



DOWNTOWN
GRAND RAPIDS INC.

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
WEBSITE DESIGN/DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Responses Due
May 3, 2021 by 4:00 PM EST

Deliver to:
Samantha Suarez
Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.
ssuarez@downtowngr.org

[Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.](#) (DGRI) seeks a qualified firm to provide website design and development services. The project consists of conceiving, designing and building a website that serves the needs of people and stakeholders who seek information about the Downtown Grand Rapids neighborhood.

This online platform will serve as the central marketing vehicle and communication tool to promote Downtown businesses, business districts, events and activities. The platform will also ensure that Downtown visitors have easy access to relevant information that supports an exceptional experience in the Downtown district. This will include but certainly not be limited to information parking and mobility, attractions, the skywalk, public art and other amenities, walking tours and the Downtown Ambassadors.

The website must be easy to locate, quick to download, intuitive to navigate and compatible with mobile devices.

The website must also have the capability to align with a new Downtown wayfinding system that DGRI will begin to deploy later this year. The wayfinding system will be deployed throughout the Downtown environs in the form of welcome/gateway signage, directional signage for motorists and pedestrian kiosks. The wayfinding system also contemplates the potential for digital sidewalk kiosks, a mobile phone app and other 21st century solutions that could potentially present integration opportunities with the website to enhance the overall visitor/customer experience.

The home and other content pages must allow for DGRI staff to easily update, add or replace content as needed without disrupting overall site operations.

This project may also compel adjustments to DGRI's existing web presence built in Craft CMS Pro.

DGRI has graphic design talent on staff and capacity to meet the photography needs of the project. DGRI staff also will provide content for the site. DGRI will maintain ownership of the website, its components, and content, and will maintain the site with internal staff. The site must include a technology solution that allows internal staff to easily and cost effectively update content and perform basic modifications of the site after initial launch.

Submission Instruction

Responses to this RFQ will only be received electronically. Please submit the response and/or any questions to Samantha Suarez at ssuarez@downtowngr.org.

All responses are due by May 3, 2021 by 4:00 PM. Responses received after this date and time will not be considered.

Downtown Grand Rapids Snapshot

Downtown Grand Rapids is the economic and cultural hub of the City of Grand Rapids and West Michigan. The "Downtown" area is comprised of several distinct neighborhoods and business districts, including Heartside, Monroe North and the Near Westside. Downtown is home to 2 miles of Grand River, 10 parks, six museums, seven colleges and universities, 17 event venues and some 2,500 hotel rooms. Downtown also counts more than 300 ground floor businesses, 177 historic structures and hundreds of events and activities every year.

New Website Objectives

- Help unify the Downtown identity and brand(s).
- Support an exceptional experience for Downtown visitors seeking info about mobility, destinations or other interests/needs.

- Encourage a locally focused Downtown visitor experience by emphasizing local restaurants, businesses and attractions.
- Increase public awareness of the Downtown neighborhoods, its businesses and business districts and activities.
- Relay a sense of excitement to visit and explore Downtown.
- Reinforce the Downtown image as a welcoming, safe and vibrant place of choice.
- Promote relevant events, programming and resources in Downtown.

Website Development Guidelines

- Mobile mobile mobile.
- Establish an easy content management system that enables staff who are not coders to instantly update website content and make basic manipulations such as creating URL redirects, cropping photos directly on the platform, edit SEO titles and images, alt text for pictures, etc.
- The website must support SEO best practices.
- Visual accessibility and compatibility with screen readers and other tools.
- Website content should offer a user-friendly searchability.
- Visually appealing. The site must have an attractive mix of text, graphics and/or photography.
- Unique URL
- Language translation-friendly
- Capability to feature an events listing or calendar so people can easily access details.
- Business directory of food and beverage, retail as well as service and entertainment offerings.
- Capability to easily upload and feature video content.
- Include a tool to measure and understand basic website user data ie number of page views and other web traffic trends.

Consultant Selection

Submission to this Request should be no longer than 10 pages. DGRI will evaluate responses to this opportunity based on the following criteria:

- Thoroughness, quality and conciseness of the submittal.
- Project understanding and approach for achieving the stated objectives.
- Related project experience and prior work that demonstrates artistic creativity and innovative user-friendly interfaces.
- Demonstrated understanding of urban business districts, trends and dynamics in Grand Rapids, MI.

Project Schedule

- April 19, 2021 – RFQ Released
- May 3, 2021 – Qualifications Due
- May 17, 2021 – Notice of Award
- July, 2021 – Commence Project
- January 2022 – Website Launch