- Technical support of CMS
- Assistant with implementation of third party software to the website

Graphics Requirement:

The winning bidder is required to use Lampe-Farley Communications, Inc. for the graphic design of the new website to maintain the City's branding and marketing goals and strategies, including the overall look of the design. The winning bidder will also work closely with Lampe-Farley Communications, Inc. during the content redevelopment and publishing stages.

Accessibility:

As a public entity, the programs, services and activities provided by the City of Decatur must be accessible to people with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Additionally, the website should be accessible to users with various levels of technological experience and computer capabilities.

Budget Considerations:

Consideration will be focused on companies that are willing to develop creative and effective ways of lowering costs while still meeting the goals outlined in this document. Proposed costs

should be listed by phase and task. The City of Decatur reserves the right to request a specific breakdown of items costs within each task. Costs shall be inclusive, with printing, copying, postage, deliveries, travel and all other categories included but the City will consider additional allowance for copying, postage and deliveries.

RFP SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Consultants are requested to submit 15 hard copies and one electronic copy of the Proposal package to meet the requirements of the items listed below by 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 15, 2010. Proposals may not exceed 20 pages maximum (excluding examples of similar work or the resumes of team members).

- Provide a description of the services proposed and approach to the work that addresses the issues elaborated above.
- Provide resumes for key staff performing the tasks, design, project management, and project administration for this project. Highlight past experience that demonstrates familiarity with the issues that this project addresses. Provide references (include contact name, phone number, email) for a minimum of three assignments of a similar nature and scope performed within the last five years. If a team approach is proposed, please provide information for all firms and staff members who will be involved in the process.
- Provide a graph describing the time schedule for completing this project with critical path dates shown.
- Provide a lump sum fee proposal for all services and deliverables described in this RFP, which shall include the cost for all labor, materials and deliverables required to complete this project. The City shall not further reimburse the consultant for miscellaneous expenses (mileage, travel, phone expenses, printing, photography, etc.). Respondents shall utilize the proposal form titled City of Decatur Website Redevelopment Proposal Form for their fee proposal.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

- Selection will be based upon professional qualifications, experience in performing similar work and the firm's ability to complete the project in a timely manner.
- Fees quoted will be considered in determining the firm's ability to render services to the City.
- The City desires that these services be completed by June 30, 2010.
- The following will be considered in the evaluation process: apparent understanding of project objectives, technical approach and expertise, qualifications of personnel, personnel organization and availability, related experience of the firm, schedule to reach each milestone and to complete project, budget.
- The City may reject any and all proposals solely at its own discretion if deemed in the best interest of the City.

SELECTION SCHEDULE

Selection of the successful firm or team is expected to be made by February 11, 2010. The firm or team will be expected to begin as soon as practical after selection, but no later than February 17, 2010. The services to be provided must be completed by June 30, 2010. Firms should provide in their proposals an estimate of the time required for each task and a proposed work schedule for completion of the work.

RESERVATIONS

The City of Decatur reserves the right to modify the scope and budget of this project to best serve its own interests prior to entering into a contract with the successful firm or team. The City of Decatur Board of Commissioners reserve the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, to negotiate changes in the scope of work or services to be provided and to otherwise waive any technicalities. Submitted proposals are public records to the extent required by the Georgia Open Records Act.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

All questions related to this RFP should be directed to: Catherine Lee, Development Services Coordinator, Community & Economic Development, City of Decatur, 509 N. McDonough Street, Decatur, GA 30030 (P.O. Box 220, Decatur, GA 30031), phone 404-371-8386, email catherine.lee@decaturga.com.

CITY OF DECATUR WEBSITE REDEVELOPMENT

Proposal Form

Date: _____

Company Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Website Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Authorized Representative Signature: _____

Having carefully examined the Proposal Documents titled CITY OF DECATUR WEBSITE REDEVELOPMENT & UPDATE, and conditions affecting the work, the Undersigned proposes to furnish all services, labor, and materials required to perform the website redevelopment and update portion of the work in accord with said documents for the sum of:

_____ Dollars

(\$ _____), which sum is hereinafter called the "Project Fee."

Authorized Representative (PRINT NAME)

Authorized Representative Signature

Date Signed

The Undersigned agrees to begin all preliminary and submittal work within five (5) days of the date of proposal award. The Undersigned agrees to execute within fifteen (15) days a contract for the work as stated.

END OF PROPOSAL FORM