

Request for Proposal

Issue Date: November 1, 2017, Olympic Peninsula Tourism Commission

Project Title

Website Development and Hosting Services: OlympicPeninsula.org

Email Questions Due Date

November 13, 2017

All questions relating to the statements contained in the RFP are to be sent via email to Mary Brelsford at OPTCWebRFP@gmail.com. To review all received questions and answers:

OlympicPeninsula.org/WebRFP

Proposal Due Date

Due by Email at 4PM PDT, November 22, 2017

Delivery Address

For consideration, qualified firms may submit their proposal responses (one (1) electronic and eight (8) hard copies of the submittal materials) to:

Mary Brelsford
Project Manager
Olympic Peninsula Visitor Bureau
OPTCWebRFP@gmail.com
P.O. Box 670
618 S. Peabody St., Ste. F
Port Angeles, WA 98362

Project Overview

The Olympic Peninsula is one of the United States' most distinctive destinations. We are looking for a creative partner to help us communicate that distinctiveness online to visitors and industry professionals; inspiring, informing, and assisting at any stage of their planning processes.

Bordered on the west by the Pacific Ocean, on the east by the Hood Canal and on the north by the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the Olympic Peninsula is anchored by the majestic Olympic Mountains and Olympic National Park – one of the crown jewels of the national park system.

Located just off the doorstep of the Seattle metro area, no other place in America can match its diversity in terrain and weather in such a compact geographic area. The unique cultural, artistic, and culinary attributes of the Olympic Peninsula make the area a “bucket list” destination for visitors from throughout the world.

Key Elements of Project

1. Website Design & Deployment
2. Hosting & Maintenance
3. Content & Creative

Olympic Peninsula Tourism Commission Description and Mission

The Olympic Peninsula Tourism Commission (OPTC) is a nonprofit marketing partnership of 8 (eight) cities/regions in Clallam, Jefferson, and Grays Harbor counties in Washington State, and is tasked with marketing and promoting tourism on behalf of the entire Olympic Peninsula. Partners invest a portion of their local room tax/resources toward Olympic Peninsula marketing efforts. Partners include: Clallam County, Port Angeles, Forks, Sequim, Clallam Bay & Sekiu, Jefferson County, Port Townsend, and Lake Quinault Innkeepers Association.

Partners market their own communities; OPTC is the overarching entity that markets the Olympic Peninsula as a whole. OPTC is administered by the Olympic Peninsula Visitor Bureau (OPVB), which has 3 (three) staff members (Executive Director, Communications Manager, Office Manager). OPVB is one of the 8 (eight) funding Partners and is responsible for marketing Clallam County.

Current Website

Our current website – <http://olympicpeninsula.org> – is built on the Drupal platform, and was developed in 2009. The goal of the site at that time was to create sections and assets specific to each Partner community, and allow each of the Partners to independently manage their own information. The site contains articles, photos, an itinerary-builder, as well as extensive databases of lodging, events, and activities. The event listings are open to user-submission, with Partner approval.

Over time, we have found that Drupal is too complicated for Partners to reliably use. As a result, other than event entries, most updates are performed by a single OPTC staff member. Moreover, as new marketing and communications campaigns are developed, they are being developed outside Drupal in separate Wordpress installations (e.g. <http://www.olympicpeninsulawaterfalltrail.com/> & <http://www.olympicpeninsulageotour.com/>).

Our current site reflects a Partner-focused presentation; it presents lists of attractions, lodging, and events specific to each Partner community. However, we feel it is time now to recast our presentation as less of a collection of database entries, and more of a magazine – inspiring, informing, and assisting visitors at any stage of their planning and visiting process. That said, much of the information contained in our existing Drupal databases is valuable to visitors – particularly lodging and events. We are open to creative solutions for migrating or recasting that information in a more engaging, user-friendly format.

The existing site does not have an integrated blog, but links to a separate, Wordpress blog: <http://olympicpeninsulablog.com/>.

Our existing presentation also includes a mobile-specific and tablet-specific version of our website: <http://m.olympicpeninsula.org> & <http://t.olympicpeninsula.org>. These implementations are opaque to current staff, and have not been updated in some time.

Our existing Google Analytics implementation is fragmented due to the issues related above, so we don't have an accurate sense of our online impact.

Our Audience

We communicate to two different audiences:

- **Visitors** – These are individuals and groups either planning their trip in advance, or looking for information while they are here. In terms of mindshare, we frequently find visitors looking at the Olympic Peninsula in the context of a visit to the Seattle metro area. Visitors often also consider visiting the San Juan Islands, the Oregon Coast, or Mt. Rainier.
- **Industry Professionals** – These include travel industry representatives, media, government agencies, film companies, local tourism businesses, etc.

Website Objectives

1. **User-friendly, Open Source, & Rock Solid** – While we won't rule out a Drupal upgrade, we think the time is right for a simpler, more user-friendly content management system. Let us know whether you think Wordpress (some other open-source option) is the right solution. We are a small staff with limited time; we expect it to be easy for our staff to create and update content, and we need to be confident that you (or your partner) will host it reliably, to scale, and with state-of-the-art security. We'd like your proposal to include sufficient time on-site in Port Angeles, WA for installation and training. We also need the entire site secured with SSL.
2. **Drop Dead Gorgeous** – The Olympic Peninsula is breathtaking - our website should be as well. We believe we have the photography assets to do that, but we are also willing to obtain them if we don't. The site should work responsively on all device types/sizes, and conform to web standards. Each of our Partner communities have their own identities and visual inventories; we want to communicate those impactfully within an overall Olympic Peninsula brand framework.
3. **Inspirational, Educational, Assistive** – We need to quickly and impactfully communicate why people should come here, where they should go, what they should do, and where they can stay. The key actions we want visitors to take are: 1) Download or order our travel planner; 2) Get inspired and then click through to the Partner communities' websites.

As discussed above, it's possible that we are communicating too much information right now, particularly in list form. While we currently utilize an itinerary builder on the site, we are not convinced that such functionality adds value for today's tourism consumer. We're curious what you think. We are leaning towards a more curated presentation in this new version of the site – focusing on highlights and major events and activities, vs. displaying laundry lists. We find the metaphor of a magazine to be a useful tool in this vision. As the sole entity promoting the Peninsula as a whole, we want to tell the larger, more impactful stories that will capture the attention of potential visitors. We have an array of PDF itineraries that we'd like to display in native web format as well, so that they work better on mobile devices.

There are a few important informational elements that are "musts:"

- a. Lodging options. We are funded via lodging tax contributions, so we need to display lodging options. We have these currently in Drupal.

- b. Event listings. While we don't intend to be the canonical source for all events throughout the Peninsula, we do want and need to be able to give visitors a sense of what is possible to do during their visit. We have these currently in Drupal. It is possible that in the new version of the site, we may scale down the number of events dramatically, but we want to work with you on that.
 - c. Maps. It's difficult to convey scale on the Peninsula. Visitors think they can do more in one day than is physically possible, due to the unique geography and road distribution. We believe that integrating maps into the website helps us with this, and we are eager to learn how you might approach this differently than we currently do. If we could modify and add layers to these maps (i.e. for specific types of tours/itineraries) that would be even better.
 - d. Site Search.
 - e. Restricted access capability for members/internal use.
4. **Integrated, Inbound-capable, and Analytics-enabled** – Right now, our communications and campaigns are spread out into our core Drupal site, as well as different Wordpress installations. We would like all existing satellite sites to be housed in the same CMS. We're open to input on the best way to do that, but we would like to ensure that future campaigns are easy to set up with templates for landing pages and calls to action that we can then promote with blog entries. We currently have a landing page and form for our travel planner, but we might have other information products in the future.

Our current Google Analytics implementation is fragmented between these different satellite sites, and in the case of the existing mobile sites – not tracking accurately. We are hopeful that an integrated CMS will allow us to better track the efficacy of our efforts and capture a true picture of our reach. We would like you to set that up utilizing Google Tag Manager so that we can easily (and non-technically) add additional tracking scripts as needed in the future.
5. **Supports Social** – We currently utilize Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and Twitter and would like your guidance on the best methods for integrating these tools into our website.

Other Website Considerations

In reviewing our peers, we find two examples of what we believe are appealing and meet some of the objectives listed above:

- Glacier Country – Montana: <http://glaciermt.com/>
- Visit Idaho: <https://visitidaho.org/>

While we don't currently have plans to support advertising on the site, we would be interested in learning how that might be elegantly integrated into the new site. Additionally, in the future we would like to enable readers from other major international tourism markets (China, Japan, Germany, etc.) to read the site in their native language.

We currently use external services (Constant Contact) for event registration. We are satisfied with that service, but if an integrated solution were available for the site, we'd be open to exploring that solution.

We invite you to conduct your own review of our site, and we are open to suggestions regarding content and functionality in the new site that would help us reach our target audiences.

Hosting Objectives

We do not have the staff time or capacity to manage a hosting environment. We'd be looking to you for that solution.

1. **Reliable and Scalable** – We would expect that the host for the site is available 24/7, has state-of-the-industry uptime and reliability metrics, and can scale if traffic for a campaign spikes unexpectedly.
2. **Secure** – In today's threat environment, we would expect that the host for the site deploys state-of-the-industry monitoring and threat-prevention tools, and keeps all platform, theme and application elements up to date.

Content/Creative Objectives

This part of the proposal is open to the most interpretation. Our existing website is very data/information-heavy, but our vision for the new site involves perhaps less information, conveyed more dramatically. We'd like your input on how to convey the incredible nature of the Olympic Peninsula to visitors.

Our team knows what connects with visitors, and we have plenty of narrative at our disposal. Similarly, we have an extensive photo library that is available for use. We do not have a robust video library, however, and are open to exploring how we might partner with you to develop that, should the new site require it. If you have a strong creative vision for what we need to accomplish our goals, then we invite you to integrate it into your proposal.

Budget

The total budget for this project is capped at \$35,000. No contractor selected under this RFP is assured of receiving any minimum amount of business.

Qualifications

1. Your firm must be licensed to do business in the state of Washington.
2. We would expect your firm to have at least 3 (three) years of experience working on sites of this scale, in the CMS you are recommending.
3. We do prefer that you have experience working with other destination marketing organizations, but if your firm has a unique vision or capabilities, we'd love to talk with you.
4. In the event you propose migrating data from Drupal to another CMS, we expect you to have experience with similar data migrations and programming.
5. We believe in a collaborative, co-creative environment, and would expect you to work in that spirit with our Project Manager.

Proposal Requirements

All proposals submitted in response to this request for proposal must contain the following information in the stated order:

1. Name, address, email and telephone number of the firm.
2. Description of the firm (corporation, partnership, etc.) and year established.
3. State of incorporation, if any, and type of ownership.
4. Name(s) of all partner(s), principal(s) and/or owner(s) of the firm.
5. Names and bios of the key staff that will be managing and implementing the contract.
6. Name, title, email and business address of person responsible for submitting this proposal.
7. Listing of proposed subcontractors, if any, and the scope of work they will perform.
8. A Creative Overview – What are you proposing and how will you accomplish it.
9. An estimate of time required to complete the project and a proposed timeline of work tasks, with the date of final completion of the project.
10. A budget breakdown of the project, including the firm's base rates, fees and charges for services, by phase and for total project, and a proposed payment schedule.
11. At least three (3) references of other destinations and work samples including individual contact name, name of company, email and phone number.

Letter of Transmittal

The letter of transmittal should be physically signed by an officer of the firm(s) and include the following:

1. Name, address, telephone number, email.
2. Name, title, email and telephone number of the individual authorized to commit the firm.
3. Name, title, email and telephone number of the individual to be the official contact person regarding all matters concerning the proposal.
4. A statement ensuring validity of the proposal for at least ninety (90) days.

Criteria for Selection

Each submitted proposal will be evaluated to determine those firms that may be invited for an oral presentation. All proposals submitted will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. Creative 60%
2. Technical 30%
3. Budget 10%

Addenda to the RFP

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, addenda will be supplied to all firms receiving this Request for Proposal.

Presentations

Any firm who submits a proposal may be required to make an on-site presentation of its capability to perform as described in its proposal to the OPTC. Such a presentation will be at the firm's expense and

will provide an opportunity for the firm to clarify its proposal to ensure a thorough mutual understanding. The OPTC will schedule presentations at a mutually agreeable time.

Modification or Withdrawal of Proposal

Responses to the Request for Proposal (RFP) may be modified or withdrawn by written or telegraphic notice prior to the RFP response deadline.

Reservation of Rights

The OPTC reserves the right to:

1. Accept or reject any and all proposals in response to this RFP, and to re-advertise for new submittals.
2. Waive or modify any irregularities in proposals received after prior notification to the firm.
3. Request the submission of proposal modifications at any time before the award is made, if such is in the best interest of the OPTC.
4. Consider proposals or modifications received at any time before the award is made, if such is in the best interest of the OPTC.
5. Request clarification and/or additional information from the firm during the evaluation process.
6. Utilize any and all ideas submitted in the proposals received unless those ideas are covered by legal patent or proprietary rights and the patent of those rights are indicated by the firm. Proposals will become the property of Olympic Peninsula Tourism Commission.
7. Negotiate with the selected firm to include further services not identified in this RFP.

RFP and Project Timelines

Issue RFP: 11/1/17

Date for Submission of Email Questions from Bidders: 11/13/17

Date for Response to all Email Questions from OPTC PM: 11/15/17

RFP Proposals Due by Email at 4PM PDT: 11/22/17

Proposal Evaluations: 11/27/17 – 12/8/17

Bidders Notified of Oral Presentations: by 12/11/17

Finalist Oral Presentation Dates: 12/13-20/17

Announce Final Selection: 1/4/17

Project Completion: 4/18/18