

ATHABASCA COUNTY REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

June 17, 2014

Website Hosting, Design, and Development



RFP Coordinator:

Laura Barfoot
Tourism/Economic Development Officer
Athabasca County
3602 – 48 Ave
Athabasca, AB T9S 1M8
lbarfoot@athabascacounty.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Submission Timeline and Format	3
2. Project Overview	3
3. Design Requirements	4
4. Functional Requirements	5
5. Maintenance Requirements	6
6. Proposal Details	6
7. Proposal Evaluation	8
8. Appendix 'A'	9

ATHABASCA COUNTY REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

1. Submission Timeline and Format

Tuesday, June 17, 2014
Monday, July 21, 2014, 4pm
Tuesday, August 5, 2014, 2pm

RFP Advertised
Question Deadline
Proposal Deadline

The RFP Coordinator for this project is:

Laura Barfoot
Tourism/Economic Development Officer
Athabasca County
3602 – 48 Ave
Athabasca, AB T9S 1M8
lbarfoot@athabascacounty.com

All communications regarding this RFP should be directed to the RFP Coordinator by email only.

The deadline for sending questions to the RFP Coordinator is Monday, July 21, 2014 at 4pm. All questions and responses will be shared the week of July 21, 2014 with all firms who provide an email address to the RFP Coordinator by Monday, July 21.

Submissions must be mailed in a sealed envelope to the RFP Coordinator at the address above and include two (2) printed copies and one (1) USB with a soft copy.

2. Project Overview

The Athabasca area is full of tourism opportunities: the beautiful Athabasca River and outdoor recreation possibilities; the fascinating history of settlement and trading; and the multitude of concerts, festivals, and events hosted by our towns, villages, and hamlets combine to create a region with excellent amenities for those seeking nature, history, and events.

Athabasca successfully operated a jointly-funded tourism consortium called Athabasca Country Tourism. The website www.athabascacountry.com ran for several years promoting tourism for the region, but unfortunately no longer exists. The need to promote our region is becoming more and more apparent.

While we are not interested in resurrecting the Athabasca Country Tourism brand, the ideas that were generated there are still relevant. Specifically, we still feel that our strengths in the region fall into the categories of Nature, History, and Events and would like the website to reflect this focus. The website will encompass the entire region that falls within the borders of Athabasca County, including the Town of Athabasca, the Village of Boyle, and the summer villages when relevant.

The goal of the website is to provide easily accessible electronic access to the region's tourism resources and serve as a hub for local events and festivities. The website design should be

ATHABASCA COUNTY REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

professional, welcoming, fresh, and easy to navigate. Athabasca County will be responsible for content management and will generate and own all content.

Our target audiences include:

- Regional residents seeking local event information
- Day and weekend travelers from the cities of Edmonton and Fort McMurray
- Travelers interested in camping and the outdoors
- Families with young children
- Retired couples

Athabasca County is requesting proposals for three services related to the creation of a tourism website for the Athabasca Region:

1. Website hosting;
2. Professional design and development of a tourism website; and
3. Ongoing maintenance on an as-needed basis.

Respondents must provide a proposal encompassing all three website services. This will be a concept to completion production, from scoping to information architecture, design, development, and deployment. As our Tourism department follows a finite budget, we expect proposals to be competitive. Contract costs and fees will be negotiated with the finalist(s).

3. Design Requirements

The following are general design guidelines for the project:

Accessible, easy to navigate website

The website should be accessible to all visitors, including mobile and tablet users, desktop users in a variety of popular browsers, and basic accommodations for the visual and auditory impaired (e.g. font size adjustment, colour control, and alt tags). Access to all features of the website should be consistent for all users regardless of their chosen platform and provide reasonable service to users with older browsers. Page build should be lightweight and pages should load quickly regardless of Internet connection.

Easily identifiable brand

The website should create visual interest and branding shall be consistent with our strengths of History, Nature, and Events. Visitors to the website should leave with a positive impression of the Athabasca region and be compelled to return to the website. The brand shall not be lost in a mélange of flashing or moving objects or otherwise distracting features. No web design company indicators will be permitted on the website.

Clean design

The website should have a clean, modern design and users should be able to easily locate information. As was suggested above, we desire the website to be highly visual without losing functionality. We welcome innovative ideas; however, design should be simple and fresh with a lifespan of at least five years.

Draft Wireframe

Attached as Appendix 'A' is a wireframe outlining the pages and basic features we would like included on the website. Please note that this wireframe does not emphasize Nature, History, and Events, though this would be preferred in the final design without losing the integrity of the overall website structure. Our proposed website features no more than five unique page designs.

4. Functional Requirements

The following are general functional requirements for the website:

Fully accessible content management system

Athabasca County staff or its designate shall have full control of the creation, editing, and removal of all generated content on the website following completed website development. The WordPress platform is already familiar to our staff and is the preferred CMS.

Search Engine Optimization and Google Analytics

The website shall make use of industry-standard best practices for Search Engine Optimization to ensure indexing and listing by all major search engines. It shall also incorporate Google Analytics to track website usage.

Upcoming Events Calendar

The website shall have a fully functional community events calendar with Google Maps integration. It shall be accessible for members of the public to add an event including all event details, to be verified and approved in the back end before being added to the calendar.

Visual Geographic Displays

This website shall have the capability to show geographically where items including but not limited to landmarks, trails, natural features, and events are located, sortable by location and by theme. It is not intended for the first version of the website to have this feature; rather, that this option will be available to us for future development.

News and Articles

The website should have blog-like functionality for posting articles, news clippings, videos, and other content. This content should be featured on the homepage of the website without being the primary focus.

Social Media Integration

Social media plays an important role on this website. Integration should include the ability to embed YouTube videos on webpages. Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram will all be part of our brand's marketing and outreach, and visiting our feed on those platforms should be easily accessed from our website.

Search

The website should have a standardized search feature for locating content by keyword.

Allowance for Interactivity

The website shall include a secure email contact form and future capabilities should include the ability to add surveys, feedback forms, and sign-up forms to receive electronic correspondence.

5. Maintenance Requirements

Following a successful website launch, we will require ongoing maintenance support throughout the life of the website. The requests may be related to any aspect of the website but will not include any considerable re-design. It is our expectation that maintenance concerns will be addressed in a timely manner during the work week and that the correction or an update on the situation will be provided within hours of the request being sent. The company will propose an hourly and monthly rate for consideration.

6. Proposal Details

Athabasca County will consider proposals based on the overall approach, proposed user-friendly tools, experience of the team, sample work, references, budget, and other criteria. The proposal must be guaranteed for a minimum of 90 days from the closing date of the RFP. Preference will be given to teams with experience working in Northern Alberta.

Cost of Proposal

Submission of a response to this RFP does not bind Athabasca County to engage the firm to provide the requested services. This RFP does not commit Athabasca County to pay any costs incurred by any respondents in the submission of a proposal or in making studies or designs for the preparation, or for procuring or contracting for the services to be furnished under the RFP.

Rejection of Proposals

Athabasca County does not guarantee that any proposal will be accepted and reserves the right to reject any or all responses to the RFP without incurring any liability. Submissions received after the due date will be automatically rejected.

Proposal Format

Proposals should include all information outlined below in the following order:

ATHABASCA COUNTY REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

1. Cover letter containing the signature of a duly authorized officer of the company submitting the proposal.
2. Title page identifying the project, company submitting the RFP, and RFP coordinator.
3. Table of contents.
4. Company name and profile, including experience providing similar services to municipalities.
5. Project Manager name, contact information, and curriculum vitae with relevant work samples from the last three years.
6. Additional team member names and curriculum vitae with relevant work samples from the last three years for each. Team members with experience in mobile app development and/or graphic design specialists will be considered an asset.
7. A summary of the firm's understanding of this proposal and related opportunities and challenges for a tourism website for the Athabasca region.
8. Describe the project process and methodology, including sample deliverables from past projects of similar size and scope. Clearly specify which services are provided in-house and which are outsourced. This section should also address the requirements outlined in this RFP, including but not limited to:
 - Description of how your company meets the above requirements.
 - How the website will prioritize space and content to our three key areas of focus.
 - How primary audiences interested in our three key areas of focus will be inspired to visit the Athabasca region.
 - Accessibility features of the proposed website.
 - Description of ongoing maintenance support provisions and fees.
 - Specifications pertaining to security, disaster recovery, historical data preservation, and procedures for handling outages.
9. Proposed phases or steps in the implementation of the website design, infrastructure, and hosting. Please provide a timeline in the form of a Gantt chart.
10. Describe the fee structure and how Athabasca County will be charged, along with your preferred payment schedule. The costs involved should be categorized separately as design, implementation, and maintenance per team member along with the annual webhosting rate. Please include your company's plan for post-launch maintenance, support, and upgrades, including the option of hourly and monthly rates for services. If your rate excludes certain fees, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.
11. Provide a list of no fewer than three clients comparable to Athabasca County indicating the length of service of each account; current clients are preferred. Please include the contact name, email address, and website URL.

7. Proposal Evaluation

Athabasca County is seeking a comprehensive proposal from qualified companies to fulfill these objectives. Companies are expected to show a demonstrated capacity to complete this type of work.

Athabasca County's Tourism/Economic Development Committee and administrative staff will evaluate proposals and, if a company is selected, select the company based on a 100 point total as follows:

1. The company's plan to meet and exceed the goals stated in this RFP in a comprehensive manner. (20%)
2. The company's experience, examples of past work, qualifications, and successes in providing similar services. (15%)
3. The company's references from past clients. (10%)
4. The company's pricing and timeline. (20%)
5. The quality of the proposal, responsiveness to requirements, and accuracy of information provided as this is considered a reflection of the company's talent and attention to detail. (15%)
6. The company's plan for hosting and post-launch support, and the rates for these services. (20%)

Athabasca County has the final approval of visual design and site architecture. The selected vendor will develop at least three separate design concepts for consideration.

The successful vendor will perform a variety of duties as agreed upon in the final negotiated Scope of Work and Level of Service Agreement. The selected vendor and the County will finalize the contract terms and conditions. If the County and the selected vendor are unable to agree on terms and conditions at this point, the County may exercise its right to negotiate with other vendors.

Appendix 'A'

