

New York State Geographic Information Systems Association

Request for Proposal Web Site Design and Development

September 17, 2009

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1. SUMMARY

The New York State Geographic Information Systems Association (Association) is soliciting proposals from experienced web site design firms to re-design and develop a new web site for the Association. (Its current site is located at: <http://www.nysgis.org/>). This Request for Proposals includes this document as well as Appendices A & B. (Please note that an additional Region, the Western Adirondack Users Group has been accidentally omitted from the diagram and should be included under "Regions.") This will be a concept to completion production. It is anticipated that the winning firm will also provide assistance required for the web site host in order to fully implement the new web site on its server. The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to explain the outcomes that are expected by the Association as well as the methodology being employed to evaluate the proposals being received. The Association welcomes proposals from all qualified vendors and, particularly, wishes to encourage vendors residing with New York State to provide proposals.

Award of the contract resulting from this RFP will be based upon the most responsive Vendor whose offer will be the most advantageous to the Association in terms of cost, functionality, and other factors as specified elsewhere in this RFP.

2. PURPOSE

The primary reason for the redesign is to better serve the membership of the NYS GIS Association by making the site easier and more efficient to navigate. In addition, as the site is updated by volunteers from the Association, it needs to provide secure remote access for content providers for easier and more efficient updating to keep the site more relevant and current. Finally, the overall graphics/design of this site must be representative of the cutting edge technology that geospatial information represents.

3. BACKGROUND

The current Association web site was originally designed several years ago in HTML as an interim measure by the Fulton Montgomery Community College. It was later hosted by the Institute for the Application of Geospatial Technologies (IAGT). It remained hosted by IAGT and was updated by IAGT at no cost to the Association for several years. Because of budget cutbacks, the site was transferred from the IAGT to a site hosted by Fountains Spatial in the summer of 2009.

Over the course of the last 18 months, a significant effort was made to provide updated information to the site. As that occurred and more and more material became available for posting, it became clear that the current design was in need of updating and a system for remotely managing its contents by authorized Association representatives was needed.

4. DESCRIPTION

The Association wishes to have a web site that is flexible, informative and easy to maintain. It also desires to have a site that reflects the technological prowess of the geospatial community. Above all, the site must be user friendly and able to deliver large amounts of frequently changing information to members of the NYS geospatial community. In addition to designing a user-friendly site with an intuitive

interface, it must also include a content management system that allows specific, designated Association members to easily update content (remotely) that they are responsible for.

To be effective, the web site must be:

- Easy and intuitive
- Visually pleasing and reflective of geospatial technologies
- Informative
- Safe and secure
- Quick to load and operate

5. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

- This is an open and competitive process.
- Proposals are to be received by noon on the date indicated in Section 7. Timeline.
- The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the company submitting the proposal.
- Proposers may submit alternate solutions or ideas to be incorporated into the web site, but they must identify them as such.
- The price quoted must be inclusive of all costs required by the vendor complete the work.
- Association reserves the right to:
 - Reject any or all offers and discontinue this RFP process without obligation or liability to any potential Vendor;
 - Accept other than the lowest priced offer; and
 - Award a contract on the basis of initial offers received, without discussions or requests for best and final offers.

6. CONTRACT DETAILS

- **Contract type:** The contract will be a firm, fixed price contract.
- **Time frame for completion of work:** All work will be completed with 4-6 weeks of contract award.
- **Payment:** The selected vendor will be paid 50% upon approval of the draft work and 100% upon approval for the completion of all work.
- **Contract precedence:** The contract will consist of the RFP (including Appendices A & B) and the Vendor's proposal. Precedence will be given to the RFP in resolving disputes.

7. TIMELINE

RFP Issued	September 17, 2009
Questions due	September 30, 2009
Responses to questions	October 5, 2009
Proposals due.....	October 14, 2009
Proposals evaluated by	October 21, 2009
Additional follow up questions (only if required).....	October 23, 2009
Vendors notified of outcome	October 30, 2009
Contract awarded.....	November 6, 2009
Completion of draft work	December 4, 2009

Review by Association December 11, 2009
Completion of all work and implementation of web site December 18, 2009

8. BUDGET

- The Association's Board of Directors has authorized the expenditure of \$4,500 for the completion of this project. Bidders are advised that their proposals should not exceed this amount.
- Bidders are asked to provide a breakdown of the costs associated with the project in a logical manner that reflects the effort to be put forth by the vendor in completing the project scope.

9. ORGANIZATION

The NYS GIS Association was formally incorporated in April 2006 as a not-for-profit professional organization in the State of New York. Its mission is to assist, educate, coordinate and guide the implementation, development and maintenance of GIS (Geographic Information Systems) technology in the State of New York. As a newly formed organization, it consists entirely of volunteers who donate their time to fulfilling its mission. By the end of 2008, its membership rolls totaled over 400 individuals.

The Association's primary goals and objectives are to:

- Support development of the GIS profession throughout the state of New York.
- Assist, educate, and contribute towards the implementation and development of GIS technology in the state of New York.
- Foster a spirit of cooperation among local, state and federal agencies, educational institutions and the private sector in addressing priority GIS issues and data development initiatives for New York.
- Contribute towards hosting regular meetings, conferences and technical workshops for the exchange of information and to exhibit products and services.
- Educate the general public about the nature of, and benefits from geospatial information and related technologies, including but not limited to, geographic and land information systems, the Internet, and global positioning technologies (GPS).
- Publish documents, produce educational materials, and promote education pertaining to geographic information and related technologies.

10. SCOPE AND GUIDELINES

Scope of work: The scope of work (scope) is included in this RFP as Appendix A.

Development guidelines: The web site designed by the successful bidder must meet the following criteria:

- Easily updated – It should use a commercial off the shelf (COTS) or Open Source content management system that will permit specified non-technical volunteers to instantly update web site content on specific pages. If a COTS system is selected, it must be licensed to the Association.
- Convert existing web site content to new web site.
- Visually appealing – The site should be visually appealing as well as attractive to potential new members visiting the site. It should be reflective of the advanced technology that geospatial information represents.

- Common theme/consistent design – Each section of the site should have a common look and feel.
- Easy to navigate – The site should be easy to navigate. Information should be grouped and presented in a logical manner and require no more than three levels of “drill down” for the user to find the desired information. Web pages should be developed to accommodate the proposed navigation scheme.

Web site re-design:

- New site must be compatible with IE and Firefox. Any required programming should be done in ASP .NET.
- Web site must not require plug-ins as a default.
- Web site should meet ADA requirements.
- Fast loading pages – The web site must be designed with a balance of text and graphics such that each page loads in 3 seconds or less on an average computer with broad band access.

Testing:

- The new site must be tested on applicable platforms to ensure that it meets Association needs. A testing plan should be proposed and approved prior to implementation. The results of the plan will be made available to the Association and any required modifications to the site be recommended at that time.

11. AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGY

Current web site specifications include the following:

- Operating system – Windows 2000 sp4 with IIS version 5.0.
- IP address – 66.162.182.5.
- Current web site code – Predominantly HTML.

12. QUALIFICATIONS

- List the three to five web sites your firm has produced that best reflect your work and note their relevancy to this project. Briefly list the role that your firm played in each project. Provide a URL for each of these sites along with the date in which they went live.
- Describe your experience in producing sites for non-profit organizations such as the Association.
- Provide current reference information for three former or current clients.
- Briefly describe your firm’s organizational capacity to product this web site. (i.e. staff, equipment, etc.)
- Indicate how many full-time staff your firm employs. Provide a company profile including the length of time that it has been in business and its core competencies.
- Briefly describe the staff that will be assigned to this project along with their roles.
- Briefly describe your firm’s project management process.
- Please discuss your testing and support plan for successful implementation.

13. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following criteria will form the basis upon which the Association will evaluate proposals.

- Suitability of the proposal – the proposal meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP.
- Expertise in developing 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.
- Candidate experience – Vendor has successfully completed similar projects and has the qualifications necessary to undertake this project.
- Value – The price is commensurate with the value offered by the vendor. As a non-profit institution, the Association is able to accept pro bono service and recognize the vendor to the full extent allowed by the IRS, including naming the vendor within the web site and other collateral as an Association supporter and partner.
- Project management capabilities – The use of a suitable project manager for the project that will execute the project plan defined by the vendor.
- Depth and breadth of staff – The vendor has appropriate staff named to develop the site in the time frame needed.
- Proposal presentation – The information contained in the proposal is presented in a clear, logical manner and is well organized.

14. FORMAT FOR PROPOSALS

- **Submittals/Communication:** Submittals of questions, proposals, etc. regarding this RFP should be directed to Bruce Oswald at bruce.oswald@gmail.com with subject line entitled, "NYS GIS Association Web Page Proposal."
- **Length and Font Size:** Please use fonts no smaller than 10 point. The maximum proposal length should not exceed 10 pages.
- **Title page:** NYS GIS Association, Web Site Development Proposal, your company name, address, web site address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address and primary contact person.
- **Electronic format:** All proposals should be submitted electronically via e-mail to bruce.oswald@gmail.com and should be in MS Word compatible format. The e-mail should be entitled, "NYS GIS Association Web Site Redesign Proposal."
- **Cover letter:** Signed by a person or persons authorized to sign on behalf of the company (1-2 pages). The letter should also indicate the contact information for the person responsible to discuss the proposal on behalf of the company.
- **Proposal:** Discuss your proposed solution, including the features, benefits and uniqueness of your solution.
- **Project Plan:** Discuss your plan for completing the project. This plan should include a description of the staff included on the project and the roles that they will play. It should also designate a project lead that will be responsible for sign-off on all key decisions for the vendor's team as well as a project manager responsible for keeping the project on schedule (these may be the same person).
- **Budget:** List staff you anticipate working on the project and their hourly rates for work and the anticipated hours that they will be working on the various parts of the project.
- **Qualifications:** Provide information on how your firm and its employees assigned to the project will meet the requirements noted above.
- **Samples:** Provide links to samples of similar work that your company has performed and, if desirable, suggestions of what could be completed for this project.

Attachment A

Scope of Work

For the NYS GIS Association Website Revision

This is a scope of work for a re-design and build of the New York State GIS Association (“the Association”) website (www.nysgis.org). The primary reason for the redesign is to better serve the membership of the NYS GIS Association by making the site easier and more efficient to navigate and to improve the site’s graphics to have it more reflect the spatial technology orientation of the organization. In addition, the site needs to provide secure remote access for content providers for easier and more efficient updating to keep the site more relevant and current.

1) Background

The site was originally designed several years ago in HTML as an interim measure by the Institute for Application of Geospatial Technologies (IAGT). It remained hosted and updated by IAGT at no cost to the Association for several years. Recently, the site was moved to a server at Fountains Spatial. The website runs on Windows 2000 sp4 with IIS version 5.0.

Over the course of the last year, a significant effort has been made to provide updated information to the site. As that has occurred and more material has become available for posting, it has become clear that the current design needs updating and a system for remotely managing its contents by authorized Association representatives. Also, while the site content will remain largely the same, there is some added functionality required by the Association.

2) Site Overview

Please see attached diagram (Appendix B - Website Layout for RFP.PDF).

3) Specifications

- a) **Design:** A graphical re-design of the website making the site easier and more efficient to navigate for Association members and the public at large and more reflective of the spatial technology orientation of the organization.
- b) **Content:** A rough outline of the current site and required additions is attached.
- c) **Programming:** Any programming required should be done in ASP .NET.
- d) **Technological Services:** The development of additional features as noted in the attached diagram, such as a(n):
 - i) **Content Management:** The proposal should include the use of a commercially available (COTS) content management system (or an open source system) and any programming

required to enable its use for the site. The COTS software must be licensed to the Association. This is being requested as part of a system to provide authorized members of the Association secure remote access for easier and more efficient updating and downloading of information to keep the site more relevant and current. (It is reasonable to assume this can be accomplished by setting up a database accessible via an ftp site.) The goal of this system would be to allow administrators to log in and make changes which will automatically update the website content once they have been approved.

- 1) Meetings and Events – Add/edit/delete Association meetings & events, upload meeting notes/agendas (PDF/doc/ppt, etc.), select featured events/meetings for homepage
 - 2) News & Announcements
 - 3) Committee Information – Add/edit/delete regional or committee meetings & events, upload meeting notes/agendas (PDF/doc/ppt, etc.)
 - 4) Membership – Add/edit/delete membership database, includes reports and downloads in Excel compatible format
 - 5) Sponsors – Add/edit/delete/reorder sponsors, upload new logos, etc.
 - 6) Regions – Edit regional coordinators, contact info, links, etc.
 - 7) Documents – Add/edit/delete/upload documents for download
 - 8) Job Postings – Add/edit/delete postings
 - 9) Links – Add/edit/delete useful links
- i) **On-line Membership Listing:** Searchable and updatable. Please note that the current membership database is in Access 2003 format.
- ii) **Board Member and Committee Chair Blog:** Development of an easily accessible blog for the Board Members and Committee Chairpersons to update.
- iii) **Communication Page for links to NYS GIS List Serve, Board Member and Committee Chair Blog, Facebook and Twitter:** Development of a communications page with links to the NYS GIS List Serve (NYSGIS List Serve (listserv@listserv.nysed.gov), Board Member and Committee Chair Blog, Facebook (to be developed by the Association) and Twitter (to be developed by the Association).
- iv) **Downloadable “Member Activity” Report:** Summary of individual member activity for use in certification processes. This should include documentation of membership status, dates of membership, committee membership and training attendance.
- v) **Interactive Map of Members:** An interactive map of Association members will be created by an Association volunteer. There needs to be a link to it from this site.

4) Additional Information

- a) Decisions as to the levels of password protection will be made by the Association. For example, the membership admin pages can be given a different set of permissions from the other pages.
- b) While the Association would prefer that any administration be through a platform-independent web interface, current information on the current server is noted above.

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- c) The Association would like attention paid to the proper look and feel of the website, along with visitor usability and search engine optimization. The aesthetics of the site should reflect the vibrancy, professionalism, energy and focus on new technology that embodies the NYS GIS Association.
- d) Responsibility for the content of the site lies with the Association. Textual content should be provided in digital form (email, Word, PDF, etc.) in full at the outset of the site build. Any required graphical elements (photos, illustrations, logos, etc.) should also be provided in the proper digital format.
- e) It is expected that there will be reasonable review and revisions of the site as the build progresses. Open communication between both parties is encouraged and welcomed in order to produce the highest quality website for the Association.
- f) The Association would like to launch a new website within four (4) – six (6) weeks from authorization by the Association to proceed, and receipt from the Association of content elements as referenced above.
- g) While it is not an Association requirement, please be advised that Fountains Spatial has offered to continue to host the Association website at no additional cost on its servers.