



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
STRATFORD CITY CENTRE BIA
WEBSITE DESIGN**

This RFP is for the design and development services of an updated website for the Stratford City Centre BIA (Business Improvement Area)

Current domain (www.stratfordcitycentre.ca)

RFP Posted: July 2nd 2021

Responses Due: July 16th, 2021 by 5:00 PM. E.T.

Send any questions on the RFP to:

Rebecca Scott, General Manager

rscott@stratfordcitycentre.ca

Email proposals to:

info@stratfordcitycentre.ca

Goal for new website launch: During our fiscal Q4, ideally no later than October 16th, 2021

PROJECT

The Stratford City Centre BIA (Business Improvement Area) is searching for a website designer to help develop a distinctive website that contains a purposeful connection between design elements, navigation, and content.

The new website design should offer ample resources for the SCC BIA membership, but its focus should primarily serve the public as a source of information about our downtown businesses and community.

In 2020-2021 the SCC BIA made great advances in its social media presence. To complement this marketing presence, the website should reflect a modern feel; that is user friendly, informative, interactive, current and visually stimulating.

SCC BIA is concurrently looking to rebrand (logo, colour scheme, typefaces, and style-guide). If your agency offers branding services, please separate these costs from the website design RFP in a separate quote.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

The BIA would like to have a new website live by October 2021. The SCC BIA reserves the right to extend this timeline where and when necessary, but will strive to adhere to the following:

1. Issue Request for Proposal: July 2nd/2021
2. Deadline to Receive Proposals: July 16th 2021 @5:00 P.M.
3. Website Team conducts interviews: Week of July 26-30th
4. Awarding of Proposal: August 6th

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

The Stratford City Centre Business Improvement Area is Stratford, Ontario's only Business Improvement Area (SCC BIA).

The SCC BIA is a not-for-profit community-based City of Stratford agency, established in 1974. The SCC BIA was formed by the area's commercial property owners and tenants. The SCC BIA currently sits as an Advisory Committee of Stratford City Council. Its purpose is to support main street business and property owners. The SCC BIA has recently undergone substantial growth having doubled its support staff size and being instrumental in COVID-19 response and recovery efforts impacting the small to medium business sector.

The key purposes of the SCC BIA are to preserve the heritage and culture, improve the SCC BIA streetscape, and focus on health and safety. The SCC BIA supports and advocates on behalf of its members through the building and nurturing of strong relationships and partnerships.

In addition, SCC BIA offers marketing support for its members, and creates and supports community events/projects that promote the area and draws visitors locals to eat, utilize services and shop and explore the downtown core.

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

1. Successful agency/candidate must utilize a content management system (CMS) that provides the following functionality:
 - Surveys
 - Feedback and other online forms
 - Blog
 - RSS
 - Commenting
 - Easy editing
 - Photo galleries
 - Member login for access to media (eg. PDFs)
 - Ability to create user profiles at different levels
 - Google or similar analytics
 - Website search
 - Social Media links/feeds
 - Embedded maps
 - Filterable directories
 - Sortable calendar
2. Our preferred CMS is WordPress but we may consider a different platform if the successful bidder makes a compelling argument supporting its use. RFP responses must also outline any ongoing charges or licensing fees associated with the implementation of the chosen CMS solution and/or third-party software.
3. The final design should include pages or page templates that are easily duplicated for creation of additional pages/content where and when necessary.
4. The website should be designed using basic on-page SEO best practices including, but not limited to:
 - Optimized site architecture/navigation
 - Compressed images, graphics, and videos
 - Inclusion of metadata (titles, descriptions, and alt tags) in pages and all uploaded media, as appropriate

The redesigned website should function as intended in the latest version of the following browsers:

- Google Chrome
- Safari

- Microsoft Edge
 - Mozilla Firefox
 - Opera
5. Navigation of the new website should reflect a sensible and straightforward re-organization of existing (and some new) website content for improved UX.

PROPOSAL INFORMATION

At a minimum, proposals should include the following:

1. Project development timelines
2. A description of the project team
3. Cost estimates, including a breakdown of project, hourly, and per diem fees
4. A payment schedule based on specific deliverables and/or milestones
5. Descriptions of comparable projects you have been involved with
URLs/examples
6. Client references from similar projects
7. A summary of your process for development, including anticipated involvement and time requirements on SCC BIA staff

If you have any questions, you would like answered before developing the proposal, please contact

Rebecca Scott, General Manager, SCC BIA

rscott@stratfordcitycentre.ca

.

USER REQUIREMENTS

Training - The successful agency/candidate will provide fundamental training to internal SCC BIA content managers re: how to manage the content, performance, and security of their website, and should provide appropriate documentation and/or links to online resources.

Site Launch - The new website will be launched after it has been reviewed and approved by SCC BIA's Marketing Sub-Committee.

DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

The SCC BIA would like its site to feel fresh, modern, vibrant, professional, informative, and trustworthy. Users should get the sense that the site is designed to serve them, with information quickly and easily accessible. Graphics and documents (including PDFs) should be easily uploaded and downloaded, where appropriate.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

In addition to being compatible across all current operating systems and web browsers, the site must comply with current AODA standards.

FULL DISCLOSURE AND ACCESS TO MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONALITY

The SCC BIA expects that its staff will maintain and update the redesigned site. Therefore, all source code, artwork and pictures should be provided/included in a form that can be modified by SCC BIA staff. It is preferable that the site be developed with web-based or otherwise common tools/platforms. If significant additions or changes to the website are required in the future, the SCC BIA may look to the designer/developer to supply ongoing maintenance, subject to hourly fee.

Because we plan to maintain the website internally, we expect non-restricted access to the CMS dashboard. The proposal should include details about the provision of initial training and relevant fees.

The SCC BIA will have full copyright of the website.

FUTURE REFRESH

The SCC BIA understands that a website has a lifespan. Of course, our preference is for a design that resists garnering a dated look over the short term. However, we do anticipate a website refresh (at the very least) being necessary 3-5 years down the road, so ideally the website will be designed with that in mind.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The main contact at the Stratford City Centre BIA will be Rebecca Scott, General Manager. The proposals will be reviewed by the Marketing Sub-Committee and a recommendation will be made to the Board of Directors.

Depending on the proposals that are received, the SCC BIA may request a meeting to aid in the selection process. Upon selection, the developer will work primarily with Rebecca Scott, the General Manager.

FEE STRUCTURE AND PAYMENT

Proponents will fully describe their proposed fee structure. Proponents must clearly quote any additional charges that may be applicable that have not already been addressed in their Proposal.

The fee shall include HST as a separate line item. Also, include a list of chargeable disbursements, with unit costs and an estimate of their total cost.

As an alternative, Proponents may suggest that disbursements be paid as a percentage of the total fee (excluding HST), in which case the percentage must be identified, as well as the extent of disbursements covered by such percentage.

SCC BIA RESPONSIBILITIES

We recognize that we will play a part in the efficient and successful development and launch of our new website, namely timely provision of feedback and provision of all relevant content, including copy, graphics, photography, and videos. Please communicate these and other and/or specific responsibilities so we can prepare accordingly.

PRIMARY DOMAIN, HOSTING, AND EMAIL ACCOUNTS

We currently have the necessary domains registered. We may opt to change from our existing domain (stratfordcitycentre.ca) to a new primary domain which we have already secured. In that case, we will add 301 redirects to our existing site as appropriate to maintain our current SEO.

We welcome recommendations for reliable, secure Wordpress (or CMS-appropriate) hosting that includes automated backups and an SSL certificate.

If you/your agency offers email configuration, we would be interested in a per-account set-up fee to ensure a smooth and lossless transition to our new accounts and email service provider from our current provider.

If you propose to build the new site using Wordpress, please also provide a quote and details for your hosting services, if applicable. Ideally, hosting should offer demonstrated reliability and include an SSL, regular backups, and excellent customer service. If you don't offer hosting, it will not detract from your eligibility for this contract. We will simply configure hosting internally and provide administrative access to you, should you be the successful website designer for this project.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The Stratford City Centre Business Improvement Area will use the following criteria to select the appropriate developer:

1. Efficiency of approach
2. Training and Support
3. Demonstration of meeting timelines
4. Demonstrated experience (Previous work with a BIA or strong knowledge of BIA function an asset)
5. References
6. Connection to Stratford/Region an asset
7. Cost

DEADLINE FOR PROPOSAL

Proposal due July 16th, 2021 @5PM emailing info@stratfordcitycentre.ca