



Request for Proposals

Date: September 19, 2022

CONTACT:
Kristina Scarcelli, EAA
734-544-7107
2777 State Road
Ypsilanti, MI 48198-9112
E-mail: kscarcelli@ycua.org
Web Site: www.ycua.org

Website Redesign, Development, and Implementation Services

Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority (YCUA) has prepared this request for proposals (RFP) seeking a creative, qualified, experienced, and professional firm (Vendor) for the design, development, and implementation of a new website to replace its existing website at www.ycua.org. Hereafter, all correspondence will be labeled “2022 Website Redesign, Development, and Implementation Project”. Proposals will be accepted electronically until 2:00 p.m. local time on October 18, 2022 and should be directed to YCUA’s representative Kristina Scarcelli by email at kscarcelli@ycua.org. Hard copy proposals will not be accepted. Proposal addenda, changes, cancellations, or other comments or inquiries concerning this RFP can be addressed by email only at kscarcelli@ycua.org through October 4, 2022.

1. Project Overview

YCUA is a Michigan not-for-profit corporation that provides drinking water to approximately 110,000 people and wastewater services to approximately 250,000 people. YCUA’s current website was designed by in-house staff in 2002. Historically, there has been one system administrator and one or two content contributors. YCUA’s current website is dated and was not created with broad-ranging functionality in mind and, therefore, is due for a redesign.

Most visitors to YCUA’s current website site fall into one of the following categories:

1. Utility customers wishing to start or stop service, pay their bills online, complete forms, etc.
2. Utility customers inquiring about service, infrastructure, odor concerns, etc.
3. Utility customers seeking information regarding public meetings and hearings.
4. Potential contractors seeking project proposals.
5. Potential employees seeking employment.
6. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) inquiries.

2. Development & Technical Requirements

This RFP is preliminary in scope to generally communicate YCUA's expectations. The scope of work may expand. Proposals should include but not be limited to the following:

1. Design of a user-friendly and dynamic navigation framework for YCUA's website that will allow users on all levels to easily access relevant information, submit forms and surveys, and share questions or comments or address problems and concerns that, based on the subject, generate an e-mail to the appropriate YCUA staff member (e.g., a public comment portal for Board of Commissioners agenda-related items). This could be an integrated solution or a third-party application.
2. Design of a site that is secure with scheduled security updates.
3. Seamless integration of social media tools including but not limited to Facebook and Twitter.
4. A robust search function that allows users to search the whole site or specific subsections within a site map.
5. Ability to create a meeting calendar and news pages based on category and / or department.
6. Ability to easily track website visitor statistics and develop reports.
7. Ability to be notified of expired pages and broken links.
8. Capability to maintain an archive of existing and past records such as agendas, minutes, newsletters, financial reports, etc.
9. Integration of a responsive design for broad-ranging device, operating system, and web browser functionality.
10. Migration of all relevant web content from existing website, possibly recoding of existing web applications and forms, to the newly designed website in an organized manner.
11. A method must exist to prevent email address harvesting from spammers.

3. Content Management System

The Vendor's content management system (CMS) should be a commercial off-the-shelf or custom-made web-based application that allows regular updates by system administrators and content creators.

1. CMS Specifications:
 - a. Automated formatting standards.
 - b. A method of creating website forms, including check boxes and radio buttons.
 - c. Ability to easily post public notices and other documents and links.
 - d. A method of replacing or updating the website home page with an emergency alert page or message.
 - e. Multi-level, role-based access control (e.g., advanced system administrators as well as various levels of non-technical content creators).
 - f. A method of tracking changes made to the content creator making the change and notifying a content creator by email when the contributed content is approved by a system administrator and made live.

4. Vendor Requirements

1. Vendor must have been in the business of providing website design and web content management solutions for at least five (5) years.

5. Proposal Specifications

1. Vendor's proposal must be valid for not less than ninety (90) days after the proposal deadline.
2. Ownership of the website design and all content to be transferred to YCUA upon completion of the project, including the full, unlimited access to website code.
3. Identification of any annual maintenance fees, covering first three (3) years of technical support (email and / or phone) and limitations (hours or days available, emergency contact, etc.), if any.
4. Coordinated site development with YCUA staff, including planning meetings and continued communication throughout the duration of the website design project.
5. Training, including written documentation, for the various staff who may serve as system administrators and content creators.
6. All proposals shall be signed by an authorized officer or employee of the submitting organization. The name of the company and address, contract person, telephone number, and email address shall be provided.
7. Vendor must provide contact information for three (3) to five (5) references.
8. Vendor must provide examples of at least three (3) comparable websites, including municipal and governmental agencies, that they have designed.
9. Proposals should contain a not-to-exceed budget for the requested scope of work along with a detailed "line item" breakdown and a la carte pricing for any proposed items outside the scope of work. No contingency shall be included in the response. Acceptable reimbursement expenses will be limited to subconsultants, mileage, and document reproduction. No other reimbursable charges will be accepted.
10. Proposal should identify a single Vendor as the "responsible lead Vendor". Please include any subcontractor(s) that will be required to meet the needs of the proposal or clearly indicate what portion of the services are not included as part of the proposal.
11. Indicate years of experience related to website design, development, and implementation.
12. Include an estimated detailed timeline for completion of this project.

6. Other

Any clarifications made in response to questions received will be emailed to all respondents providing contact information and requesting YCUA to do so.

This RFP does not commit YCUA to award, nor does it commit YCUA 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.

YCUA shall have a period of thirty (30) days after the opening of the bids in which to award the contract. Contracts shall be awarded to the Vendor that submits the best overall proposal as determined by the awarding authority. One finalist will be determined based on meeting the eligibility, developmental, and technical requirements listed below:

1. Qualifications and experience of Vendor and staff.
2. Completeness and inclusion of requested information.

3. Similar projects completed by Vendor.
4. Ability to meet deadlines requested by YCUA.
5. Proposed cost of the project.

YCUA reserves the right to request oral interviews or request additional written information from any or all Vendors. YCUA also reserves the right to award a contract based on proposals received without further discussion or negotiation. Vendors should not rely upon the opportunity to alter their qualifications during any presentation or discussion.

Proposals submitted shall not be subject to public inspection until a contract is awarded. Any and all information submitted in conjunction with this RFP and evaluation process will not be returned to the Vendor.

YCUA may negotiate with any Vendor in order to obtain a final contract that best meets the needs of YCUA. No prior, current, or post award verbal conversation or agreement(s) with an officer, agent, or employee of YCUA shall affect or modify any terms or obligations of this RFP or any contract resulting from this procurement.

YCUA reserves the right without prejudice to reject, in whole or in part, all proposals received, to waive all technicalities as may be permitted by law, or to negotiate any term(s) or provision(s) of such proposals. Such rejection, waiver, or negotiation shall be accomplished in any manner necessary to service the best interest of YCUA. YCUA also reserves the right to be the sole judge of the suitability of all proposals for use by YCUA. YCUA reserves the right to reject or otherwise disregard, in whole or in part, any ambiguous proposals or proposals which are uncertain as to terms, delivery, quantity, or compliance with specifications.

YCUA reserves the right to terminate this RFP at any time prior to contract execution. Either party may cancel the resulting contract by providing the other party a thirty (30) day notice of cancellation.
