



West Parry Sound Economic Development Office

Request For Proposal

Digital Strategy, Content Creation,
Website Design/Development,
Hosting, Training/Support

RFP Closing Date: Monday, July 24, 2017, 4:00pm, EDT

Lead Contact Person:

Dustin Turner

Regional Economic Development Officer

Parry Sound Area Community Business & Development Centre

1A Church Street, Parry Sound, ON, P2A1Y2

dustin@cbdc.parrysound.on.ca

Phone: 705-746-4455

(Lowest or any proposal not necessarily accepted)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 RFP Introduction

West Parry Sound Economic Development Office is planning to launch a digital presence to assist our regional economic development efforts in retaining and attracting business investment in our region and growing our local economy. We do not have an existing website or online presence. We are seeking proposals from experienced website development professionals for assistance with:

- digital strategy
- content creation
- website design/development
- hosting
- training and support

1.2 RFP Schedule of Events

RFP Issue Date	July 10, 2017
Deadline for Submission of Questions	July 16, 2017
Final Addendum for Questions Published	July 17, 2017
RFP Closing Date	July 24, 2017
Notification of Awarded Contract	July 31, 2017
Estimated Project Start Date	August 1, 2017

2.0 BACKGROUND

West Parry Sound Economic Development Office is a regional economic development initiative spearheaded by the Parry Sound Area Community Business & Development Centre and six municipalities (Municipality of McDougall, Municipality of Whitestone, Town of Parry Sound, Township of Carling, Township of Seguin, and Township of the Archipelago) in

partnership with FEDNOR. West Parry Sound Economic Development Office is committed to ensuring the economic and social prosperity of the region. Our objective is to grow the local economy through increased business investment and job creation in the West Parry Sound region.

As part of the initiative, a regional marketing plan was commissioned and created by a third-party marketing consulting firm along with local input. An integral piece to the marketing plan was to develop and launch a digital strategy that encompasses a regional economic development focused website along with other digital tools and tactics that will be outlined throughout this document. As part of the marketing plan, a regional brand, West Parry Sound - Bay and Beyond, was also created to be used to promote economic development in the area. Please see accompanying REDAC Regional Marketing Plan document for further insight.

The digital strategy is a launching off point to market the area for economic development. The website and digital strategy will act as a 24/7 sales tool to promote economic development in West Parry Sound and hub for regional business information.

3.0 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

3.1 Our over-arching mission is to increase business investment in West Parry Sound in order to strengthen our economy. With this in mind, the digital strategy, content, and website should be created to elicit a call to action, moving the user along the sales journey and closer to investing in the area.

3.2 A primary goal of the digital strategy and website is to provide the core audiences – new businesses and local businesses – with the information they require in an intuitive, well-organized, and highly accessible manner. The content and website should be designed with audiences in mind, providing users with the information they need, when they need it, in a format that works for them. The website should act like a hub for economic development in the region.

3.3 The website should be visually appealing and easy to navigate. The West Parry Sound Bay and Beyond branding is to be incorporated into the website design (please see accompanying REDAC Regional Marketing Plan for

complete brand guidelines) and when creating content, a strong emphasis should be placed on imagery (photos, infographics, etc.) and video with the area's natural beauty accentuated.

3.4 With today's technology and the way people are accessing information using a variety of different devices, we're looking for a responsive website that performs seamlessly across platforms and browsers.

3.5 The website must comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 level AA accessibility standard guidelines developed through the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) consortium and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

4.0 PROJECT SCOPE

4.1 Audiences

The digital strategy, content, and website must be developed with the following key target audiences in mind:

- Existing Local Businesses
- Potential New Businesses

The following audiences should also be taken into consideration:

- Local Residents (permanent, seasonal, and youth)
- Media
- Municipalities
- Partner Organizations
- Workforce

4.2 Content

The proponent, working closely with the Regional Economic Development Officer, will be responsible for content development.

We envision the website housing the following content:

- Community Profile featuring information and statistics on West Parry Sound (i.e. demographics, labour force, etc.)
- Incentives – list of business funding and assistance programs

- Site Selector Tool - mapping tool that provides information on a database of available properties and businesses for sale or lease. *This tool is currently being developed and will be embedded in the site.*
- Business Directory - interactive directory of local businesses. *This database has already been developed and will be embedded in the site.*
- Contact Information - prominently displayed on every page (i.e. header) and a dedicated “Contact Us” page.
- Business Testimonials/Success Stories - featured stories and videos on successful local area businesses and their testimonials on doing business in West Parry Sound.
- Living Here - information on the area (healthcare, education, housing, recreation, etc.)
- Business Resources - information and links to partner organizations and local municipalities
- Blog featuring local news, industry information, success stories, etc.
- E-Newsletter Subscription - enrollment form/permission to send emails to subscribers
- Social Media - pop out widget housing social media account feeds such as Twitter and Facebook
- Search bar to quickly and easily find what you’re looking for on the site

4.3 Website Design, Tools & Functions

The following should be considered when designing the website:

- The ultimate goal of the website is to elicit a call to action
- User-centric design of site navigation should allow visitors to easily find the information they need using various techniques
- Visually appealing site that is not text heavy with an emphasis on images, infographics, and videos
- The site must be easy to search and provide highly accurate, targeted results
- The site must be responsive, allowing for seamless viewing across platforms and browsers
- The site must be capable of integrating with common social media sites and tools
- The “West Parry Sound Bay and Beyond” branding must be integrated within the site (see accompanying REDAC Regional Marketing Plan for complete brand guidelines)
- Employ Search Engine Optimization (SEO) techniques that ensure that searches made via off-site search engines return the most relevant results from the website

- Include a blog for posting information such as local news, press releases, business testimonials, etc.
- Include a customer relationship management (CRM) system that features e-newsletter subscription to gather permission to contact and automate management of contact list and distribution of content
- Ability to embed HTML5 content
- Feature community profile that displays data and information in an easy to understand and visually appealing way
- Integration of current area economic development tools including:
 - Site selector mapping tool
 - Business directory
- Ability to export documents to CSV and PDF
- Fully integrated with Google Analytics tracking (or another analytics suite)

4.4 Content Management System

West Parry Sound Economic Development Office requires a secure, powerful, and easy to use content management system that is designed to:

- Be used by staff with no prior programming knowledge
- Permit staff to easily add/edit/delete pages anywhere on the site
- Allow staff to manage, add, and delete text, images, videos, and other content
- Allow for code embedding
- Automatically update site map and menus when new content is added or existing content modified
- Provide mechanism to ensure new posts, pages, etc. meet accessibility requirements
- Provide different page templates as required and support the ability to develop new customized pages
- Provide online work-flow details and guidelines to follow when making content changes

Proponents should outline any initial or recurring cost associated with the CMS system in their proposals.

4.5 Hosting

West Parry Sound Economic Development Office is expecting all proponents will include hosting of the new website as part of their proposal. Details about the proposed hosting environment should be provided including

information such as yearly cost, location, speed, connectivity, redundancy, backup, and portability.

4.6 Security, Training, and Maintenance

The successful proponent will be responsible for the following security, training, and maintenance activities:

- Training staff on how to create and update the website via the CMS. This training should include details on how to write for the web in an accessibility-friendly manner.
- Training staff on the back-end features of the site such as the creation of user accounts, groups, permission settings, and any other advanced features.
- Preparation of a Quick Start Guide that provides step-by-step instructions on how to create and update website pages via the CMS, upload and link documents, and perform other common site-related tasks.
- Provide ongoing support for website assistance and technical issues once the site is live.

5.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Proponents are encouraged to carefully review this RFP. If questions arise regarding clarification of any point in this document, these questions must be presented in writing to the lead contact before 11:59PM EDT July 16, 2017. This is to allow time for any necessary amendments or addenda.

Should amendments or addenda to the RFP be necessary, they will be publicly posted online at: www.cbdc.parrysound.on.ca/rfp on or before July 17, 2017. Proponents are encouraged to check back to this site during the submission period to ensure their awareness of any additional information.

6.0 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

In order to ensure that all proposals are evaluated fairly, every proponent must provide all of the information set out in this RFP. Failure to provide all of the requested information by the proponent may affect their evaluation or result in the disqualification of their proposal.

6.1 Proposal Requirements

Each proponent shall submit identical hard and soft copies of their proposal using the contact information outlined in Section 6.2. Proponents shall submit 5 hard copies of their proposal.

All proposals must include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A cover page with the proponent's contact information along with the title "West Parry Sound Economic Development Office Digital Project Proposal"
- The background of the firm indicating similar projects completed elsewhere
- Identify all team members who will be involved in the project along with their qualifications
- A detailed description of the proponent's approach to the project, including a work plan and timeline for execution of all components of the project (strategy, content creation, website development, training, support)
- Include at least 3 examples of similar websites created by the proponent (preferably projects where the proponent worked on strategy, content creation, and website design/development if possible). Only live designed sites will be considered please.
- Provide references from at least 3 current clients
- Describe your experience and plans working with the particular software programs that will be used in this project
- A detailed cost estimate including:
 - Cost estimate for the entire project recognizing costs including consulting and professional fees, licensing fees, annual maintenance and support fees, hosting fees, training, and any other out-of-pocket expenses
 - A list of any and all recurring fees that West Parry Sound Economic Development Office should expect to incur on an annual basis
 - Indication on whether HST is included or extra
- Identification of any terms or conditions that the proponent may have
- Proponents may include a mock up of proposed content and/or site for the new West Parry Sound Bay and Beyond economic development website. The mock up will be used purely for information purposes and upon acceptance of the proposal West Parry Sound Economic Development Office is not committed to use the design, layout, or format.

6.2 Proposal Submission

All completed sealed proposals must be submitted on or before 4:00PM EDT on July 24, 2017. It is the responsibility of the proponent to ensure that West Parry Sound Economic Development Office receives 5 hard copy proposals by drop-off, mail, or courier on or before the submission deadline. Sealed proposals should be labelled “West Parry Sound Economic Development Office Digital Project Proposal”. All submissions and further communication shall be directed to the lead contact:

Dustin Turner, Regional Economic Development Officer
Parry Sound Area Community Business & Development Centre
1A Church Street, Parry Sound, ON, P2A1Y2
dustin@cbdc.parrysound.on.ca
705-746-4455

Late proposals will not be accepted. Faxed proposals will not be accepted. Proponents are to email a copy of their proposal to dustin@cbdc.parrysound.on.ca, but the required hard copy must also be received by the deadline to be considered. West Parry Sound Economic Development Office is not responsible for delays in delivery.

7.0 PROPOSAL REVIEW & EVALUATION

7.1 Proposal Review

Proposals will be opened on or after the submission deadline of 4:00PM EDT Monday July 24, 2017.

West Parry Sound Economic Development Office reserves the right to contact any proponent to request additional information, clarification, or demonstration of the information within their proposal.

7.2 Proposal Evaluation

Each proposal received in response to the RFP will be objectively evaluated based on:

CRITERIA	MAXIMUM POINTS
Quality of proposal, understanding of the project, work plan, and methodology	30
Qualifications, past experience, and references	20
Cost	15

Content management system	15
Cross platform and cross browser support	15
Project schedule	5
EVALUATION TOTAL	100

7.3 Right to Accept or Reject RFP Submissions

West Parry Sound Economic Development Office reserves the right to reject any or all submissions and to waive formalities as the interests of West Parry Sound Economic Development Office may require without stating the reasons. The lowest or any submission will not necessarily be accepted.

8.0 TERMS & CONDITIONS

8.1 West Parry Sound Economic Development Office, Parry Sound Area Community Business & Development Centre, or any of its constituent municipalities, shall not be responsible for any costs or liabilities associated with the preparation, submission, or presentation of any submitted proposal. Nor shall the aforementioned bodies be liable for costs or losses suffered by the proponent or any other third party resulting from the exercising of any of its expressed or implied rights outlined throughout the RFP process.

8.2 All costs and duties outlined in any proposal submitted must remain valid for a minimum of 60 days past the submission deadline outlined in Section 6.2. Extensions to this period may be requested by West Parry Sound Economic Development Office and granted at the discretion of the proponent.

8.3 Any information provided to the proponent by West Parry Sound Economic Development Office before, during, or after the project completion shall be kept strictly confidential and shall not be used or communicated by the proponent or any other third party unless otherwise identified by West Parry Sound Economic Development Office.

8.4 Any documents, reports, plans, or other information produced by the successful proponent during the project shall become the exclusive property of West Parry Sound Economic Development Office. However, intellectual property including specific tools, templates, and processes that the proponent provides throughout the project shall remain the property of the proponent.

8.5 Once a proposal is selected, the successful proponent shall be required to enter a contractual agreement with the West Parry Sound Economic Development Office which will ensure that the needs and provisions of this

RFP are met or exceeded. Further, the proponent shall abide by the price outlined in their proposal. No further payments beyond the contract price will be issued to the proponent for additional services required to meet the needs of the contract. Any additional work outside of the contract that is deemed necessary shall be requested in writing by West Parry Sound Economic Development Office.

8.6 The awarded proponent shall provide invoices addressed to West Parry Sound Economic Development Office based on an agreed upon schedule of payment to be outlined in the contract.

8.7 By submitting their proposal, the proponent acknowledges that they have read, completely understood, and agrees with the terms and conditions of the RFP in full. West Parry Sound Economic Development Office is not responsible for any misunderstanding of the RFP.