

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL: WEBSITE SERVICES**  
**1.) WEBSITE DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT**  
**2.) WEBSITE HOSTING**  
for  
**COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE FOR SEACOAST TRANSPORTATION**  
**(COAST)**

**RESPONSE DUE: September 17, 2010**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation (COAST) provides fixed-route and demand response public transit services within an eleven community region within the greater seacoast region of NH. COAST is a 501(c)3 non-profit, established in 1981. In 1985 COAST was further defined as an independent public body (politic and corporate) by NH RSA 239.

In 2009, COAST went “live” with its current website layout and design. It was a product developed in-house, met all of COAST’s needs at the time, and still substantially does so. It is a format and layout that we do not feel needs significant redesign on the front-end. However, there are some changes that we do need to incorporate that we can no longer handle in-house.

As such, COAST is looking to request proposals for the following services related to COAST’s web presence:

- (1) Professional re-design and development of the site to include making the site more manageable and efficient, adding secure (authorized access only) areas for data, as well as development and integration of searchable databases. COAST also wishes to have its website information readily available for use by web-enabled mobile devices through the state-of-the-art means.
- (2) Professional design and development of a new adjunct site to include general information, as well as the development and integration of a new searchable database.
- (3) Hosting of the COAST websites

Respondents may provide proposals separately for website design and development or hosting services, or a combined proposal for both services. The award of the work will be made on a firm-fixed price basis to the most responsive and responsible bidder; price will be one of the factors considered in the award.

COAST’s website(s) goals are to provide simple and intuitive electronic access to information regarding its services. Linked to, but separate from COAST’s primary website, will be a website maintained by COAST for the Alliance for Community Transportation (ACT); this adjunct website will include a newly created searchable

database for regional transportation services in addition to information about that collaborative effort led by COAST.

Specific goals of this project are:

- (1) To permit simple and efficient navigation for customers of both COAST websites, with clear, consistent and uncluttered design layout and features.
- (2) To clean up the back-end design and code of the current COAST site to make it more efficient & easier to expand upon into the future.
- (3) To design both COAST websites with the same content management system (CMS), which must be simple and straightforward.
- (4) To incorporate Google Transit trip planning functionality for personalized trip planning.
- (5) To create a new searchable database and links to local partners along the routes and/or regional transportation services on the primary COAST website.
- (6) To provide access to the COAST Twitter and Facebook or other social media through the COAST primary website.
- (7) To provide access to general information about ACT on the adjunct website, including a searchable database of regional transportation providers and links to same, current developments, meeting agenda and minutes.
- (8) To ensure that COAST email through its domain name is maintained.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

COAST projects are supported by funds from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), under the US DOT, thus the procedures for awarding this project will follow the guidelines identified in FTA Circular 4220.1F. Payment terms must be provided with the quote. COAST will have up to thirty (30) days to make final payment upon completion of the entire scope of work by the Contractor.

Time is of the essence for the completion of this project. As part of the quote, the Contractor must provide a list of work tasks with a corresponding timeline for each. A final completion date must also be provided.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

The Contractor selected for this project must have documented experience in website design, implementation and/or hosting. Evidence of prior experience in this area is to be provided as part of the quote for the project. References from all contracts with similar scopes that have been entered into in the past three (3) years must be provided.

## **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

Proposed application/system must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Public access to all of the features on the websites is not dependent on specific browser, that is, the web interface is browser agnostic and works with commonly used browsers found on Windows, Linux and Apple computer systems
- Websites displays should be viewable on various monitor configurations
- Websites, especially primary COAST site, should be compatible with web-enabled mobile devices (i.e., iPhone, etc).

- Websites must prominently feature the capability of supporting and/or linking to the Google Transit function for trip planning purposes
- Websites are capable of being organized into multiple divisions
- Intuitive and consistent options for navigating the website, especially return to general information/home page
- Flexibility within the sites for designated staff to add, remove and update content using tools and templates that do not require extensive knowledge of web development languages or technical structure through a “content management system” software that is proven to be user-friendly for non-technical staff
- Security features, completely contained within the website infrastructure, and not reliant on network security or peer-to-peer connectivity that will, at a minimum, allow access to different sections of the website by users with permitted access; this feature should be able to be controlled by COAST staff through the CMS
- Pages and features compatible with limited bandwidth access by the public, or alternative routing to portions of the site that provide content formatted in a manner that is consistent with limited bandwidth; navigating the sites should not require reloading of all content.
- Search engine optimization must be included and demonstrated as effective
- The website must be accessible to persons with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). See rules and an example at [www.ada.gov/websites2\\_prnt.pdf](http://www.ada.gov/websites2_prnt.pdf).
- Capability of the COAST staff to:
  - Control content and images used within the site.
  - Control publishing of links to other websites
  - Report website maintenance activity and statistics on content type: updates, downloadable documents, web pages, calendars, and broken links.
- Report number of visits to sites generally and separately for use of special features
- E-mail interfaces, if any, are not dependent on a specific e-mail client
- Respondents proposing to host the websites must not be on any e-mail or website “black lists” as a source of unwanted solicitations or objectionable content
- The websites and email hosting must be structured such that COAST will be able to document its posting of public records and email history in compliance with New Hampshire’s RSA 91-A and COAST’s Document Retention Policy.
- The websites must be designed for continuous operation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with express maintenance windows clearly defined. Host must have adequate redundant equipment to minimize down time
- The websites must be developed on a platform that will allow the sites to be portable to another host.
- Technical Support must be inclusive in the contract and available on a 24/7/365 basis

- On-site training must be provided to ensure the administrator and designated staff (up to five) are able to maintain and control the website. Adequate training manuals must be provided; electronic format is acceptable.
- Annual support and maintenance of the website:
  - Services such as refreshing the design elements, updating of technology in the website design, engineering, search engine optimization, content management and other elements associated with the website.
  - These elements included with this project beginning with the first day of “go live” for the website for 1 year and, as an option, for ongoing item and cost, the continuation of this support in 1 year increments thereafter, not to exceed three years.

### **ADDITIONAL FEATURES AND CAPABILITIES**

The following is a list of additional features and capabilities COAST is seeking in website services. The list is not intended to be all inclusive, nor is it intended to represent a minimum of features and capabilities.

- Capability for easily searching the websites for key words or phrases
- Graphic files should be sized relative to the site and designed with simplicity to allow for the quickest loading
- Mechanism for members of the public to convey comments, suggestions or questions concerning the website information or design; if comments are to be directed to the website host, COAST must be apprised of those comments
- Development of searchable databases within each COAST websites
- Content Management system (CMS)
  - A CMS that permits for easy update of the resident databases by COAST staff
  - CMS that provides a uniform means of managing web documents whether posted as web pages or downloadable files to include items like the document/page title, description, posting information, expiration date.
  - A simple meeting/event calendar system.
  - Support and restrict users to a consistent design strategy throughout the website and all departments.
- Ability to use current interactive and social networking mediums such as Facebook, Twitter, and RSS feeds, as well as flexibility to add these types of features in the future.
- Potential for future capability of bus passengers to locate COAST buses equipped with GPS tracking devices through PCs and mobile devices.
- Creation of secure areas for authorized individuals to access applicable COAST documents.

### **TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

One of the areas of consideration for evaluating proposals will be compatibility of the content management system (CMS) for COAST’s interface with the website with COAST’s information technology infrastructure. That infrastructure currently includes the following:

- Microsoft Outlook 2003 for e-mail, but capability for updated software

- Internet Explorer 8.0 or higher for default browsers
- Microsoft Office 2003
- Microsoft XP Professional for workstation operating systems
- Hardware: COAST workstations are recent-vintage PCs linked with a Local Area Network on a resident server and using various monitor configurations.

COAST expects to upgrade its operating system and basic applications software in the near future; the website design and interface should not be negatively impacted by those upgrades.

### **PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE**

Potential proposers are invited to a Pre-Proposal Conference scheduled for **1:30 pm on August 31** at COAST's offices located at 42 Sumner Dr., Dover, NH. At this conference, COAST will identify websites or features of websites that are considered to be desirable in the redesign/creation of the two COAST websites. COAST will allow proposers to submit questions or requests for clarification for up to two business days following the meeting. COAST shall provide said questions and their responses to all interested potential bidders via electronic means within the following four business days. Failure to attend the pre-proposal conference will not disqualify a proposer, however COAST will not entertain exhaustive questions from proposers who did not attend the Pre-Proposal Conference. Interested potential bidders should make themselves known to COAST by September 9, 2010 in order to receive any pertinent communications prior to the deadline for proposal submittal.

### **PROPOSAL CONTENT**

All proposals are to include the following and with the numerical reference for easier evaluation purposes:

1. Full contact information for the respondent.
2. Number of years of experience respondent has in developing, implementing and supporting similar projects.
3. List of staff responsible for the project (provide curriculum vitae), including a designated project manager.
4. Description of any work within the scope that will be subcontracted and to whom that subcontract would be awarded..
5. A description of the finished work product, including how the minimum requirements, as well as the additional requirements outlined above, will be met
6. Description of the proposed process for website design including how proposer intends to gather all of the required information, format preferred, and assistance expected from COAST in order to complete this project.
7. Description of infrastructure, utilities and tools proposed for web page creation and maintenance. This should include the backend content organization, link finders, etc.
8. Description of the finished websites design, infrastructure and hosting, to include the migration of the existing website.
9. List of all customers for whom website development, design, and/or hosting services have been provided within the past three years, including the nature of

- the work performed, the timeframe of that work, and a current contact with that organization.
10. Timeline for completion of the project, including, total number of hours for each component.
  11. Contractor's costs (by direct labor, direct material, overhead, and profit) to include separation of one time and recurring costs for: website design; infrastructure; training; hosting, etc. These costs will represent "not to exceed" prices..
  12. A clear separation of the "COAST website re-design and development" services proposal, and the "ACT website design and development" services proposal and cost from the "website hosting" proposal and cost, if both services are being proposed for the COAST websites.
  13. Accessibility features of the proposed website.
  14. Detail how the websites designs will facilitate COAST's compliance with NH's "Right to Know" laws and its Document Retention Policy.
  15. Options for training COAST staff in creating and maintaining website content.
  16. Description of ongoing support provisions.
  17. Specifications and configurations required to support the proposed system, including specifications for all software components required for the system, but not provided as part of the proposal. In other words, hardware and software requirements for COAST workstations and network configuration.
  18. Requirements, if any, for COAST bandwidth to the Internet necessary to support reasonable performance of website maintenance tools.
  19. Information on hosting site including specifications on security, disaster recovery, historical data preservation, and procedures for handling outages.

## **DEMONSTRATION OF PRODUCTS**

At the option of COAST, and as a condition prior to selection, respondents may be required to demonstrate the functionality of the proposed system. The demonstration must be conducted with the products proposed and must be able to demonstrate the functionality as it would be implemented for COAST. If COAST elects to have a demonstration, the respondent may be required to do so at the COAST facility. Failure to agree to the demonstration will disqualify the responder. It is understood that any costs for demonstrations shall be the sole responsibility of the respondents.

## **CONDITIONS OF WORK**

- Vendor will be responsible for all licenses, permits, fees and taxes associated with the system installation.
- Any hardware, network, and software installation and configuration must be performed in cooperation with the COAST IT staff.
- The implementation must be accomplished in a manner that minimizes disruption of COAST business via the Internet.
- The vendor will be expected to complete the entire project scope within three months of the award
- COAST anticipates that the value of the combined website design, technical support, and hosting services should not exceed \$10,000.

## **CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS**

The successful vendor will be required to enter into a written agreement with COAST in which the vendor will undertake certain obligations. A draft or sample contract will be available before or at the Pre-Proposal Conference. Contractual obligations will include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Inclusion of Proposal - The proposal submitted in response to this RFP will be incorporated as part of the final contract with the selected vendor.
- Indemnification and Insurance - The successful vendor shall indemnify and hold COAST officers, agents, employees and assigns, harmless from any liability imposed for injury whether arising before or after completion of work hereunder, or in any manner directly or indirectly caused, occasioned or contributed to, or claimed to be caused, occasioned or contributed to, in whole or in part, by reason of any act or omission, including strict liability or negligence of vendor, or of anyone acting under vendor's direction or control or on its behalf, in connection with or incident to, or arising out of the performance of this contract. The successful vendor shall maintain and shall require all of its subcontractors to maintain general aggregate insurance with limits of not less than \$1,000,000 per accident. Proof of coverage will be required.
- Costs - All costs are to be stated in exact amounts. All costs must be detailed specifically in the vendor cost summary section (attached) of the proposal; no additional charges (e.g. for sales tax, transportation, container packing, installation, training, out-of-pocket expenses, etc.) will be allowed unless so specified in the proposal.
- Federal Requirements – The contractor shall agree to comply with the pertinent Federal laws and regulations that are identified in the FTA Circular 4220.1F.

## **EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS**

Price will be a significant, but not the only, criteria in evaluating the proposals.

Consideration will also be given to the following:

- Ability of the same respondent to provide all aspects of the proposal: design & development and hosting.
- Compliance of the proposer and proposal with the Minimum Requirements outlined above.
- The extent to which the proposed system provides the Features and Capabilities outlined above.
- Responses to requests for additional information requested by COAST.
- Degree to which the proposed system fits COAST's existing information technology infrastructure.
- Degree to which the proposed system is user friendly and easily maintained by COAST staff.
- Past performance and reference checks.
- The extent to which the proposer has sufficient and fully qualified staff resources to conduct the work in-house.
- Ability of the proposer to meet COAST's goal to have the website "live" and training complete within three months of the award of the contract.

- Cost of the services to be provided.

The award will be made to the responsible (as required by 49 U.S.C. Section 5325) and responsive bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to COAST with price and other factors considered. COAST may reject any and all proposals.

### **PROJECT CONTACT**

Questions about the project may be directed to:

Jeremy LaRose  
Manager of Operations and Planning  
COAST  
42 Sumner Drive  
Dover, NH 03820  
603-743-5777 x 101

[jlarose@coastbus.org](mailto:jlarose@coastbus.org)

### **BIDDER COMMUNICATIONS AND REQUESTS**

All correspondence, communication and/or contact in regard to any aspect of this solicitation or offers until the contract award shall be with the COAST Contact identified in the previous section. Prospective proposers and their representatives shall not make any contact with or communicate with any members of COAST, ACT or their employees, other than the COAST. Contact in regard to any aspect of this solicitation or proposals.

If it should appear to a prospective proposer that the performance of the work under the contract, or any of the matters relating thereto, is not sufficiently described or explained in the solicitation, or that any conflict or discrepancy exists between different parts thereof or with any federal, state, or local law, ordinance, rule, regulation, or other standard or requirement, then the proposer shall submit a written request for clarification to COAST.

COAST will allow proposers to submit questions or requests for clarification for up to two business days following the pre-proposal meeting. COAST shall provide said questions and their responses to all interested potential bidders via electronic means within the following four business days.

### **DELIVERY OF PROPOSAL**

Each proposal must be received by the date and time set for closing receipt of proposals: no later than **3:00 pm** local time on **September 17, 2010**. The proposal packet shall be sealed and identified with the RFP name, the name of the vendor, and the date and time of the closing. The proposal packet must include 2 copies of the proposal. Electronic copies may be provided within the packet as well.

Note: Any deviation from this requirement may result the proposal being considered

non-responsive, thus eliminating it from further consideration. The proposer will be solely responsible for ensuring delivery of the proposal packet prior to the deadline. Those proposals received after the established deadline will be returned, unopened, to the vendor.

Proposals must be delivered to:

Jeremy LaRose  
Manager of Operations and Planning  
COAST  
42 Sumner Drive  
Dover, NH 03820  
603-743-5777 x 101

### **PROPOSAL COSTS**

Those submitting proposals do so entirely at their expense. There is no expressed or implied obligation by COAST to reimburse any individual or firm for any costs incurred in preparing or submitting proposals, providing additional information when requested by COAST, or for participating in any selection interviews.

Proposals may be modified or withdrawn by an authorized representative of the vendor or by formal written notice prior to the final due date and time specified for proposal submission. Submitted proposals will become the property of COAST after the proposal submission deadline.

### **ACCEPTANCE**

Submission of any proposal indicates acceptance of the conditions contained in the RFP unless clearly and specifically noted otherwise in the proposal.

### **TIMELINE**

This is a budgeted project and COAST intends to enter a contract as soon as possible. The new COAST websites should be up and fully operational within three months of the award of the contract.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

Equal opportunity will be observed and solicitation from minority and women owned firms is encouraged.

