Questions & Answers

Request for Proposals for Website Redesign and Upgrade Services

Date:	January 26, 2018
To:	Interested Firms and Individuals
From:	Eric Young – Senior Communications Officer
Subject:	Request for Proposals for Website Redesign and Upgrade Services (RFP 17/18-08)

The Transportation Authority received the following questions submitted by 5:00 p.m. on January 18, 2018. Due to the volume of questions received, we have removed duplicates and grouped similar questions under the four categories below.

Maintenance and Operations

1. *Is the online training for technical staff, content administrators, or both? How many content administrators will need training? Do you have a matrix of roles and permissions for content management and editing?*

   Both technical staff and content administrators will need training. Three staff members will regularly update the website and will need all administrator permissions (creating/deleting pages, adding new users, etc.). Approximately ten additional staff members will occasionally create new pages and update existing pages. We do not have a matrix of staff roles.

2. *Are there existing author permission roles or approval workflows you wish to retain?*

   No.

3. *Do you need a guide for users or administrators? Do you have any preferences of how this should look? Should we make a video tutorial, or a step-by-step walkthrough? Are you open to video training user guides as opposed to typed user guides?*

   We will need a guide for new users and administrators. A typed guide with screenshots would work. A video tutorial would be nice but is not required. We would prefer printed user guides.

4. *Who is on point for managing the website technical operations/maintaining the enhancements post launch?*

   We have not yet determined who will be responsible for technical maintenance. We currently contract for that service and may continue that after the new website launch.

5. *How many internal stakeholders will be approving designs and strategies? How long do decisions typically take?*

   The contractor will work closely with a communications team of three staff. The Senior Communications Officer will be one of the three staff and will work closely with the agency's Executive Director and senior staff on project milestones. Decisions typically take a few days.

6. *Is there another set of stakeholders, who are not directly making decisions, which we will need to keep in the loop with extra deliverables?*

No.

7. *Do you have any current content management workflows? If so, please explain.*

Our communications team regularly updates the website. Staff members from different divisions update their project-related webpages on a less-frequent basis.

8. *Who currently manages Domain Name System (DNS) for the existing website? Will this person or group be responsible for DNS management on the new website?*

The Transportation Authority's contracted IT team currently manages DNS. Yes, they will continue to be responsible for DNS management.

9. *How often will your website's content need updating? Do you want to be able to update it internally within your organization? What content do you want easily updated?*

The website needs updating on a daily basis. Several staff members will update the website on a regular basis. All content should be easily updated.

10. *Do you foresee the selected vendor to provide ongoing maintenance for the website?*

Whether the contractor provides ongoing maintenance will depend on many factors, including whether we change the content management system (CMS).

11. *Does the budget include maintenance of the website for 12 months? Or does it just cover the design, development and launch of the redesigned website?*

The budget includes design, development and launch of the redesigned website.

12. *What marketing plans do you foresee after the website is complete (e.g. search engine optimization, email marketing, social marketing etc.)?*

We would like the new website to work with our current email distribution system (MailChimp) as well as our various social media tools (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube).

Technical

13. *How many pages do you currently have on your website? How many pages do you see the new website having? How much of the existing content is being migrated to the new website?*

There are approximately 500 pages on the existing website. We anticipate much of the current content to be migrated to the new website.

14. *Task #4 indicates "The contractor shall migrate appropriate data to the new website." Besides existing webpages, are there other data stores you wish to include in the integration, and if so could you provide more details on those data stores?*

We anticipate migrating existing webpages (which include photos) as well as several project reports and meeting documents, primarily in the form of PDFs.

15. *Given that relaunching the website is in scope, why is documentation of the migration from the old website to the new website a project requirement? Does the Transportation Authority imagine that some content from the old website will not be migrated before the initial relaunch?*

It is possible that some content on the existing website will not be migrated to the new website, but we envision that most of the existing content will be migrated to the new website.

16. *Is the contractor required to supply a hosting platform quote? Do you have your own hosting? If so what is it? Will this hosting solution be retained?*

Proposers are free to discuss hosting if they feel that is necessary, but hosting should not be included or assumed in the cost proposal. The Transportation Authority generally establishes the hosting account on its own. We currently contract with Media Temple for our web hosting. We will not necessarily retain this hosting and will evaluate recommended hosting providers.

17. *Do you have a platform preference or requirement for the new website (e.g. Windows based, Linux based etc.)?*

No, as long as the selected platform is widely used and robust and can meet our goals and objectives. We want a CMS platform that is easy to update and maintain. We are currently using Drupal for our CMS but are willing to consider others, but preferably not Java.

18. *What are the pros and cons of the existing platform from a content management perspective?*

The pros are that Drupal is widely used and that staff is familiar with Drupal, the cons are that Drupal is not the most intuitive CMS.

19. *Do you have any technology biases or limitations that would impact our proposed solution (e.g. CMS)?*

No.

20. *What technology stack (backend, frontend and Database) has been used for the current website?*

Drupal, php, MySQL, Apache.

21. *Do you have preferences on the technology stack or can the proposer choose any technology stack for developing the website? Do you have preferences on a hosting provider to be used? Should service fees for hosting be included in the proposal?*

The proposer should recommend the technology stack. Based on the specialty of a particular technology stack, it should have design and development capabilities to meet our goals and objectives. We do not have a preference of hosting provider, however we reserve the right to select a provider based on its technology, scalability, security, and support. An estimate of the monthly hosting service fee would be good to know and may be included in the cost proposal, separate from the contract budget.

22. *Will the Transportation Authority be hosting servers for code repository and Development, Testing and Production environment?*

    If they are necessary for the new website to function, they can be hosted by the hosting provider.

23. *Will you be seeking to perform any user testing to be done on wireframes or website architecture deliverables?*

    Yes, we envision internal testing only.

24. *Does the Transportation Authority have the capabilities to recruit real user participants for any user research or testing?*

    We will launch the new website after testing by our internal staff. We will not undertake user research or testing with external stakeholders.

25. *In addition to wireframing, would a website prototype also be helpful? The prototype would show basic functionality of the website, with no design. Will you provide the logo?*

    Yes, that would be helpful, and yes we will provide the logo.

26. *Have you chosen a new hosting service or are you open to suggestion? Is the Transportation Authority open to using managed or cloud hosting such as Pantheon, Heroku, or AWS?*

    We have not chosen a new hosting service and are open to suggestions. Yes we are open to those, but functionality and security are the primary areas we will be evaluating for the services.

27. *What are your average monthly disk space and data transfer requirements for web hosting for your current website?*

    In 2017, the monthly average data download from the website was 93 GB and the monthly average data upload was 3 GB. Disk space on hosting is 50 GB.

28. *What is your annual hosting spend for your current website?*

    Approximately $500 per month.

29. *From your current website analytics, how many unique users currently visit your website per month? How many sessions and pageviews do you get per month?*

    Based on the past 12 months of website traffic, we get about:

- 5,000 unique viewers per month
- 8,420 sessions per month
- 19,580 pageviews per month

30. *Can you share data about what pages are most visited on your current website?*

Among the most visited pages in the past year are:
- Homepage (www.sfcta.org)
- Meetings, Agendas, and Events (www.sfcta.org/meetings)
- TNCs Today (www.sfcta.org/tncstoday)

We can provide more detailed information to the selected contractor.

31. *Do you currently use Google analytics? Will you be able to share analytics from the past six months?*

Yes, we currently only use Google Analytics, and yes we can provide the past six months of data to the selected contractor.

32. *What is the largest screen and the smallest device sizes the new website should support?*

The largest screen size would be a standard PC desktop screen. The smallest screen would be a standard smartphone.

33. *Under Section III of the RFP, Compatibility highlights the list of browsers along with the Mobile OS version (iOS version 7 and greater, Android version 4.4 (KitKat) and greater). Does that mean the creation of a mobile app or is it specified to support browsers on those mobile OS?*

We do not want to create a mobile app. We want the new website to display and function properly on all the latest browsers, whether the browser is on a PC, tablet or smartphone.

34. *After awarding the contract, will the contractor have access to the current code base to understand the current requirements and reuse the code base, if possible?*

Yes, the selected contractor will have access to the code base.

35. *According to the RFP, the website should follow U.S. Website guidelines. Can the website be made using a source code from https://standards.usa.gov/page-templates/?*

Yes it can, though it needs to meet the new website's proposed functionality and design.

36. *Will the website be built on existing or new infrastructure?*

It will be built on new infrastructure.

37. *Will the contractor be required to build out dev ops environment?*

Yes, it is required.

38. *Will the website be hosted on a city server? If so, can you describe this environment?*

No, it will not be hosted on a server from the City and County of San Francisco.

39. *Will there be a staging server available?*

We are currently not using a staging server.

Look, Feel, and Functionality

40. *Regarding "Create a website that enables users to easily translate content to languages other than English, such as with Google Translate", how many languages will you want the website to translate to, and are you expecting the same functionality and user experience (UX) as the existing website or something more involved?*

We currently use the Google Translate app on the existing website, which translates to about 90 different languages. We want the new website to be able to translate to as many languages as Google Translate allows. Continuing use of the Google Translate tool would work.

41. *Do you ever anticipate needing to actively translate the website and its pages (versus passively, with Google Translate, which is happening now)?*

We do anticipate active translation of website content.

42. *Does the Transportation Authority imagine using any translation options beyond Google Translate's auto-translation features?*

No.

43. *Do you have legal or other content that requires the website to manage professional translation in addition to website-wide automatic machine translation, due to legal liability or other concerns?*

Website-wide automatic translation is sufficient for our needs.

44. *What level of ADA compliance level is required (A, AA, etc.)? In addition to ADA Compliance, is it safe to assume we can rely on WCAG (https://www.w3.org/WAI/intro/wcag) standards as well?*

Level AA of the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2 is required. It is good to have WCAG Level AA standards. We suggest that proposers refer to Section 508 of the Standards Refresh Toolkit and Information and Communication Technology Standards and Guidelines.

45. *Is your text-only version of the website in service to the ADA requirements or does it serve another purpose currently?*

It is mainly for the ADA requirements (visually impaired).

46. *What is the most important thing you are looking for in a proposer?*

It is important that in proposers we see demonstrated technical knowledge, demonstrated ability to meet deadlines and manage a project, and demonstrated ability to think creatively about website design. Detailed evaluation criteria are included in Section VI of the RFP.

47. *What is your biggest challenge(s) with the current website?*

We have identified several challenges with the current website, including:

- An uninspiring and dated design
- It is not responsive to various screen sizes
- It does not enable easy social media interaction

There is more detail regarding what we want the new website to accomplish under Section III of the RFP, Project Background and Purpose.

48. *Are there any existing organizational objectives, events or activities driving the need for the website redesign?*

As noted under Section III of the RFP, the goals of the website redesign and upgrade are as follows:

- Showcasing the agency's plans, programs, and project delivery efforts.
- Serving as a resource for San Francisco transportation issues, data and topics.
- Informing the public and other stakeholders about ways to get involved in – and give feedback about – the agency's work.
- Distributing copies of reports, press releases, notifications and other documents.

We will refine our goals following the selection of a contractor.

49. *List three other public-sector websites that you have seen that you really like and add why you like them?*

Metropolitan Transportation Commission (mtc.ca.gov)

This website has a clear navigation bar, color coded icons, and information organized according to people's most common reasons for visiting their website.

City of San Rafael (cityofsanrafael.org)

This website has content organization that makes it easy to find what you are looking for. The public meeting pages, public records search, and PDF viewer (which allows you to view a PDF without downloading) are also nice.

National Resources Defense Council (nrdc.org)

This website has a beautiful yet simple display.

Zipcar (zipcar.com)

This website has a simple display and nice balance of photos, icons, and text.

New York State Senate (nysenate.gov)

This website's "bills and laws" search function provides an easy way to sort through many online files. If possible, we would like our search function to scan PDFs and PowerPoint presentations for keywords as well.

50. *Do you have user personas developed for the website user groups? Can you define your targeted audience of your website? What are their goals on the website? How tech-savvy is your audience?*

We have not developed user personas per se. We have several target audiences, generally they are defined as:
- General public
- San Francisco Board of Supervisors
- Transportation Authority staff

The goals of our website audience are primarily two-fold:

1. To find information about plans, projects, reports, data, etc.

2. To provide feedback, comments, questions, etc. about those plans, projects, reports.

We assume our website audience is not tech savvy.

51. *Can you provide a bit more clarity on what you mean by "Theme Development"?*

Theme development refers to the look and feel of the website.

52. *What type of social media integration are you looking for? Please provide examples. What do you mean by "ease of social media interaction"?*

In addition to featuring our social media icons on the website, here are a few features we have seen:

- "Share this" icon that allows users to share a specific webpage to Facebook/Twitter, etc. in one click.

- When we post a link to one of our webpages into Facebook or Twitter, we would like to be able to choose which headline and photo auto-fill into the post thumbnail.

- We have seen some webpages that have a "social media" webpage which auto-fills a few of the agency's most recent Twitter/Facebook/Instagram posts.

53. *Regarding "integrate, test and publish new website", please clarify what do you mean by integrate?*

We would like the content from the existing website to be migrated and integrated into the new website.

54. *Can you provide an expanded list of "other interagency tools" you wish to integrate to the website beyond "MyStreetSF" and "TNCs Today"? Will you need integration with other third-party systems such as Customer Relationship Management (CRM), email services, chat, etc.?*

At this point we only have the MyStreetSF, TNCs Today and Congestion Management websites (congestion.sfcta.org/), but we anticipate creating others in the future. No, we will not need integration with other third-part systems.

55. *Where does the website content currently reside? Is it easily accessible for porting to the new website?*

The content currently resides with the hosting provider. All the current content is available and easily accessible.

56. *Does the website need to integrate with any back-office systems? If so, are there application programming interface (API) specifications available?*

No, it will not need back-office system integration.

57. *Is there a network diagram or overview?*

There is no network diagram of the existing website.

58. *Under Section III of the RFP, Project Background and Purpose headline, Point 4 mentions embedding the other agency websites into the main website. Does that mean that the contractor will not be responsible to make any change in terms of layout for the other agency websites?*

The contractor will not be required to work on the other agency websites.

59. *Will stripping MyStreetSF out of the current website require any work by the contractor? Will any design or development work be required for MyStreetSF or TNCs Today?*

No MyStreetSF will not need to be stripped out of the current website and no design or development work will be required for either.

60. *Regarding "Create a website that allows for other agency online tools to be embedded within the main website (e.g. MyStreetSF, TNCs Today)", will this be done using an i-frame or what type of integration are you looking for? Please describe how you want those websites to be shown to an end-user.*

We want those websites to be accessed through the main website (www.sfcta.org) and be responsive to different screen sizes. We likely do not want an i-frame as we believe that will embed the website visualizations within another page, but Transportation Authority staff will likely lead that effort.

61. *It looks like MyStreetSF is part of the current website. How is it currently integrated and embedded there?*

We did not build another website for MyStreetSF, it is part of another webpage (Delivering Transportation Projects).

62. *Regarding "Create a website that allows the display of video content from websites such as YouTube", please list all the websites from where the content should be displayed.*

We will mostly embed YouTube videos into the new website.

63. *Regarding "Enable robust and accurate search functionality", what type of search? Full text keyword search? Is there any type of filtering or sorting needed?*

Yes, it should be full text keyboard search.

64. *Regarding "Allow for standard modules for service features such as calendar listings, event registration, surveys, and questionnaires)", please clarify this requirement. This can be a simple task, but may be a huge task to complete. We need more details on how that functionality would be presented on the website. Are there existing survey content or questionnaires that must be relaunched using this feature? Are there any functionalities that are necessary for the website besides those listed in RFP?*

The listed functionalities are the primary ones we anticipate. Some existing content, such as the existing questionnaire linked below, will need to be migrated to the new website.

Here are a few examples of service features:

Calendars:

- New York State Senate calendar (nysenate.gov/events)
- City of San Rafael calendar (cityofsanrafael.org/events/)

Event registration:

We would like people to be able to submit their contact information for events or simple surveys through an online form. Here is an example of a form that we like: nextgenamerica.org/act/protect-arctic-refuge/

Here is an example of an existing questionnaire on the existing website: sfcta.org/freeways/questionnaire

Surveys:

We will continue to use SurveyMonkey for more complex surveys.

65. *What areas of the design, content and functionality do you hope to improve with the new website? What modules or features do you envision, beyond those listed (calendar, event, surveys, questionnaires)?*

Section III of the RFP, Project Background & Purpose, provide a general overview of how we would like to improve the design, content, and functionality of the website. We also want the new website to have individual project pages as the existing website does. New features include a search mechanism for public documents and a news/blog page function. We would like our website users to be able to submit short surveys and feedback forms.

66. *Is there an intention to change the navigation and the content architecture?*

Yes.

67. *Are you looking for a new modern design or a complete new set of functionalities that can be added during website redesign work along with existing functionalities?*

We are looking for a new look and functionality of the website, which is outlined under Section III of the RFP, Project Background & Purpose.

68. *Will there be any brand guidelines that will be provided?*

We have a logo guideline that can be provided to the selected contractor.

69. *Are there any photo/image/design assets that can be leveraged or do you expect contractor to licensed photo assets for website design?*

Existing photos and images from the existing website can be used for the new website.

Procurement Clarifications

70. *Did you have a third party help you write the RFP?*

No.

71. *Do you have a relationship with any of potential proposers?*

We are not aware of who is proposing as proposals are not due until February 12.

72. *Was the RFP sent to any proposers overseas, any single developers, or only North American agencies/vendors?*

The RFP was sent to the Transportation Authority's email distribution list and distributed through local partnerships. We are looking for a local vendor. It may have been received by overseas vendors since we do not verify whether people on our email distribution list are local.

73. *What is driving the timeline? Is there a firm due date for the website to be live?*

We would like the new website to be live by December 2018.

74. *Who is the internal dedicated point of contact, including for Systems Operations, Deployment, etc.*

Eric Young, Senior Communications Officer.

75. *Are you looking for a local vendor in California?*

Yes.

76. *While we do have an office in San Francisco, are you open to video meetings with other members of our team who are remote? If the vendor does not have a San Francisco office, will they be eliminated from consideration?*

We would prefer to have the selected contractor be available in San Francisco. Meetings can be virtual, but we would prefer to not rely only on virtual meetings. Vendors outside of San Francisco or California will not be eliminated from consideration.

77. *Could you elaborate on what you're hoping to achieve out of number 16 on Page 3 of the RFP, "Engage with staff to provide regularly-scheduled updates and deliverables, with capacity to be on-the-ground in San Francisco for the duration of the contract". How often do you want to meet with the project manager and dev team to get status updates and provide feedback? How many times per week? Who are you requesting to be present for these meetings (project lead, project manager, etc.) and what are the time requirements?*

We would like to meet in person and by phone as needed, perhaps once per week. We would like to have weekly contact with the project manager.

78. *On Page 8 of the RFP, 2. Technical and Management Approach, the following phrase appears: "demonstrate the proposer's knowledge of adjacent projects and their potential impacts to the delivery of the services of this RFP." Can you please define "adjacent projects" and clarify what information you are requesting here?*

Proposers are to demonstrate how their past work shows that they can fulfill what the Transportation Authority is seeking.

79. *We are a federally certified Small Business, does this count towards the Local Business Enterprise (LBE)/Small Business Enterprise (SBE)/Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) requirement?*

Yes, please include a copy of the Small Business certificate in your proposal. Certifications will not count towards the page requirements.

80. *Under Section V, 4. Assurances and Miscellaneous Items, does proposer need to supply Terminated Contracts and Workforce data? It seems like this would be for subcontractors and not the main contractor. Could you clarify?*

This section applies to the main contractor and all subcontractors.

81. *Is there a separate licensing budget, or does any license fee pull from the $120,000 budget? Or does all software need to be free/open source? This is including but not limited to CMS software and Plugin/extensions.*

The Transportation Authority will pay for license fees for the new website separately. Although free or open-source software is not required, we encourage proposers to consider open-source solutions.

82. *Will the Transportation Authority be providing the licenses for any paid technology or tool, if used for development of website?*

Only if the service or tool will be transferred to the Transportation Authority as the licensee after new website been developed.

83. *Has any research or input been provided about the current website experience?*

We have incorporated feedback from our staff and agency partners into the RFP.

84. *Would you consider a proposed change to the language in the indemnification clause?*

   Proposers may include limited modifications to the indemnification clause in its proposal for the Transportation Authority's consideration. Once the top proposer has been identified and the proposer's cost and pricing data has been reviewed, Transportation Authority staff will start contract negotiations with that proposer. The goal of such negotiations will be to agree on a final contract that delivers the services and work described in this RFP at a fair and reasonable cost to the Transportation Authority. If agreement cannot be reached, then contract negotiations will begin with the next most qualified proposer.

85. *Are you willing to entertain a request for information format or revised request for proposal that includes a platform/software-as-a-service approach to digital service delivery as opposed to the current approach, focused on a bespoke, custom services process?*

   Yes, we would accept a proposal that includes a platform/software-as-a-service approach to digital service delivery.

86. *Is the U.S. Web Design Standards requisite based on adherence to the specific UI/UX components or more as a point of reference for adhering to a standardized style guide and UI framework (i.e. Bootstrap, Foundation, etc.)?*

   It is meant as a point of reference.

87. *Can you elaborate on what deliverables you would expect for the bullet under Task 2, B. Content Strategy, "Design content to meet the agency's current and future communication goals"? Are you expecting the contractor to create original copy? Edit copy?*

   The deliverable is to recommend changes to existing website content. We are not expecting the contractor to create original copy or edit copy.

88. *Why are "Recommendations for changes to existing website content" part of Graphic Design rather than part of the Content Strategy?*

   During final contract negotiations with the selected contractor we can finalize which task that activity should be assigned to.

89. *Under the Scope of Services, Task 7, there is a line for additional enhancements. We would recommend using additional budget for post-launch support. I see you are just asking for recommendations, can we suggest post launch support as an enhancement?*

   Yes.

90. *Are the additional enhancements expected to be included as part of the $120,000 budget ceiling or in addition to? Are proposals that choose to include cost for optional Task #7 evaluated equally on "lower overall cost" with proposals that do not include cost for optional Task #7?*

The optional Task 7 is to be included in the $120,000 budget. Yes, the proposals will be evaluated equally.

91. *May proposals go over the $120,000/$140,000 limit, when factoring in the 10% contingency, or must proposals be under these limits inclusive of the 10% contingency?*

The total cost proposal, inclusive of the 10% contingency, must be within the $120,000 budget ceiling.