

Town of  
**Matthews**  
North Carolina

Town of Matthews

Request for Proposal

Website Redesign, Mobile Application and Hosting  
Services

Issue Date: June 15, 2015

Proposals Due: July 20, 2015 at 2 p.m.

## 1. Purpose

The Town of Matthews is seeking a creative, qualified, experienced, professional firm to redesign its current website, [www.matthewsnc.gov](http://www.matthewsnc.gov), and complement the redesigned site with a compatible mobile application. The Town seeks a vendor to develop and implement a new website, utilizing posted information on its existing website, along with new information, products and features as suggested by the Town and the selected vendor. The Town is seeking the most cost-effective way to achieve the project's goal and is interested in the respondents' ideas for content and approach in achieving these goals, while encouraging them to consider and propose alternative solutions.

The redesigned site will be the public-facing point of interaction between the Town and the community, used to improve communication with residents, business owners, developers and prospective buyers as they seek the information they need. The redesigned site will enable the Town to:

- Improve usability/navigability for both visitors and Town staff;
- Improve visual appeal of the site for visitors;
- Utilize a quality content management solution that will allow non-technical Town staff to enter and manage content as easily as possible without altering the site's structural integrity;
- Develop and migrate content for the newly redesigned site with collaboration between the Town departments and the vendor, with the Town's desire being to maintain content internally as much as possible;
- Create a website that allows multiple users (1-2 from each department) to have responsibility and access to managing its own information
- Allow for integration of photo galleries and video;
- Accessibility via Windows or Mac computers;
- Scalable to incorporate site expansion in the next 5 to 10 years; and
- Hosted exclusively on a server located within the continental United States and backed up exclusively within the continental United States.

## 2. A) Project Development Minimal Guidelines

- The website must be accessible and available 24 hours a day/365 days a year;
- It must have development/test and production platforms;
- Establish up to three levels of authority for site administration with multiple user logins within each level. Departmental update capabilities are required for users to update specific pages without widespread access to all website pages;
- Include a content management system that will permit non-technical Town employees to instantly and easily update web content. The site should be flexible enough to allow custom page development by the Town within a template environment, include database connectivity, scripting, and server-side includes;
- The site must have an email newsletter template and email-blast capability;
- At the time of release, the site must be fully compatible with 80 percent of the browsers in use at that time, at the lowest level of regional data available for the Matthews area. The vendor needs to specify the source for supporting this requirement;
- The site must not require plug-ins as a default (.pdf is allowable);
- No proprietary or non-standard code;
- Ideally the site should follow the “three-click rule”;
- Take full advantage of the resolution available, but be able to operate without horizontal scrolling, down to a screen resolution of 800x600;
- The site must meet ADA requirements, developed to meet all federally mandated access requirements adopted by the Federal Access Board under Section 508, subsection 1194.22 of the Rehabilitation Act;
- Site must be built in accordance with the most recent Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, provided by the W3C and should also be easily accessible to the novice, as well as the experienced internet user;

- Pages must be fast-loading; design should be optimized with a balance of text and graphics so each page can quickly load (maximum of 8 seconds);
- Once the site is accepted by the Town, the site will be maintained by the Town, using tools identified by the vendor. The site will be utilized by non-technical users, so these tools need to easily update content. Master templates and style sheets should be provided to the Town, and the Town should be able to make minor adjustments to those templates without incurring additional programming costs;
- The site must be visually appealing, with a balanced use of text and graphics;
- Each section of the site should be visually consistent, with consideration to the Town's marketing and branding goals;
- The site should be easy to navigate, with information grouped and presented in logical form, requiring no more than three levels of 'drill down' for users to find the information they need;
- The site should have access to any email addresses (staff, board members, etc.), including methodology to prevent email harvesting from spammers;
- The use of pictures, fonts and layouts should be consistent throughout the site. The Town, however, should have the flexibility to exercise changes of fonts on any pages for specific content;
- The selected vendor will assign a project manager to be made available to coordinate with Town staff and present information, including a reasonable number of meetings to present design and development solutions to the Town's satisfaction;
- Technology implemented must work with current Town systems;
- Once the site is completed and accepted by the Town, the website design and all contents, software, and architecture become property of the Town;
- Training will be provided to Town employees, with meetings held at Town facilities.

#### B) Functional Requirements

- The website should allow for online transactions and have the capability to interface with financial and online registration/reservation systems currently in use or contemplated by the Town. Any financial transactions must occur on a secure server. Secure pages should either contain no unsecured content or prevent pop-up messages warning users the page contains both secure and unsecured content;

- Search functionality must have options for site-wide searching or searching within a specific area of the website;
  - It should provide search capabilities using key words or phrasing that will identify content from throughout the site;
  - Document search should include PDF and Word files;
  - Results should be based on relevance, then date, using “fuzzy logic”;
- The site should have a searchable document archive;
- The site should have a sign-up function for users to receive emails/newsletters and to register home/work/cell numbers for bulk delivery of Town messages. This database should be expandable in formats including CVS and Excel, with the ability to send blast messages from remote locations;
- Dynamic breadcrumbs;
- A rapidly-changing news function – text/audio/video – preferably with RSS syndication. News function should be database or XML driven with flexibility in content display;
- Centralized file/photo/video/podcast storage;
- “Email This Page” function;
- “Printer friendly version” functionality;
- Polling feature to solicit input from the public;
- Dynamic site index/map;
- FAQ section;
- Configuration of flash slide show or photo gallery, with Town having the ability to access and change photos out;
- Employment opportunities – job postings and application capability
- Staff directory including name, position, email address, with option for biographical information for any person. Directory must also support elected and appointed officials;
- Calendar function;
- Ability to optimize large maps for viewing;
- Standard log files must be available for tracking error coding, broken links, etc.;
  - Reports to generate:
    - Web traffic analysis (daily, monthly, cumulative);
  - Path analysis;
  - Visitor trends;

- Page views;
- Entry pages;
- Top pages;
- Exit pages;
- Length of stay on page/pages

### C) Customer Support Requirements

- A Customer Service Level Agreement (SLA) will be required prior to implementation of the new or improved site. The SLA must specify a time frame for acknowledgment of site issues and establish reasonable response times for differing levels of need. It is expected that critical issues (system or important parts of the system are unusable) will have continuous efforts from both the vendor and the Town until the problem is resolved;
- Allow the Town to report “bugs” and/or questions to the Vendor via email, phone, or web-based forms;
- The Vendor must have a process and reports to track issues electronically, allowing the Town to monitor progress on any issue reported.

### 3. Functionality to Be Priced Individually (Add-Ons)

The following items are not required, but cost estimates for each element should be included in the Vendor’s proposal as separate line items:

- Dynamic content creation in Spanish;
- Web optimized images – it would be desirable for users to have the option of using a server-side proportionate image resize tool to reduce larger pictures down to appropriate sizes to save space and improve load times;
- Vendor to convert substantial amounts of existing proprietary content to new website;
- Portions of the site will be accessible by the public, with other portions available to Town employees, Board commissioners which will require a login (extranet). Database to be developed supporting login functionality and then maintained by Town staff moving forward;
- Installation of forms creator for user-defined online forms;
- Ability to use audio/video clips;

- Interface to other systems and platforms – i.e. citizens should be able to apply for permits online, pay fees online, and the Town can approve or deny the permit. Approvals should be able to interface with Mecklenburg County’s Permit system for processing. Denials should be returned to the applicant with the reason for denial, which is input by Town staff.

#### 4. Testing

The selected Vendor will be responsible for testing the site on all applicable platforms to ensure the site functions properly. The Town will also conduct usability testing after initial site schematics are designed and developed to validate navigation choices.

#### 5. Town Staff Resources

Project Lead: The Town Manager will be responsible for sign off on key decisions and will provide project direction.

Project Manager: The Town Communications Director will be responsible for keeping the project on schedule, maintaining the relationship with the Vendor, and keeping the project within the Town’s budget.

#### 6. Qualifications

- List the three web sites your firm has produced that best reflect your work and relevancy to this project. Briefly list the role your firm has played in each project. Please submit the URL to each site (only sites that are live will qualify during evaluation);
- Describe your experience in producing sites for government entities;
- Provide current reference information for three current or former clients;
- Briefly describe your firm’s organizational capacity to produce the Town’s website (i.e. staff, equipment, software, physical space, office location, etc.);
- Provide a company profile, length of time in business and core competencies;

- Describe what type of team will be assigned to this project, what each team member's role will be, and a background summary of each team member assigned to the project;
- Describe your firm's project management process; and
- Describe your testing and support plan.

## 7. Evaluation Criteria

- Cost;
- Suitability of the Proposal – the proposed solution meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP;
- Expertise in recommending and communicating appropriate technical and aesthetic solutions as evidenced by the proposal and references;
- Aesthetic Capabilities – prior work demonstrates artistic and innovative, user-friendly interfaces that engage viewers and communities;
- Candidate Experience – candidate has successfully completed similar projects and has the necessary qualifications to undertake this project;
- Depth of Staff – the candidate's firm has appropriate staff to develop the site in the necessary time frame;
- Proposal Presentation – the information is presented in a clear, logical manner and is well organized;
- Demonstrated commitment to high service level agreement (SLA); and
- Any other criteria the Town deems appropriate.

## 8. Format for Proposals

### 1. Title Page

a. Town of Matthews Website Development Proposal, company name, address, website address, phone number, fax number, email address, name of primary contact person

2. Cover Letter – signed by the person/persons authorized to sign on behalf of the company

### 3. Proposal

#### a. Executive Summary

#### b. Site Development

- i) Web development process – Explain the process you will follow to build the website and app, including major milestones and evaluation;
- ii) Define the change order request process during development;
- iii) Address usability standards and testing;
- iv) Address any important technology information and specifications used in your solution (i.e. languages, platform, etc.);
- v) Meeting and training locations;

#### c. Budget

- i) Break down cost by activity performed and number of hours per activity;
- ii) Maintenance and support – identify any costs that should be assumed as part of the site, app and ongoing costs for maintenance and support the Town may need in the future. Include current cost for change requests once in production;
- iii) License fees – identify any costs associated with licensing requirements;
- iv) Hosting – identify whether hosting is provided as an option or requirement; provide pricing options;
- v) Training and Style Guide – include any costs to train Town staff and for documentation, including a style guide;
- vi) Other charge areas – please identify additional expenses, i.e. consulting fees, future work, etc. to complete this project.

#### d. Attachments

- i) Qualifications (see above);
- ii) Biographies of all staff who will work on the project;

iii) Professional references;

iv) If you provide hosting:

- How often do you backup?
- How often do you have scheduled down time? In the past year, how often have you experienced unscheduled down time and for how long?
- Please describe your technical support;
- Please describe your security;
- Please describe your methodology and service level agreements;
- Pricing, terms and conditions;

v) If you do not provide hosting, please suggest a vendor/partner to provide hosting services and include answers to the above questions for such vendor/partner.

#### e. Administration/Submission

i) All questions must be submitted in writing to the Communications Director. Questions and answers will be forwarded to all proposing firms who provide contact information via email to: [jthompson@matthewsnc.gov](mailto:jthompson@matthewsnc.gov). In order to make information available to all proposing firms, no questions shall be entertained past 2 p.m. June 29, 2015. Answers will be distributed via email no later than 5 p.m. July 6, 2015.

ii) Sealed proposals must be submitted **no later than 2 p.m. July 20, 2015**. The sealed package should contain four (4) printed copies and one electronic copy of the proposal, and any company brochures, pamphlets and/or materials indicating the firm's qualifications. The electronic copy of the proposal may be sent via email to [jthompson@matthewsnc.gov](mailto:jthompson@matthewsnc.gov) but the Town is not responsible for undelivered email. Electronic and hard copies must be received by the deadline or a proposal will **not** be considered.

Proposals packages must be submitted to:

Jen Thompson, Communications Director

Town of Matthews

232 Matthews Station Street

Matthews, North Carolina 28105

It is the responsibility of the firm to ensure its proposal is sent sufficiently ahead of time to be received no later than 2 p.m. on the opening date. Proposals received after the deadline will **not be opened.**

#### 9. Selection Criteria and Process

The Town reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals, waive any irregularities in the proposal process, and award a contract in whole or part, as may be in the Town's best overall interests. The Town will be the sole judge of the suitability of the products, services and system designs offered.

The selected Vendor will be required to enter into an agreement for the project, subject to the Town's contract policy.

Before the Town executes a contract, the selected Vendor will furnish the Town a certificate of insurance, Workman's Compensation Insurance and Comprehensive Public Liability Insurance or General Liability Insurance.

The Vendor is responsible for securing various rights, licenses, clearances and other permissions related to works, graphics or other copyrighted materials to be used or otherwise incorporated in the website.

All applicable copyright notices will be displayed on the website.

#### 10. Miscellaneous

The vendor will hold the Town of Matthews, its officers, agents and employees harmless from liability of any nature or kind on account of use of copyrighted or uncopyrighted composition, secret process, patented or unpatented inventions, article or appliance furnished or used under the quotation. The Town reserves the right to reject any bids that do not address all the terms and conditions of this bid

request. In addition, the Town may reject any and all bids at any time when it is determined to be in the Town’s best interest not to make the award from among the submitted bids.

11. Preliminary Timeline

Task	Date	Time
Issue RFP	June 15, 2015	N/A
Deadline for questions	June 29, 2015	2:00 p.m.
Questions/addendum issued	July 6, 2015	5:00 p.m.
Responses due	July 20, 2015	2:00 p.m.
Proposal evaluation	July 21-28, 2015	N/A
Vendor presentations (if necessary)	August 3-7, 2015	TBD
Present for award	August 10, 2015	TBD
Anticipated Contract Effective Date	August 11, 2015	N/A

The award date is subject to change at the discretion of the Town. The effective date of the contract is tentative, and is dependent upon the length of time required for contract negotiation.

12. General Bidding Requirements

- This solicitation is for the purchase of information technology goods and services and shall be awarded per North Carolina General Statute 143-129.8. The contract shall be awarded to the vendor that submits the best overall proposal.
- Proposals submitted shall not be subject to public inspection until a contract is awarded. Proposals will be received by the Town at the time and place so stated on the document. At that point, the Town will close the receipt of proposals and begin the evaluation process.
- Respondents are asked not to contact any Town staff or elected official in reference to the process. Any questions should be directed to the

Communications Director during the question period outlined. As information becomes available and is relevant for release, that information will be shared with the respondents. Any and all information submitted in conjunction with this RFP and the evaluation will not be returned to the respondent.

- Vendors must specifically identify portions, if any, of their submittals, deemed to contain confidential and proprietary information, or trade secrets. The vendors may be required to justify why the Town of Matthews should not, upon request, disclose such materials.
- The Town reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any informalities as may be permitted by law. The Town reserves the right to request oral interviews or request additional written information from any or all vendors. The Town also reserves the right to award a contract based on proposals received without further discussion or negotiation. Vendors should not rely on the opportunity to alter their qualifications during any presentation or discussion.
- This RFP and any contract resulting from shall be governed by and construed according to the laws of the State of North Carolina. Any litigation to enforce such agreement or any of its provisions shall be brought in Mecklenburg County.
- Successful bidder must be prepared to begin providing service within one week of the contract award date.
- Vendor warrants that his bid is genuine and not collusive and that he has not conspired nor agreed in any manner to fix any bid or any element of such bid price, payment or agreement for commission percentage, brokerage, or any other compensation for the procurement of this contract.
- Either party may cancel the resulting contract by providing the other party a thirty (30) day notice of cancellation.
- All proposals shall be signed by an authorized officer or employee of the submitting organization. The name of the company, contact person, telephone number, fax number and address shall be included.
- The Town shall have the right to reject or accept any Proposal or offer, or any part thereof for any reason whatsoever, at its sole discretion.
- The RFP does not commit the Town to award, nor does it commit the Town to pay any cost incurred in the submission of the Proposal, or in making necessary studies or designs for the preparation thereof, nor procure or

contract for services or supplies. Further, no reimbursable cost may be incurred in anticipation of a contract award.

- The Town reserves the right to terminate this RFP at any time prior to contract execution.
- No prior, current, or post award verbal conversation or agreement(s) with any officer, agent, or employee of the Town shall affect or modify any terms or obligations of this RFP, or any contract resulting from the procurement.