



DOWNTOWN ALBANY
Business Improvement District

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
WEBSITE REDESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

MARCH 24, 2021

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SUMMARY

The Downtown Albany Business Improvement District (BID) is accepting proposals for website redesign and development (downtownalbany.org). The purpose of this RFP is to provide a fair evaluation for all candidates and to provide the candidates with the criteria against which they will be judged.

After extensive research, the BID launched a redesigned, Drupal-based website in 2015 which continues to be primarily maintained with in-house resources (CMS) with significant formatting changes completed by the current website provider.

Today, the BID's website is a leading resource for Downtown residential referrals, event information, commercial property availability, and more, and the strategic focus of the organization continues to evolve to meet the needs of our Downtown Stakeholders and serving as Albany's newest neighborhood. A more updated use of the site's real estate is needed to more effectively present and utilize information and make the user experience modern, productive, and easy regardless of device.

1. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES & REQUIREMENTS

This is an open and competitive RFP process. Proposals received after 3:00 PM Friday, April 23, 2021 will not be considered. The BID reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses to the RFP, even if all of the stated criteria are met.

2. CONTRACT TERMS

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

3. OBJECTIVES

Pulling on the existing look and feel of the brand, develop a fresh site that uses homepage real estate and subpages in a more functional and modern web presence, allowing information to be easily found within the rich content resource.

The BID's website highlights the vibrancy of downtown Albany and specific attributes that make it compelling to visit, shop, live and maintain business in the District. In addition, the site serving to highlight our advocacy efforts and successes will also be important.

Upon completion of the development of the site and with acceptance by the organization, the BID will assume full responsibility of the website content, maintenance, and administration. At that time, all content, coding, graphics, software, and architecture will become the sole property of the BID.

4. BUDGET

The BID operates as a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization. In developing the 2021 budget, the BID Board of Directors is looking to understand the costs associated with website design, development, hosting, and maintenance contract.

The budget must encompass all consultation, design, production, hosting costs, and software acquisitions necessary for development and maintenance of the website.

List pricing for:

- Phase I: Discovery, Requirements Planning, and Site Definition
- Phase II: Site Development, Test, Deployment, and Hosting
- Optional: Contract retainer price to continue website services beyond this RFP

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, please 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 sub-contractor(s). The BID 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.

5. TIMELINE

- This RFP is dated March 24, 2021.
- Questions in relation to the RFP will be addressed via email through Tuesday, April 20, 2021 at 3:00 PM. Please email questions to Rebecca Hughes, Marketing & Communications Manager, at rhughes@downtownalbany.org.
- Proposals are due no later than 3:00 PM on Friday, April 23, 2021 and can be submitted via e-mail to rhughes@downtownalbany.org, or mailed to Attention Rebecca Hughes, Downtown Albany BID, 21 Lodge Street, Albany NY 12207.
- Proposals will be evaluated immediately thereafter. We may require interviews via Zoom with the evaluation committee beginning the week of April 26, 2021. You will be notified if this is requested of your firm.
- The name of the candidate firm who has been selected will be decided on or about May 12, 2021, pending the approval of the BID's Board of Directors. Negotiations will begin immediately with the successful candidate.
- All other candidates will be notified on or about May 17, 2021.
- The project will start by June 1, 2021; candidates must include anticipated timeline for completion with proposal.

6. SCOPE & GUIDELINES

The scope of the project is to design a new website for the Downtown Albany BID. We are looking for a firm that can handle all preliminary discovery and planning, design and programming, and existing content migration. The BID will create/provide and implement all copy. Prior to site implementation, in-person and/or online training and training manual will be provided to BID staff.

Development Guidelines

While there are certain criteria listed below, much of the scope will need to be uncovered in the discovery part of the development.

- The chosen candidate will create a design that works dynamically across devices.
- Open-source programming is required; Drupal preferred.
- Once final design is implemented, corresponding templates for our two e-newsletters in MailChimp are also requested.

Design and Functionality Objectives

The BID's website redesign objectives include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- A modern, accessible site that employs effective design, graphics, and current development and SEO knowledge.
- Ability to highlight high profile news and events prominently on the homepage.
- Implementation of uniform image size for individual listings and featured content.
- Allows users the ability to share content easily on social media platforms. Allows staff the ability to add this functionality to newly added content.
- A clean and appealing property database for commercial and residential space listings with image galleries. For both commercial and residential landing pages, dropdown menu or similar functionality allowing users to sort results with options inclusive of:
 - Commercial properties: lease/sale, type of office space (coworking, executive suites, etc.), pricing, on-site parking, etc.
 - Residential space: number of bedrooms, pet friendly, etc.
- A calendar functionality that has multi-dimensional sorting capability between several variables including dates, range of dates or by venue / location.
- Updated navigation bar; a site map will be agreed upon between BID and chosen vendor to based on functionality and content objectives.
- Ability to add Board Member headshot for each person.
- Ability to feature content on all main landing pages (Events, Live, Lease, etc.)
- ADA and WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliant with Section 508 requirements.
- Implementation of chatbot.
- Implementation of Facebook Pixel across site.
- Implementation of e-commerce on site (contingent on cost comparison to currently utilized payment platforms Square and Eventbrite).
- Creation and implementation of branded short link URL
- Implementation of plug-in for language translation

Sites the BID has identified for interesting design and functionality:

- <https://downtowndallas.com/>
- <https://downtownla.com/>
- <https://www.discoverlosangeles.com/>
- <https://dtphx.org/>

7. STAFF RESOURCES

A successful planning effort is driven by an interdisciplinary team of participants. The team will be driven by:

- Project Lead: Rebecca Hughes, Marketing & Communications Manager, will be responsible for sign-off on key decisions, providing project steering, keeping the project on schedule within the budget, and maintaining communication between other team members.
- Other Stakeholders include: BID Executive Director, Executive Committee Members and Downtown Albany BID Board Members.

8. QUALIFICATIONS

- Candidate must have resources available to begin project on June 1, 2021.
- Provide one person to serve as the main contact for the duration of the project who will present information and coordinate with BID staff, including a reasonable number of meetings to present concepts and designs.
- Describe your creative/technical website process from start to finish.
- Provide reference information from three current clients.
- Provide a company profile, length of time in business and core competencies.
- Briefly describe your firm's organizational capacity to produce creative (e.g. staff, equipment, software, physical space, office location, etc.).
- Briefly describe your firm's project management process.
- Please include a brief biography for each key staff member assigned to this project. Specifically, we want to understand the level of specialization and expertise in creative design, project management and website development that they bring to the project.
- Please state your terms and conditions.
- Please explain your service level agreement (SLA) structure.

9. EVALUATION CRITERIA

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

Your proposal must be received no later than 3:00 PM on April 23, 2021 and can be submitted to the attention of Rebecca Hughes via e-mail to rhughes@downtownalbany.org or via mail to Downtown Albany BID, 21 Lodge Street, Albany NY 12207. If mailing, seven copies of your proposal must be included. 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. 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.

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

- (20%) Suitability of the Proposal – The proposed solution meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP.
- (20%) Candidate Experience – Candidate has successfully completed similar projects and has the qualifications necessary to undertake this project. Working knowledge of working with non-profits and government agencies is a plus.
- (20%) Expertise in recommending and communicating appropriate technical and aesthetic solutions as evidenced by the proposal and references.
- (15%) Value | Pricing Structure and Price Levels – The price is commensurate with the value offered by the proposer. As a non-profit institution, the BID is able to accept pro bono service and recognize the provider to the full extent allowed by the Internal Revenue Service.
- (10%) Proposal Presentation – The information is presented in a clear, logical and organized manner.

- (10%) Demonstrated commitment to high service level agreements (SLAs).
- (5%) Depth and Breadth of Staff – The candidate firm has appropriate staff to accomplish the work in the time frame needed.
- NOTE: An initial preference will be given to candidates located within the BID boundaries. For specific addresses that are located in the BID district visit: <https://downtownalbany.org/about/bid-boundaries>
- NOTE: The BID reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses to the RFP, even if all of the stated criteria are met.

10. FORMAT FOR PROPOSALS

Please use the following guidelines to format your proposal:

Length

Maximum proposal length including title page, cover letter, proposal, qualifications, and budget should not exceed 20 pages (not including creative portfolio).

Title Page

Downtown Albany Business Improvement District, Website Design and Development Proposal, date, your company name, address, website address, telephone number, email address and primary contact person.

Cover Letter

The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the company submitting the proposal.

Proposal

Proposals should include two different designs for consideration, and should 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 noted in Section 5. Must also include costs related to website hosting.

Qualifications

Provide the information requested in Section 8.

Budget and Fees

List budgets as requested in Section 4.

Creative Portfolio

Please provide at least three recent website examples where your firm produced the project from start to finish.

Timeline

Must have capacity to adhere to the timeline outlined in Section 5.

11. BACKGROUND OF ORGANIZATION

Overview

The Downtown Albany BID is an independent, not-for-profit organization established in 1996. The organization partners with businesses, property owners, arts and cultural

institutions, social service providers, government agencies and elected officials in a united effort to advocate for the revitalization of downtown Albany. Playing a vital role in business recruitment and retention, visual improvements and safety, the BID represents an area of approximately 50 square blocks of Albany, NY's primary and concentrated Downtown and commercial area.

Mission

To restore, promote and maintain the character and vitality of downtown Albany and improve the quality of life and overall image for those who live in, work in, and visit New York's Capital City