



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

WEBSITE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Original proposals and with four copies will be submitted sealed via mail or courier to:

City of North Chicago
Website Design and Development
Attn: Gregory Jackson, Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor
1850 Lewis Avenue
North Chicago, Illinois 60064

Inquiries regarding this RFP must be submitted via email to: grejac@northchicago.org.

DEADLINE FOR PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS: August 2, 2024, by Close of Business (5 p.m. CST)

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PROJECT BACKGROUND

The City of North Chicago, Illinois seeks proposals from qualified professionals and firms to refresh and update its current website. The city is targeting the first quarter of 2025 for the new website launch.

For reference, the current website can be located at www.northchicago.org.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. The respondent's proposal must include the following:
2. Cover memorandum.
3. Detailed profile of company including all relevant contact information. For sole proprietors a resume/CV must be provided. Note: subcontracting any portion of design or development for this engagement is prohibited.
4. Detailed summary of all costs/fees for design, development, deployment, and ongoing maintenance.
5. Project timeline.
6. Narrative describing project management process.
7. Identification of key personnel responsible for leading and executing this project.
8. Like project references with at least three from municipal units of government.

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PROJECT GOALS AND SCOPE

The City of North Chicago seeks the service of a qualified contractor with considerable ability on the areas of web design, graphic design, content management, and project management to redesign the city's website. The city is seeking one firm for this project.

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The following items are strong preferences, but not necessarily rigid requirements. If expertise finds that here are more effective methods or tools to achieve the preferences, you are strongly encouraged to offer those recommendations. In addition, if there is additional functionality that is beneficial to the city and not included in this RFP, please include both descriptions and costs.

Graphic Design

1. The website should have consistent design template(s) for all pages.
2. The site must comply with the current requirements of the ADA, with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Amendments Act of 1998, and with the Electronic and Information Technology Standards adopted by the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (reference 36 CFR Part 1194).
3. Design should provide sufficient contrast so that color-blind visitors can properly interact with the site.
4. The website must be visually appealing to include a mix of text, photos, and graphics.
5. Uncluttered appearance that does not overwhelm visitors.
6. Ability to secure pages or sections from public view, with access restricted by password protection.
7. The website should not require any plug-ins to function.
8. Mobile browser capability and usability on a variety of mobile devices of various screen sizes and resolutions.

Informational Design

1. The website should consist of an updated informational outline in keeping with municipal website standards and/or best practices.
2. Suggested top-level navigation includes:
 - a. Residents
 - b. Visitors
 - c. About Us
 - d. Online Services
 - e. News
 - f. Calendar

Functionality

1. Calendar: Comprehensive and user-friendly. Include a calendar that is updated internally. The calendar should be searchable by meeting or event. The calendar

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should offer multiple views with the ability to filter by categories, including calendar grid as well as chronological listing.

2. E-Mail Notifications (Mass Notification): Provide a user-friendly way for residents to register and receive E-Mail notifications/Unlimited SMS/Voice Messages (Robocall) and geo-tracking.
3. Emergency Notification: Ability to display an emergency message on a scroll across the website, NOAA integrations and IPAWS.
4. Form: Ability for staff to easily create and compile forms that can be submitted by visitors to the site. A workflow function that directs inquiries to departments and allows for tracking would be ideal.
5. Meeting and Agenda Management Solution: If available, provide cost and services relative to agenda and meeting management solutions.
6. News Center: A simple administrative editor for adding news releases. Automatic chronological indexing of existing and past release within and archive section.
7. Breaking News, Communications/Social Media Portal: Provide an interactive interface for breaking news as well as discussion forums for the public to register comments, complaints, and feedback. Provide a direct home-page interface to social media channels for news.
8. Resident Feedback: The city is interested in soliciting feedback from residents and utilizing the site as a tool for interaction. The site should provide an easily accessible, mobile-friendly user interface for residents to report any non-emergency city issues, ask questions, and find answers.
9. Search: Pages should be constructed for indexing by common methods with the capability to designate certain pages to remain unindexed. Ability to search PDF documents, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint documents, in addition to standard HTML or database searches. Ability to control the priority of pages/documents returned for certain search phrases. Administrative report of the most frequently search terms configurable by date range and number of terms.
10. Social Media Integration: To ensure that the city is communicating important information to all audiences through current technologies, propose programming services for social media that allows the city to automatically push updated content to various outlets.
11. Efficient Navigability and Effective Searchability of Public Documents: Provide an intuitive navigation structure and an easy-to-use portal for uploading and archiving public documents with a database component for efficient searchability by the public. The site must be able to provide “friendly” URLs through the Content Management System.
12. Departmental Service Pages and Employee Directory: Provide a searchable employee directory as well as easily navigable pages for departmental information, including public safety, public works, human resources, careers, etc.

13. Available Properties and Business Databases: Provide an effective and efficient searchable database for available properties (residential and commercial) and local businesses.
14. Transparency/FOIA Tracking Module: If available, provide cost and services relative to transparency/FOIA tracking services.

Content Management

The current city website is updated by a limited number of staff in decentralized operating departments. It is likely that a limited number of staff will remain responsible for future content updates. A content management system (CMS) should include:

1. Updating photos, videos, documents, creating hyperlinks, and entering text by non-technical personnel.
2. Permit the use of custom code.
3. The ability for the website administrator(s) to approve content before being posted to the website.
4. Schedule the launch and expiration of content.
5. Workflow features to set reminders to update content.
6. Language/Translation Services.

Respondents should indicate the type of software being used and list any additional software that will be utilized to create the site. Respondents will also need to indicate any software licenses or maintenance the city will need to purchase, if applicable.

Hosting

The website may be hosted in the cloud; however, the city requires service-level guarantees important. Additional hosting services requested include:

1. Fixed IP address for the site.
2. SSL Certificate.
3. Unlimited or generous file storage.
4. Unlimited or generous bandwidth.
5. Significant reporting and metrics on a monthly or on-demand basis.
6. Automatically scalable.

Content Migration

Content from the existing site will need to be extracted and added to the new site.

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Training

The selected company will be required to provide training to city staff on content management, routine maintenance/troubleshooting, and adding audio/visual components to the website.

TIMELINE

RFP Issued: July 1, 2024

Vendor Submissions Due: August 2, 2024, by Close of Business (5 p.m. CST)

Bid Opening: August 5, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.

Vendor Presentations (Required): August 16, 2024

Vendor Recommendation Chosen: August 23, 2024

Recommendation to Committee: September 3, 2024

Council Approval: September 16, 2024

Project Begins: September 30, 2024

Web Site Launch **TBD**

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Maintenance, system, and software support must be provided as a part of the contract and must be included as one of the items in the cost summary. All items submitted in the proposal must be fully supported by the manufacturer/vendor. The selected vendor will be required to assume all responsibility for the delivery, installation, and testing of all software and support systems offered in their proposal, whether the vendor is the producer or manufacturer.

CONTRACT DURATION AND PRICE CHANGES

The City of North Chicago is seeking a multi-year agreement with all conversion, application, hosting, and maintenance services as part of the costs proposed. At no point will pricing be allowed to rise above the stated contract. Devices and additional services may be added during this time.

ADDENDA

Addenda are any graphic or written instruments issued by the City of North Chicago prior to the date for receipt of proposals that modify or interpret this document by additions, deletions, clarifications, or corrections.

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EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to any part of the requirements stated in this request must be clearly identified as exceptions in the submitted proposal.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

Any submitted information considered trade secret or confidential to the proposer or rendered via a non-disclosure agreement with the City must be so labeled and enclosed separately. The proposer, the City of North Chicago, and their agents will hold the submitted proposal and any related materials in confidence if so requested by the proposer. Throughout the evaluation process, any information therein will not be made available to any other party unless precluded by Illinois State Code. No debriefings or scoring sheets will be released before the final recommendation. However, after the award, all contents of the selected proposal will be considered public information. All proposal material supplied, including supporting material and information disclosed during the proposal evaluation process, will become the property of the City of North Chicago, and will be retained for internal use. The City of North Chicago reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted and to use any ideas in a proposal regardless of whether that proposal is selected. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the proposer of the conditions contained in this request for proposal, unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between the City of North Chicago and the vendor selected.

INCURRING COSTS

The City of North Chicago is not liable for any costs incurred by replying to this RFP.

PROPOSAL CLARIFICATION QUESTIONS

After reviewing all proposals received in response to this RFP, the City of North Chicago may develop a list of clarification questions to be addressed by the Vendor. The City of North Chicago will send these questions to the Vendor for clarification, and vendors should address these questions in their presentations.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

This RFP is not meant to favor any vendor. Instead, it is designed to meet the needs of the City of North Chicago. The City of North Chicago will weigh the proposals based on the proposer's references, qualifications, and support as well as technical merit and cost. The award will not be made on price alone.

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A “short list” of vendors meeting the desired criteria will be compiled. Vendors making the “short-list” will be asked to come on-site or virtually to provide a presentation of their solution.

In awarding the Contract, the City will take into consideration the proposer's skill, facilities, capacity, experience, responsibility, previous work record, financial standing, the necessity of prompt and efficient completion of work described in the proposal documents, or other factors the City of North Chicago considers relevant. The inability of the proposer to meet these conditions may be cause for rejection of the proposal. The city is seeking a solution that best addresses the needs outlined in this RFP. Vendors may respond “a’ la carte” to items identified in this proposal. Vendors may partner to achieve the total solution requested and such partnerships and subcontracting relationships should be clearly identified in the proposal response. One vendor must be identified as the primary vendor for the portion of the proposal they are responding to.

PROPOSAL ACCEPTANCE

The City of North Chicago reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals and waive formalities or irregularities in the process. A proposal once submitted shall be deemed final and binding on the proposer and shall constitute an option with the City of North Chicago to enter into a contract upon the terms set forth in the proposal. All proposal prices must be valid for 60 days from the proposal due date.

PROPOSAL AWARD

Unless otherwise indicated in the specification for a proposal, the City of North Chicago reserves the right to award the proposal in whole or in part, by item, or by a group of items where such action serves the best interests of the City of North Chicago.

CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

The City of North Chicago reserves the right to negotiate a contract after the successful proposer is selected. Selection will be based only on the proposal and subsequent interviews, if any; therefore, proposals must be complete.

CONTRACT DOCUMENTS

The proposer’s response to this RFP, response to questions, and written addenda will become part of the contractual documents upon signing of contract documents. The order of precedence shall be signed contract, response to follow-up questions,

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response to addenda, and response to the RFP. The most recently dated response to an item will supersede other items referencing the same topic.

FEES AND COMPENSATION

Provide a proposed lump sum budget for the completion of the proposed scope of services with cost breakdowns by scope element. Payment terms will be negotiated through the contract process.

WARRANTY

Warranty on all systems proposed will begin after successful installation, NOT upon delivery of the system.

EXISTING SOFTWARE, HARDWARE, AND OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

Applications that are included in the proposal must be demonstrated on a production basis before acceptance of the proposed system takes place. No “beta” products shall be proposed for this project. Included in the exceptions portion of the proposal are any points where the proposed application packages DO NOT conform to the Functional Requirements included in this RFP.

SECURITY

There must be a secure administrative function provided to maintain and monitor security. Secure, administrative functionality must exist to maintain users and provide access to users so that they only have access to those pages that they are given rights. Administrators must have access to all areas of the website. Administrative functionality should also include the ability to make modifications to the main page of the site.

INSTALLATION AND DELIVERY

Any materials/equipment shall be delivered to its proper location and installed by the proposer. During the time between delivery and acceptance, the City of North Chicago cannot be held liable for any damage or theft of any components. It will, therefore, be the responsibility of the contractor to obtain insurance against loss, theft, and damage.

OWNER'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR DELIVERY AND INSTALLATION

Please identify the exact tasks that the City of North Chicago must perform and/or be responsible for accomplishing the delivery and installation of the system if any. (Attach a

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separate sheet labeled “Required Pre-Delivery and Installation Tasks” if needed.) This may include, but not be limited to

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