Request for Proposals for
Town Website
Design and Replacement

RFP

Date Issued:

February 1, 2021

Bid Opening

March 5, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. EST

Late Proposals will be rejected

Evaluation Review

March 19, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. EST

Council Presentation/Recommendation or Rejection

April 5, 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

1(A) Background

The Town of Somerset is a small municipality in southern Montgomery County, Maryland, approximately one mile from the Washington, D.C. border. The Town, which primarily made up of single-family residential homes, consists of 413 residential houses, and approximately 1,200 residents. The Town also boasts a world-class swimming facility, a newly renovated Tennis Court and Town Hall, and various small parks and green spaces.

The Town is represented by a five-member Town Council and Town Mayor. The Town also has several volunteer-led citizen committees to provide research and recommendations to the Council and Mayor for various Town functions. The Town employs a small professional staff, including a Town Manager, Town Administrative Assistant, and maintenance staff.

Somerset is an affluent community, with one of the highest college graduate, master's degrees, and PhD recipients per capita in the country. Originally made up of tobacco farms and summer houses, the Town was incorporated in 1906, and slowly developed into a commuter neighborhood for those working in DC. The Town places great pride in its care for the environment, civic-mindedness, and the upkeep of its facilities for residents. Somerset has a close-knit small-town feel in a suburban environment, while remaining accessible to multiple downtown urban areas. All of these factors have made Somerset a desirable place to live, raise a family, and grow old in.

The Town's website is intended to be the front-facing window into official government and Town operations to the public. The current website was built over eight years ago, and the Town's Communications Committee has recommended that it be redesigned and upgraded, to improve communications from the Town to its residents.

1(B) RFP Purpose

The goal for the Town is to have a website with the technology to support online services, provide full site searchability, facilitate content creation and editing, house a calendar of event system, and create an overall inviting and engaging web design interface. The Town is requesting qualifications from vendors specializing in web design services able to meet the requirements in this document for the Town's new website. The successful vendor's ability to convert existing content from the current site is necessary.

1(C) RFP Cover Sheet

<div align="center">

Town of Somerset RFP
Town Website Design and Replacement
Response Cover Sheet

</div>

Does any employee or official of the Town have any financial or other interest in your firm?

Has your company been disqualified by any public agency from participation in public contracts?

Please fill out this sheet with the appropriate contact information for your company.

FULL LEGAL NAME OF COMPANY: _____

TYPE OF BUSINESS: ☐Partnership (general)   ☐Partnership (limited)
                           ☐Sole proprietorship   ☐Limited Liability Company

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE ID NUMBER (FEIN): _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____   FAX: _____

NAME (PLEASE PRINT): _____ TITLE: _____

SIGNATURE*: _____ DATE: _____

*Proposals must be signed by a duly authorized official of the responder.

2. RFP INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION

2(A) RFP Contact

Matthew Trollinger

Town Manager

Town of Somerset

manager@townofsomerset.com

301-657-3211

Address (Physical and mailing):

4510 Cumberland Avenue

Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Any and all communication to the RFP Contact relative to this requirement must be submitted via email.

2(B) RFP Evaluation Criteria

The Town staff, in consultation with the Town's Communications Committee, will evaluate the RFP responses received from each vendor. Prior to the selection of the award to the apparent successful vendor, the Town of Somerset reserves the right to require any vendor to participate in a presentation to the Town evaluation team and/or the Town Council of the items contained in the RFP response and any other items deemed appropriate by the Town of Somerset.

If an award is made as a result of this RFP, it shall be awarded to the vendor whose proposal will lead to the best product for the Town with the quality of design, CMS, along with price and other factors including, but not limited to: demonstrated technical ability and expertise; reference calls and/or recommendations; memberships, licenses, ISO Certifications or any other applicable memberships or certifications; presentations to the Town (if applicable); product; any additional criteria deemed appropriate by the Town which would lend itself to establishing the Service Provider's viability to perform the work as outlined in this RFP.

When determining whether a vendor is responsible, or when evaluating a vendor's response, the following factors will be considered, any one of which will suffice to determine whether or not a potential vendor is a responsible vendor or if the vendor's proposal is the most advantageous to the Town:

1) The ability, capacity, and skill of the vendor to perform/provide the service required;
2) The character, integrity, reputation, judgement, experience, and efficiency of the vendor;
3) The vendor's ability to provide a content management system that meets the requirements of the Town;
4) The quality of performance of previous public and private contracts or services, including, but not limited to, the vendor's ability to perform satisfactorily and complete items specified in the contract agreements;
5) The previous and existing compliance by the vendor with laws relating to the contract or services;
6) Evidence of collusion with any other vendor, in which case colluding vendors will be restricted from submitting further bids on the subject project or future tenders;
7) The vendor is not qualified for the work or to the full extent of the RFP;
8) There is uncompleted work with the Town or others, or an outstanding dispute on a previous or current contract that might hinder, negatively affect, or prevent the prompt completion of the work bid upon;
9) Such other information as may be secured having a hearing on the decision to award the contract;
10) Any other reason deemed proper by the Town.

2(C) Notices and Response Criteria

   1) Good Faith

This RFP has been compiled in good faith. The information contained within is selective and subject to the Town's updating, expansion, revision, and amendment.

   2) Right to Cancel

The Town reserves the right to change any aspect of, terminate, or delay this RFP, the RFP process, and/or the program, which is outlined within this RFP at any time, and notice shall be given in a timely manner thereafter.

   3) Not an Award

Recipients of this RFP are advised that nothing stated herein, or any part thereof, or any communication during the evaluation and selection process, shall be construed as constituting, offering, or awarding a contract.

   4) Property of the Town

Responses to this RFP will become the property of the Town, and will form the basis of negotiations of an agreement between the Town and the apparent successful vendor. Proposals are subject to the Maryland Public Information Act (MPIA), and may be provided to anyone properly requesting same, after contract award.

   5) Equal Opportunity Employment

The Town of Somerset is an equal opportunity employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law. The successful proposer must be an equal opportunity employer and all qualified applicants for employment with the proposer must receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

   6) Town not Liable for Costs

The Town is not liable and will not be responsible for any costs incurred by the vendor(s) for the preparation and delivery of the RFP responses, nor will the Town be liable for any costs incurred prior to the execution of an agreement, including, but not limited to, presentations by RFP finalist(s) to the Town.

   7) Town Expectations

During the review of this document, please note the Town's emphasis on the expectations, qualities, and requirements necessary to be positioned as an RFP finalist and successful vendor.

   8) Proposal Rejection; No Obligation to Buy

The Town reserves the right to reject any or all proposals at any time without penalty. The Town reserves the right to refrain from contracting with any vendor. The release of this RFP does not compel the Town to purchase. The Town may elect to proceed further with this project by interviewing firm(s) well-suited to this project, and proceeding with an award.

9) Right to Award

The Town reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposal submitted. Therefore, the proposal should be submitted initially with the most favorable terms the vendor can offer.

10) Non-Endorsement

As a result of the selection of a vendor to supply products and/or services the Town is neither endorsing nor suggesting that the vendor's product is the best or only solution. The vendor agrees to make no reference to the Town in any literature, promotional material, brochures, sales presentation or the like without the express written consent of the Town.

11) Errors in Proposal

The Town will not be liable for any errors in vendor proposals. Vendors will not be allowed to alter proposal documents after the deadline for proposal submission.

The Town reserves the right to make corrections or amendments due to errors identified in proposals by the Town or the vendor. This type of correction or amendment will only be allowed for such errors as typing, transposition, or any other obvious error. Vendors are liable for all errors or omissions contained in their proposals.

12) Scoring Submissions

Each submission will be judged according to a fixed set of criteria. The criteria are:

- 35% on the approach of the proposal, including portability of the CMS system and ability to meet the requirements of the RFP;
- 25% on the experience level and references of the contractor, including last five implementations and quality of training on the CMS provided to the Town Staff;
- 25% on experience level of project manager, including quality of previous design portfolio;
- 15% on the total cost of the proposal.

3. SCOPE OF SERVICES

3(A)1 Project Goals

The primary goal of this project is to replace the current website with a new and improved website, along with an updated Content Management System. The new website will be easier for users to navigate, more efficient for Town staff to manage, and provide a wide variety of services to the citizens of the Town of Somerset. The website should be capable of serving the Town and its customers for a minimum of five (5) years. The Vendor shall provide a platform and user interface that shall be able to grow with the City and its services. The Vendor will provide the City with an information ready, turn-key website with current/pertinent content from the existing site migrated.

Short-Term Goals

1) Improve the tools that support updating the website, i.e.; content management system (CMS);
2) Improve the information architecture that supports easy navigation of the site to key Town services;
3) Redesign the website with a new look and feel; supporting the branding efforts of the Town and reflecting the diverse make up and vision of the residents of the Town.

Long-Term Goals

1) Improve the timeliness of content published to the website;
2) Expand the services the Town offers to citizens on the website;
3) Enable updating the look and feel of the website on an as-needed basis by existing Town staff;
4) Expand the amount of information the Town publishes on the website;
5) Ensure easy accessibility and navigational user experience, encouraging residents to return;
6) Visually reflect the values and characters of the Town.

Samples of Website with Desired Characteristics

1) https://www.tampa.gov/
2) https://www.nantucket-ma.gov/
3) https://www.oakislandnc.com/
4) https://www.denvergov.org/Home
5) https://www.stpaul.gov/

3(A)2 Project Objectives

1) Redesign & Host the information and architecture of the Town's website;
2) Replace or upgrade the existing website CMS software;
3) Implement electronic workflow for all proposed web postings for approval and promotion;
4) Redesign the look and feel of the website;
5) Update and implement website technology management policies and best practices:
   a. Identify and formalize content contributors who will ensure that all content is accurate and up to date;
   b. Identify and formalize use of web social networking tools;
   c. Identify and formalize acceptable website content and links to outside resources;
   d. Identify and provide web information management tools to comply with State of Maryland Public Records retention guidelines. This will include storage of each information update.
6) Provide for full integration with existing e-government applications currently in use, and provide for easy integration with future e-government applications
7) Identify additional or replacement e-government applications for government services;
8) Provide customer service/technical assistance throughout life of product.

3(A)3 Scope of Work

Vendors replying to this RFP will be asked to organize and itemize their submissions into five (5) main areas for the Town's consideration of their services: scope of design services offered, examples of previous designs, proposed content management system (CMS) software, available hosting options, and options for training.

A. The Vendor(s) will be responsible for the following:
   1) Redesign the Town website look and feel to support the Town's brand as well as the design needs of specific services.
      a. Provide a project plan for the design phase of the website replacement project;
      b. New website content information architecture that supports easy navigation to key services;
      c. Determine a consistent look and feel for the website, including color schemes, graphic elements, and navigational tools that provide straightforward navigation within a unifying graphic theme, as well as flexibility for the branding of different Town Committees, services, etc.;
      d. Work with existing vendor to obtain starting data;
      e. Provide mock ups of primary website sections;
      f. Apply website redesign mockups to website CMS software implementation to enable information ready website;
      g. Provide a website CMS software implementation project plan that can be integrated within the overall project plan;
      h. Consult with Town staff to determine how the website CMS navigation will support the Town requirements.
   2) Website CMS training for Town staff, site administrators, and content contributors.

B. The successful Vendor(s) will deliver the following:
   1) Look and Feel Design
      • The Vendor will work with the Town to determine a new website design and content information architecture navigation framework to support easy navigation to key Town services.
   2) CMS
      • The Vendor shall provide a comprehensive CMS solution;
      • The CMS software proposed should not be a beta, release candidate, or other early adopter technology;
      • The CMS shall be accessible via external access;
      • The Vendor will provide a search engine solution that will support indexing all contents within the CMS as well as external Town website resources.
   3) Website
      • The Vendor shall provide a fully-operational and working website;
      • The website shall integrate all existing e-government applications and shall be designed for easy integration of additional e-government applications;
      • The website shall be viable on mobile devices (e.g., smart phones and tablets).

4) Training
- The Vendor will provide full, complete training on the use of the CMS.

C. The Town of Somerset will be responsible for:
1) Collaborating with the website design vendor in determining key services and design for inclusion in the updated information architecture that will support easy navigation of the site to key Town services;
2) Specify website CMS template requirements;
3) Website governance (i.e., user roles, permissions, and approval letters).

3(A)4 Website Content Management Software

3(A)4.1 Software Needs Summary

The Town of Somerset is looking for website content management software that will:

- Be adaptable to current and changing technology;
- Enable content subject matter experts to efficiently publish and manage their content on the Town website; and
- Provide easy access of Town services to website visitors.

3(A)4.2 Product Requirements

Product requirements are outlined below. This list is a comprehensive set of requested features based on staff research, but may be discussed and negotiated, depending on the nature of the requirement.

1. Content Editor
   - WYSIWYG rich text editor;
   - Spell checker;
   - Ability to limit certain features of WYSIWYG editor to maintain common look and feel throughout the website;
   - Content publisher control of associated meta data.
2. Content Management
   - Ability to organize and manage uploaded documents and images;
   - Ability to archive outdated documents and images;
   - Ability to optimize uploaded pictures and graphic files for quickest page loading;
   - Interactive photo galleries to publish and display photo assets;
   - Documents galleries to organize and publish documents according to subject matter;
   - List module for creation and organization of logically-related items into lists that can be shared on multiple pages, but managed within single list (e.g., Contacts, links, etc.);
   - Ability to specify a publishing schedule for specific content;
   - Versioning and indexing of content to meet State of Maryland Records Retention and Retrieval requirements;
   - Multi-lingual Content Integration with website content translation capabilities.
3. Navigation
   - MEGA Drop-down Menus;
   - Breadcrumb navigation;
   - Secondary level navigation within specific content subject matter areas;
   - Friendly URLs;
   - Addition of external pages to navigation;
   - Flexible navigation tools that facilitate management of common links across site;
   - Ability to reorganize content to different sections of the website without manually changing content links.

4. Master Calendar Functionality
   - Master calendar to share events, meetings, holidays, etc. that can be managed in a main calendar and shared across the website by content/subject matter category;
   - Links for users to add events to desktop calendar programs such as Outlook;
   - Provide RSS feeds by calendar based on content creator defined categories.
5. Forms
   - Standard contact forms;
   - Ability to add custom forms to site pages and manage content produced by forms;
   - Surveys and ad hoc reporting.
6. Security/Authorization
   - Ability to centrally add and manage users and specify access rights;
   - Ability to create groups with different access rights;
   - Ability to limit certain group members from specific content and content management functionality;
   - Ability to manage logged-in users;
   - Publish Workflow with ability to customize by security group and user;
   - Audit trail and reports of changes to content within the CMS.
7. Additional Functionality
   - RSS consumption and display of external resources;
   - RSS production on frequently updated content such as news releases and calendar events;
   - "Share This" social networking site links for site visitors to share content on Facebook, Twitter, etc.;
   - ADA/508 standards-compliant site templates;
   - CSS template features for viewing text only, printing, and mobile access version of site;
   - Software Development Kit – ability to create custom pages and content within the site's templates to facilitate integration of other e-Gov services software such as GIS, permitting, online bill payment, Constant Contact, etc.
   - Search engine that can be directed to index both internally and externally hosted website resources;
   - Ability to manage an interactive multimedia top stories section within the CMS.

3(A)4.3 Technical Requirements

- Hosted by the vendor;
- Ability to have separate development and production environments;
- Vendor(s) will have the ability and will allow Town staff to perform a hands-on demo/test of the software during the website CMS selection process;
   o Demos will be as close to current production environment as possible;
   o Documentation of additional functionality and performance differences from demo will be provided.

3(A) 4.4 Site Look and Feel

- Site must display correctly in all version for major browsers, e.g., Internet Explorer, Microsoft Edge, Firefox, Google Chrome, Safari, etc.;
- Site themes and/or style sheets that maintain common look and feel throughout website;
- Service Marketability – ability to apply customized look and feel within different committees and/or services while maintaining global navigation and website common look and feel.

4. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The information that is provided in your responses should answer all questions as indicated in the RFP Response Submittal checklist in Section 5.

4(A) Technical Questions

4(A)1. Content Editor and Management

1) Does the CMS software provide an easy interface for nontechnical users to update content? If yes, please describe, addressing how the editor manages HTML tags, tables, links, images, spellchecking, and other features.
2) Can WYSIWYG capabilities be turned off for source code editing? If yes, please describe how this can be accomplished.
3) Can administrators limit certain features of the WYSIWYG editor? Please describe the features that can be controlled and how the control functionality is accomplished,
4) Describe the CMS software meta data management tools.
5) Can content live in multiple areas or be referenced in multiple areas? If yes, please describe the functionality and management of this feature.

4(A)2. Archiving and Rollback and Restore Functionality

1) As pages are updated, are existing versions automatically archived? Is there a limit to the number of archived versions?
2) Describe the CMS software's version control of content and rollback to the previous versions of content and documents/pages.
3) Does the CMS generate an audit trail and reports for the content that was updated? If yes, please describe this functionality.

4(A)3. Content Scheduling

1) Describe the CMS ability to schedule publishing or deletion/archive of content based on date, time, and/or approval, etc.
2) Describe how the CMS assigns expiration dates and handles expired pages.

4(A)4. Navigation

1) Describe the ability of users to create new navigation menus.
2) Describe the ability of users to move or change the placement of navigation menus.
3) Does the CMS software manage content and links for MEGA Drop Down Menus in its global navigation? If yes, please describe how this is accomplished.
4) Does the CMS software manage navigation and display of interactive content such as tabbed content areas? If yes, please describe how this is accomplished.
5) Does the CMS software support the addition of external links to the global and secondary navigation? If yes, please describe how this is accomplished.
6) Does the CMS software support notification of users when they are leaving the site? If yes, please describe how this is accomplished.

7) Is "breadcrumb" navigation automatically created and maintained by the software on every page of content? If yes, please describe how this content and links are managed.
8) Does the CMS support the ability to generate friendly URLs? If yes, please describe how this is accomplished.

4(A)5. Master Calendar Functionality

1) Describe the website calendar functionality.
2) Does the calendar support item categories and custom display of calendar items by category across the site? If yes, please describe how this is accomplished.
3) Does the calendar create event reminders for site users to download event reminders to their own calendar applications? If yes, please describe how this is accomplished.
4) Does the calendar support event submissions from the public side? If yes, please describe.

4(A)6. Security/Authorization

1) How are users and user groups created and managed?
2) Can users and user groups be created with different access rights? If yes, please describe how this is accomplished.
3) Please describe any pre-defined users and/or group types that are included in the CMS software.
4) Please describe how specific content ownership can be managed, including reassigning ownership.
5) Please describe the administrator's role and access to content and content management on the website.
6) Please describe the CMS software's workflow management tools, including the ability to customize the workflow, workflow notifications, and the auditing capabilities of the workflow system.

4(A)7. Other Features

1) Does the CMS software support the ability to apply customized look and feel within different services/committees/departments while maintain global navigation and website common look and feel? If yes, please describe how this is supported.
2) Does the CMS software produce RSS feeds? If yes, please describe the content this feature is available for, and how it is managed within the software.
3) Does the CMS support social networking links for site visitors to share content? If yes, please describe the functionality and the ability to manage what is included in this feature.
4) Does the CMS meet ADA/508 standards? If yes, please describe how this is accomplished.
5) Does the CMS support viewing text only, printing, and mobile access of content? If yes, please describe how this is accomplished and the mobile access systems that are supported.
6) Does the CMS have a software development kit or other functionality to facilitate the integration of current and future e-government services software, such as GOS, permitting, online bill payment, etc.? If yes, please describe how this is accomplished.
7) Does the CMS have search and index capabilities both internally- and externally-hosted website resources? If yes, please describe the content that can be indexed, and how search features are managed.
8) Does the solution provide for the management of content in rotating content or slideshow type of content that could support a rotating news feature on the home page? If yes, please describe how the software supports this type of content.

4(B) Summary

Please explain in one page or less how your solution will differentiate you from other vendors and why the Town should select you/your company as our website vendor. Please provide the features that give your company a competitive edge in the website design and replacement industry.

5. RFP RESPONSE SUBMITTAL CHECKLIST

If you wish to provide a proposal, the required information should be submitted to:

Town of Somerset
Attn: Website Redesign RFP
4510 Cumberland Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Or

SomersetRFP@somerset.com with the Subject Line, "Website Redesign RFP"

Proposals must be received no later than 4:30 p.m., Friday, March 5, 2021. Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered. Proposals sent via mail should be submitted with one original, five (5) copies, and a USB/flash drive of the entire response.

The original and each of the five (5) copies shall be indexed in the suggested format with tabs as follows:

Tab #	Section	Description
1	1(C)	RFP Cover Sheet
2	3	Acknowledgement - Scope of Services
3	n/a	Company Profile - to include names and bio of your team to be assigned to this project
4	n/a	Proof of Errors and Omissions Insurance - $1,000,000
5	n/a	List of references with contact names, phone number, and years as a client
6	n/a	Visual examples of previous work
7	n/a	Visual examples of proposed CMS
8	4(A)1	Answers to Content Editor and Management questions
9	4(A)2	Answers to Archiving questions
10	4(A)3	Answers to Content Scheduling questions
11	4(A)4	Answers to Navigation questions
12	4(A)5	Answers to Master Calendar Functionality questions
13	4(A)6	Answers to Security/Authorization questions
14	4(A)7	Answers to Other Features questions.
15	4(B)	Summary
16	Appendix A	Proposal Price Certification
17	Appendix B	Copy of Firm's Valid Business License

This checklist is intended as an aid to the Vendor in providing a response to this RFP. The Vendor retains the sole responsibility for accuracy and completeness of the response. The Town of Somerset reserves the right to reject any and all proposals in part or in full and to waive formalities as may best serve the interest of the Town.

APPENDIX A

PROPOSAL PRICE CERTIFICATION

In compliance with the attached specification, the undersigned offers and agrees that if this proposal is accepted by the Town of Somerset Council within 100 days of the date of the proposal opening, that they will furnish any or all of the deliverables upon which prices are quoted, at the price set opposite each, to the designated point(s) within the time specified.

COMPANY _____

ADDRESS _____

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE _____

PRINT/TYPE NAME _____

Total Cost for Redesign Services: $_____

Hosting Cost per year: $_____

Please list and explain all other pricing for services and frequency of cost below.

Item	Description	Cost	Frequency (One-time or Recurring)