BERNARD C. “JACK” YOUNG CHRIS R. RYER

*Mayor Director*

**Request for Proposals (RFP) Baltimore City Office of Sustainability**

**Title:** Consultant Services for Website Updates

**Issue Date:** December 6, 2019

**Project Background**

The Baltimore Office of Sustainability (BoS) was created by the City Council in 2007 and acts as a resource, catalyst, and an advocate in creating an equitable and resilient Baltimore. We integrate environmental integrity, social equity, and economic prosperity into plans, practices, and policies. Our aim is to provide innovative solutions to our city’s challenges while engaging, inspiring and collaborating with all sectors of Baltimore. We have a citywide Sustainability Plan and a 21-member Sustainability Commission who oversees the plan.

Current Status:

BoS has maintained a website (<https://www.baltimoresustainability.org/>) for several years, and has not done a recent update to the structure or design. The website is updated periodically as new plans and projects are started or as information on existing work needs to be refreshed. The home page is infrequently changed, as are news items and events. Staff have received minimal training in Wordpress, which is the content management software. We like how easy it is to find our plans and project information, but want fewer words on most pages. We would like to be able to better highlight news items, recent successes, and upcoming events. We are seeking a website that is fast, user-friendly, appealing, and easy to navigate.

Our target audiences are Baltimore residents, nonprofits, businesses, community groups, faith based organizations, as well as anyone outside the City who is interested in our work.

Our goals for the website are (1) to increase awareness of our work and the work of others in the city in relation to implementing projects, plans and policies that lie at the intersection of people, planet and prosperity, (2) to activate people to carry out the actions in the 2019 Sustainability Plan, and (3) for the site to be a city-wide resource for information on sustainability.

On March 18, 2019, the Baltimore City Council unanimously voted to adopt the city’s new 2019 Sustainability Plan. With that approval, BoS has a new framework and categories for our work going forward (see Appendix A). Ideally, an updated website would be structured to reflect the Plan. BoS also has a style guide, which should be used in the design of new website structure.

**Statement of Needs**

BoS is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) for qualified consultant/firms to provide web marketing and design skills and to conduct an update to our website. Proposals will be solicited from qualified consultants to work with the City for up to a one-year period. Our website is not connected to the city website structure but is hosted by Bluehost ([www.baltimoresustainability.org](http://www.baltimoresustainability.org))

The successful consultant/firm will have the following qualifications:

• Demonstrated understanding of and experience with website marketing and communications.

* Extensive experience in the design and re-design of websites for governmental and/or non-profit organizations, especially websites that are easily maintained.

• Demonstrated experience working with organization staff to translate ideas into functional websites, that are easy to navigate and that share significant and varied content.

• Knowledge of and extensive experience using Wordpress and of graphic design concepts and software.

• Demonstrated experience training staff on Wordpress.

BoS will enter into a contract with the consultant or firm who has the ability to best meet project needs as described in this RFP. The contract will be structured to compensate the consultant or firm for their work on a fixed cost basis up to a maximum of $12,000, with the specific tasks to be completed agreed upon after the start of the contract. Additional tasks or change orders may be added at a later date at BoS discretion, and would be billed at the consultant’s or firm’s hourly rate.

**Contractor Deliverables**

The following bulleted list outlines anticipated tasks and deliverables the successful consultant/firm will be responsible for:

* Review website including 2019 Sustainability Plan, framework (below), and additional BoS plans, including the Baltimore Climate Action Plan, Baltimore’s Disaster Preparedness & Planning Project, Baltimore Food Waste & Recovery Strategy, Baltimore Green Network Plan, and Homegrown Baltimore: Grow Local.
* Kick-off meeting with staff to discuss what is working and not working, suggest changes and identify new features such as using the 2019 Plan framework as the focus and adding new sections, like ‘How You Get Involved,’ or ‘Recent Successes, New Programs, and Upcoming Events.’
* Finalize details of tasks to be completed under the contract along with estimates of time required to complete them. At a minimum, the submission should anticipate the completion of the following specific tasks:
* Selecting design template for webpages
* Designing new home page, including a more prominent location for news feed and a revolving banner at top
* Creating a compelling, attractive, accessible site
* Identifying structure for webpages, incorporating content, and following the framework of the 2019 Sustainability Plan
* Migrating content to new framework and incorporating new content
* Connecting news feed on website to new BoS newsletter
* Adding a social media feed
* Adding more photos and reducing text
* Fixing all dead links
* Ensure site complies with ADA guidelines and is compatible with Google translate

• Provide training to BoS staff on using Wordpress to update content and amend key structural elements

* Other proposed new elements, subject to approval by BoS (such as creating an interactive map of projects), to be billed at the consultant’s or firm’s hourly rate.

Note: BoS will be responsible for generating the majority of the content.

**Table 1: Proposed Timeline with Contractor Deliverables and Projected Target Dates**

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| --- | --- |
| **Deliverables** | **Target Date** |
| Kick-off meeting | January 2020 |
| Finalized list of tasks and changes | February 2020 |
| Draft of new website | March 2020 |
| Website finalized | April 2020 |
| Continued support for website (limited to refining new format and fixing any related issues) | Additional 6 months |

**Submission Information**

Proposals must clearly and concisely describe the consultant/firm’s ability to meet the requirements and provide the requested services of this RFP and should clearly lay out the approach to working with BoS staff to design a new website.

* Written proposals should be no longer than 8 pages, including cover letter.
* Cover letter must include the RFP Title and the name, title, email address, phone number(s) and current address of the submitting firm’s main point of contact.
* Provide resumes of key team members, indicating those that have the above described experience, and the percentage of time team members will be on the project.
* Provide a list of links to websites the consultant/firm has created or redesigned or other portfolio elements related to the project.
* Provide a budget breaking out the tasks and deliverables by amount; also list the hourly rate that would be used to calculate the cost of any additional tasks. Also include a proposed schedule of work.
* Submissions are due by email (lisa.mcneilly@baltimorecity.gov) in PDF form to Lisa McNeilly, Director of Sustainability, by 5 pm on December 20, 2019.
* Any questions can be directed to the email provided above.

**APPENDIX A**

