

I. PROPOSAL DETAILS

Androscoggin County Website Design, Implementation and Maintenance

A. Issuing Entity

Androscoggin County

B. Deadline

Proposal Deadline: **November 24, 2023**

C. Submission and receipt of proposals

* Response to this RFP MUST be clearly marked “RFP-Website Redesign and Development”

Submit four (4) hardcopies and one PDF electronic copy of the entire response on a flash drive in your sealed bid and send to: Androscoggin County, Commissioner’s Office, Attn: Sandy Berube, “RFP-Website Redesign and Development”, 2 Turner Street, Auburn, ME 04210.

* Late, faxed, or emailed submissions will not be accepted, no exceptions.

Contact: Sandy Berube-Administrative Assistant

Email: sberube@androscoggincountymaine.gov

Phone: (207) 753-2526

D. Timeline

RFP Release date: October 25, 2023

Deadline to submit written questions: November 15, 2023

Proposal due date: November 24, 2023

Review responses: November 27-December 15, 2023

Award contract: Upon approval of contract

Tentative project start date: December 26, 2023

Tentative website launch: April 1, 2024

E. Award

Proposals will be reviewed by an internal committee where proposals will be evaluated and ranked. Proposing firms may be asked to participate in an interview to further discuss qualifications and to answer questions from the committee. The contract will be awarded to the responsible, responsive firm whose proposal, conforming to this solicitation, will be most advantageous to Androscoggin County, price and other factors considered.

The County of Androscoggin reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, in part or in whole and to waive informalities and minor irregularities in bids received.

F. Withdrawal

Proposals may only be withdrawn by written notice prior to the date and time set for the submission of proposals. No proposal may be withdrawn after the deadline for submission.

G. Non-Collusions Clause

By signing and submitting this proposal, proposer states that his proposal is genuine and not collusive or sham; such proposer has not colluded, conspired, connived, or agreed, directly or indirectly, with any proposer or person, to put in a sham bid, or that such other person will refrain from proposing and has not in any manner, directly or indirectly, colluded, conspired, connived, or

agreed, with any person, to fix the price of affiant or any other proposer, or to fix any overhead, profit or cost element of said proposal price.

H. Non-Discrimination Clause

By signing and submitting this proposal for consideration of an award by Androscoggin County, the proposer covenants not to discriminate against an employee or applicant for employment with respect to hire, tenure, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment or a matter directly or indirectly related to employment, because of race, color religion, national origin, age, sex, height, weight, marital status or a disability that is unrelated to the individual's ability to perform the duties of a particular job or position. Breach of this covenant may be regarded as a material breach of the contract.

II. PROJECT DETAILS

A. Description

The county is seeking a vendor that will be able to build a new website utilizing the existing information from the current website. The goal for the website includes but is not limited to:

- Improving communications between the county and its constituents
- 24-hour access to county information, forms, the ability to make inquiries to minimize phone calls, in-person visits and outgoing mail that would otherwise occur.
- Delivering e-government *services*
- Enhancing the county's image and identity

Some general requirements & staff requests:

- Intuitive, mobile responsive design for simple navigation, easy to find and use tabs and drop down boxes, two clicks to find desired information
- Ability to plug in future technologies
- Fast download
- Current events and announcements on the homepage, as well as posting emergency notices from a mobile device mainly for emergency and closure notifications
- Can-spam compliant email subscription program for e-newsletter/agendas & minutes and public service announcements
- VPN capabilities to remotely access intranet and personal files
- Androscoggin County will own the website code
- Each department having its own domain name & license
- Link(s) to bank from website in an I-frame so customers may pay fees online.
- Link(s) to county's finance program in an I-frame
- Employee intranet with plug-in capability for current accounting and administrative systems
- We would like one page to showcase all seven of our commissioners with contact/town information and links to other commissioner related information (something like <https://kennebeccounty.org/commissioners>)
- Easy maintenance by county staff, including making programmable changes internally without having to contact vendor
- The ability for jail visitors to schedule a visit online (instead of calling)
- Ability to post and download various electronic forms and securely submit online. The ability to allow vendors to submit W-9 and Certificate of Liability forms online. Online job posting and electronic resume submission with the ability to send attachments (resume/cover letter) with the application. Online posting of bids and ability for bidder to submit responses electronically.
- Electronic submission of FOIA requests via website

- Content Scheduling-set dates for content to automatically publish & expire

The county is soliciting a vendor with the desire, experience and talent to develop a superior plan or “blueprint” for its website. The website must be designed from the customer’s perspective. The county will pursue vendors with proven track records in providing government websites together with ongoing technical support, maintenance and upgrades.

It is the county’s goal to design a website that best meets the needs of residents, businesses, visitors, staff and other stakeholders. Improvements or suggestions to any condition in the RFP are welcome and should be explained in the bid.

Both this document and the winning bid will be considered contractual components.

B. Background

The current Androscoggin County website was created by a previous employee. We have approximately 10 departments which would all need their own page with links to online services (or the ability to create them in the future if not currently needed). Each department will need the ability to update their own webpage.

There are several other pages in addition to these main pages. Our current website can be found at Androscoggincountymaine.gov. Our website currently uses a sidebar to focus on quick links, we do not require “quick links” as a side bar, but prefer an organized website like Emmet County Michigan, <https://www.emmetcounty.org> in which the each page has their specific links listed on the left to simplify navigation.

C. Scope of Work

The proposer will redesign Androscoggin County’s website, including a new design, a new website structure and the options for a new content management system (CMS), *or external content management system provided by the contractor*. A final scope of work will be developed by agreement with the county and the proposer. The following only acts as a preliminary scope to generally communicate the county’s expectations. Proposals for redesign of the website and CMA should include or account for, but not be limited to the following:

1. Creation of a highly useable website using dynamic design and organization that will allow users to easily find information.
2. Convey a sense of place and organizational culture consistent with the county brand.
3. Demonstrate the county’s commitment to transparency and high-quality customer service by increasing measurable public self-service options.
4. Consolidate and migrate existing content to the new website, with various changes as requested.
5. Incorporate various specific needs of each department and the community as a whole into the overall design.

D. Development Objectives

Androscoggin County would like to create a customer focused website using intuitive navigation controls that will allow for easy access to information by site visitors. The county would like to redesign the current website utilizing the latest technology.

Balance Government Look & Feel with Unique Web Presence

Government sites are informative in nature and should clearly portray that purpose on the website, but it should also portray a unique web presence that is attractive as well as functional to fulfill the

model of online government services. The vendor will be expected to work with county staff to develop the look and feel of the site to convey the county's unique brand. This shall include a cohesive graphic design incorporating the county's brand, logo, culture, etc.

Site Navigation & Organization

The site navigation should use modern tools/techniques to help guide visitors to their desired information. The site should incorporate, but not be limited to, these strategies:

- User-centric design and organization
- Robust, Google-like, intuitive search functionality and menu system as the primary navigation tools
- Searchable business directory, indexed document archiving and retrieval system
- Each department will have its own main page to guide visitors to department specific news and services

Content Management System

The vendor shall provide a comprehensive, widely used, CMS solution as an option of the proposal. The CMS software proposed should not be a beta, release candidate, other early adopter technology or easily susceptible to hacking. The CMS shall be accessible via external access. The vendor will provide a search engine solution to support indexing of all contents within the CMS.

Calendar Program

Desired features include the ability to view the calendar in either day or month format with the ability to add to specific days hyperlinked events that can lead to either a web page or a document (such as a pdf) is required. Online calendar must be downloadable and available for import into users' personal calendars

Email Subscription

Ability for visitors to sign up to a mailing list for various communications such as e-notifications for meeting agendas and building closures. This needs to be CAN-SPAM compliant. The website company must provide email marketing software.

Online Newsroom/Calendar

Ability to post news to a page or pages on the site. News should have the ability to be automatically archived in an easily retrievable manner at a predefined time after publishing and scheduled to be published at a future date and time. New headlines should have the option to be displayed on the homepage in an order defined by staff.

Audio and video embedding

Ability to embed audio and video into website pages. Photo slideshow header on the home page with the ability for staff to change out photos as needed.

Integrated RSS Feeds

Integration with social networking applications, including but not limited to, Facebook and Twitter, so users can share county information with their social media contacts. The ability to integrate with future social media tools should also be provided.

- RSS Feed Reader: Ability for staff to set up feed readers for important county information.
- RSS Feeds: Ability for users to sign up to receive RSS feeds.

Integration of Third-Party Sites and Services

Third party tools, features and databases should have the same look and feel as the county's website and the links to the third-party websites should be integrated into the site's navigation.

- Possibility of live streaming county's government TV channel and future video streaming service for videos and county meetings.
- Integration of Microsoft Outlook for internal email and calendar services

Browser/Device Compatibility

Responsive site design. Any new website design should be easily viewable from a desktop, tablet or mobile device of any manufacture. The user experience should be similar across all devices, allowing for difference in device layouts or requirements.

Fully functional, both viewing and editing, with the major browsers and operating system on PC and Mac.

Ensure implementation is functional with the current versions and one version back of major browsers and operating systems.

- The site will be required to support browser versions that are more than 3 years old where the older version still accounts for 10% of site web traffic.
- The site will not be required to support any browser that is no longer available for download from the manufacturer's website or whose manufacturer has ceased development.
- The site will not support browsers for operating systems not currently supported by the OS' manufacturer's website or whose manufacturer has ceased development.
- Functional viewing and editing with all major mobile devices. The website will be easy to use by viewers and content managers with all major mobile devices, including but not limited to:
 1. Tablets-iPad, Samsung tablet, MS Surface
 2. Smart phones-iPhone, Blackberry, Android and Windows Mobile phones
- The development of mobile applications is excluded from this project scope but site compatibility with mobile devices is within the scope. While outside of this project's scope, vendors may provide information on mobile application development for future consideration.
- Fully functional, both viewing and editing with the major browsers and operating systems on PC and Mac

Hosting

The website company will provide hosting of the website *and intranet*. In addition, there should be redundant server back-up to ensure 100% up time. Downtimes must be transparent to the user with processes and procedures to preclude data loss and file corruption.

Website Analytics

Analytics tracking and reporting must be integrated on the site to allow for website visitor tracking, page tracking, etc.

ADA Compliance

Comply with Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 508 and World Wide Web Consortium standards.

- Site should be accessible to those with disabilities. The final design must comply with all requirements of Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, WCAG 2.0 (Minimum Level AA).

- Site should have the ability to scale fonts on each page.
- Cascading style sheets will be utilized to ensure consistency and separation of content and design.
- The site will support W3C standards as much as technology will allow, so long as it does not reduce the active functionality of the site to our supported users.
- Ensure the site is HTML5, and CSS3 compliant.
- Ensure employee updates will also be ADA compliant using software such as Monsido.

Search Engine Accessibility

Search engine optimization (SEO) and site search functionality. The site should provide for search engine optimization to allow the highest possible ranking of the individual pages within the site from all major search providers, including but not limited to Bing, Google, MSN Search and Yahoo!

- Robust, Google-like, intuitive search functionality, search engine and web crawler optimized
- The site should be accessible by spiders for the purpose of indexing the site and structured in a manner that spiders can crawl easily.
- The site should provide meta-title and meta-description tags that can be maintained by county staff.
- The site should provide robust and prominent smart search functionality, allowing users to type in a word or phrase to find information on the site.
- The search feature should provide results for a single word, combination of words, or the exact phrase searching using quotation marks.
- The search feature should enable search of both HTML pages and documents, such as PDF files.
- Results will be returned in order of relevance bases on the frequency of the search words in the page content or metadata, and results can be browsed by category.
- Users should be able to browse search results within different content types, such as documents, event calendar and news.

Data Migration

Data and file migration from existing site and integration into new site: Understanding that this RFP provides the county with the opportunity to restructure and update its content, the county has a significant investment in the existing content and files. Proposals should include the necessary process for migrating the data and files from the existing site into any new or upgraded CMS. This includes indexing and integrating existing content into the new design and navigation structure.

Knowledge Transfer and Skills Training

The newly designed website will bring new technologies to the county and new ways to use existing technologies. The county expects the vendor to work closely with the county's key staff members to answer questions and give demonstrations on the new site features.

*Describe how your company will provide initial training for the county's appointed users, should the county select an internal CMS. In addition, describe how you will provide on-going support by job title, including project management, development, help desk support and training as separate items. Preference will be given to vendors who provide support as an unlimited part of ongoing services, within reason, rather than a pay-per-use system that discourages customer questions and interaction.

Long-Term Management

Include a strategy for the long-term management of the website's architecture and Content Management System including:

- Review site usage statistics and provide suggestions for improvements on a bi-annual basis
- Maintenance of website architecture
- Technical support of CMS
- Assistance with implementation of third party software on the website

Website Project Phases

The following website project phase outline is provided to demonstrate what the county anticipates the project will involve. This outline shall further be discussed with the awarded vendor.

A. Concept

1. Determine Content
 - a. Evaluate existing web content for inclusion on the new site
 - b. Brainstorm to identify potential new content
 - c. Meet with department heads
 - d. Document all content for new site
 - e. Document relationships between content for use during site layout
2. Navigation Structure
 - a. Determine the functional top level navigation tabs.
 - b. Determine the sub-level navigation tabs.
3. Acceptance
 - a. Concept report of findings and recommendations
 - b. Present to management

B. Design

1. Functional Specifications
 - a. Detail exactly how the website will operate
 - b. Specify all deliverables
 - c. Set specific milestones
2. Design Site Layout
 - a. Organize site structure
 - b. Determine all of the templates needed for various functions
 - c. Determine a look and feel for the site, including color schemes, graphic elements and navigation tools.
3. Mock-up Templates
 - a. Create visual models of how the user interfaces will operate
 - b. External web pages
4. Acceptance
 - a. Present to management
 - b. Implement suggestions
 - c. Final acceptance

C. Development

1. Create user interface templates for staff to add, change or delete content
2. Design Web Applications
 - a. Develop server-side objects and components
 - b. Develop client-side scripts and controls

3. Testing
 - a. Develop user testing
 - b. Usability testing
4. Acceptance
 - a. Present to management
 - b. Implement suggestions
 - c. Final acceptance

D. Implementation

1. Install web applications
2. Install object and components developed
3. Site testing
 - a. Usability testing
 - b. Stress testing
 - c. Load testing
4. Acceptance
 - a. Present to management
 - b. Implement suggestions
 - c. Final acceptance

E. Go live – Replace current site with new site

F. Training & Support/Maintenance

1. Train Staff
 - a. Provide training to two to three applicable staff personnel
 - b. Provide documentation that outlines maintenance process
2. Support
 - a. Provide support documentation
 - b. List support number and hours of operation
 - c. Process for obtaining and installing updates

G. Selection Criteria

A selection committee will evaluate the proposals based upon the submittal requirements. After a review of the written proposals, selected forms may also be asked to make an in-person presentation or field follow-up questions.

The County of Androscoggin is not obligated to award the contract based on cost alone.

The contract will be awarded to the responsible, responsive firm whose proposal, conforming to this solicitation, will be most advantageous to Androscoggin County, price and other factors considered.

III. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

A. Submittal Requirements

1. Cover letter. The letter should include a project statement describing the applicant's understanding of the goals and objectives, as well as the approach and philosophy regarding the project.
2. Full name & address of the firm with a short description of the following:
 - a. Business organization

- b. Year established
- c. Federal ID number
- d. Maine tax ID number
- e. The firm's legal formation (e.g. corporation, sole proprietor, etc.)
- f. State of incorporation, if applicable.
- g. List the firm's officers (up to three)

3. Outline of work plan and timeline for project.

4. Proposed project team members: Include a description of the organization, an organizational chart, and the primary role and responsibility of each team member. Clearly designate the team leader for this project and the responsibilities of other contributing members.

5. Individual experience: Include information on the background of key members and detail their specific contributions to past projects, as related to this project.

6. Specific project experience: Provide examples of similar successfully executed projects. Be sure to include at least one project that involved generation of a government website.

7. Affirmative statement regarding ability to start immediately upon award of the contract.

8. Additional suggested and/or proposed steps, actions or deliverables which members of the firm deem advisable, along with associated costs are welcome.

B. References

RFP reviewers may solicit references from some or all client contacts provided with previous experience examples above. Include at least (3) references, for similar projects completed within the past 5 years. Include the name, telephone number and email address. List services provided to each client.

C. Compensation/Fees

For this project, please provide the following:

1. Separate the cost of website development from that of providing a company intranet.
2. Delineation of actual charges the County will incur related to ongoing maintenance, listed separately from the proposed price of the construction.
3. Hosting costs, annual or otherwise.
4. Project cost: Include a proposal as a separate attachment showing a not-to-exceed cost of your proposed services (Please see end of request for proposal). Include a breakdown of cost for each task or deliverable. While cost will be a secondary factor, the county is not required to accept the lowest cost proposal and selection of the successful consultant will be based on the proposal deemed to be in the best interest of the county.

D. Evaluation Criteria

The following elements will be considered on a weighted basis in evaluating proposals for selecting the consultant for this project:

- Successful public-sector informational program experience, including input from clients
- Competency of firm or individual, including reputation and integrity

- Professional background and success of key personnel assigned to this project
- Ability to meet deadlines and implement the program in a reasonable time frame
- The contract will be awarded to the responsible, responsive firm whose proposal conforming to this solicitation, will be most advantageous to Androscoggin County, price and other factors considered

E. Conflict of Interest

- Disclose any conflicts or perceived conflicts of interest
- Identify what procedures your firm utilizes to identify and resolve conflicts of interest

F. Copies of the Following Items

1. Comprehensive General Liability and Property Damage coverage
2. Professional Liability (Errors and Omissions) coverage
3. Worker’s Compensation coverage
4. Any and all relevant license/registration numbers
5. Signed ARPA form
6. The form below-completed

Component/Module Name	Function	*Offered (Y/N) * Cost	Vendor Comments
Browser based administration	Create, edit, or delete and template-based web pages and news updates		
Calendar	Update/publish calendars (& link to pdf or other), w/ optional ability to import Google calendar feeds.		
Departmental home pages	Ability to create landing pages for associated county departments		
Staff directories	Dynamic content		
Document & file repository	Upload/download capability/back end ability to search within		
Public meeting document management	Create, manage, host agendas, minutes & other relevant documents		
Search/archive center	Search solution for live or archived content (internal site search engine)		
News updates	Online publishing of information with email subscription capability		
Alerts	Front page solution for notification updates, registration & the ability to share via social media interface to existing systems and databases		

Component/Module Name	Function	*Offered (Y/N) *Cost	Vendor Comments
Interface to existing systems, databases, external platforms	Integration or links to interactive GIS, land records portal, Facebook, YouTube etc.		
Online payment solution	Secure online transaction by department to both the bank and to the county financial program		
RFP/RFQ bid posting	Dynamic content		
Integrated human resources solutions	Applicants can view job openings, fill out applications, attached resumes/documents to submit electronically via website.		
Security integration	SSL encryption		
Video hosting	Ability to embed third-party videos		
Site analytics	May use google analytics to analyze site traffic		
Sitemap	Dynamic		
Mobile browsing	Website can be accessed from any mobile platform		
Online forms	Forms, publishing, and tracking with email forwarding capability. Also, the ability to submit FOIA requests electronically via website		
Printable pages	Print-friendly function		
Sideshow	Dynamic image/video display		
Other			
Total (without hosting)			
Hosting	Ability to host, (include cost separately from creating site)		
Total (with hosting)			