

Information Technology Department

ADDENDUM NO. 1

DATE: November 8, 2023

REVISIONS TO: Request for Proposals Specification No. IT23-0239F City Website Modernization and Redesign

NOTICE TO ALL PROPOSERS:

This addendum is issued to clarify, revise, add to or delete from, the original specification documents for the above project. This addendum, as integrated with the original specification documents, shall form the specification documents. The noted revisions shall take precedence over previously issued specification documents and shall become part of this contract.

REVISIONS TO THE SUBMITTAL DEADLINE:

The submittal deadline has been changed to 11:00 a.m., Pacific Time, Tuesday, November 21, 2023

REVISIONS TO THE GENERAL INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS:

Remove and replace Section 2.2 RFP Timelines in its entirety with the Section 2.2 RFP Timelines below.

The section has been updated to reference the revised submittal deadline of 11/21/2023.

2.2 RFP Timelines

This is a tentative schedule only and may be altered at the sole discretion of the City. Contract may be issued after City Council approval if cost exceeds \$500,000.

Deadline to submit proposal: Nov. 21, 2023

The anticipated schedule of events concerning this RFP is as follows:



Event	Due Date
Publish and issue RFP:	10/26/2023
Pre-Submittal Questions:	11/2/2023
Response to Questions:	11/7/2023
Submittal Due Date:	11/21/2023
Submittal Evaluated:	12/5/2023
Interviews/presentations, on or about:	12/8/2023
Award Recommendation:	1/2/2024
City Council Approval:	1/9/2024

REVISIONS TO THE TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:

Add top 5 languages to Appendix B – CMS Capabilities, Languages row. Include Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Tagalog, Ukrainian, Cambodian, Russian.

Add additional information to Appendix B – CMS Capabilities. Editor row for Allows import from Word and Excel documents.

This requirement is to support our web stewards' current content updating process. They typically update their pages by copy/pasting content from Word documents. We would like them to be able to continue updating their web pages in this way (or a similar way).

Add additional information to Appendix B – CMS Capabilities. Advanced Search Features row.

The City would consider any search technologies that can be easily integrated into WordPress. Vendors may propose solutions that leverage AI/ML. The City will work with the vendor to determine the viability of incorporating AI/ML for advanced searching. It may require a deeper dive if it involves expanding the project scope or impacts City policy on AI.

Add additional information to Appendix B – CMS Capabilities. Responsive Design Using latest browsers: Edge, Chrome, and Safari at a minimum. See <u>Usage share of</u> <u>web browsers - Wikipedia</u> for top versions.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

Question 1: Can you please advise if you are open to vendors that haven't worked with public organizations?

Answer 1: We are not. However, we are considering non-profits as public organizations.



- Question 2: I noticed on the RFP document that it states a submission due date of 11/14/2023, but within the schedule table right below it there is a date of 11/21 for due date. Can you please clarify which date is the accurate one for the submission deadline?
- Answer 2: Please see Addendum No 1 for the updated table. The submittal due date of 11/14/2023 is the correct date.
- Question 3: This RFP requests a "new CMS", but it also requires the new CMS be built on your WPEngine instance. WPEngine only hosts WordPress CMS websites. Can you confirm that the City will only consider WordPress vendors?
- Answer 3: Yes, we will only consider vendors providing WordPress services.
- Question 4: Is the Google Analytics to be set up a Standard (Free) GA4 or is it a GA4 360 licensed version.
- Answer 4: We are open to recommendations.
- Question 5: Are you accepting proposals from foreign entities? (i.e Canadian companies)
- Answer 5: Yes



Question 6: Do you have a preference for local vendors/an incumbent vendor/preferred vendor list for this project?

- Answer 6: There is no preferred vendor list for the project.
- Question 7: The sample projects we would like to present are not for municipalities but are for nation-wide nonprofits who serve millions of users. Would these be acceptable?
- Answer 7: Yes.
- Question 8: May we confirm if the Website Assessment Findings report is current and can be used as an input into the forthcoming redesign. Is there anything there that is outdated?
- Answer 8: Yes, the findings report is current. It was completed earlier this year. It is an input into the forthcoming redesign; however, we are asking in the RFP for the vendor to review findings and make recommendations.
- Question 9: Can you explain your pain points and the reason for this procurement?
- Answer 9: All the pain points are listed in the Website Assessment Findings report.
- Question 10: Based on the understanding of the scope of work, does the city prefer only WordPress or are vendors allowed to suggest other technological stacks that will be robust in achieving the scope of work?
- Answer 10: The City is seeking solutions developed in WordPress and other supporting technologies and/or plug-ins.
- Question 11: There seem to be two contradictory statements: 1) The current city website is a custom .NET CMS that resides on city-owned servers internally. 2) This RFP seeks proposals from vendors to build, deploy, and support a new website in the City's existing (WPEngine) environment. Could you please clarify this?
- Answer 11: The City owns multiple environments. The .NET environment hosts the <u>existing</u> <u>cityoftacoma.org</u> website, and WPEngine hosts other various City owned sites. The City is seeking to replace existing cityoftacoma.org website with a WordPress solution on WPEngine. Review of the other WPEngine websites is out of scope.

Question 12: Will the agency (City) disclose the usage and the parameters for the Dashboard?

Answer 12: The desired metrics can be found on the RFP. The City will work with the vendor to refine those requirements.



Question 13: Can you explain the data sources and the types of data that will be used in the dashboard?

Answer 13: Potential sources of data include web analytics tools (such as Google Analytics), server logs, data from the CMS, and custom tracking scripts. These are anticipated to collect data such as page views and visits, traffic sources, user demographics, user behavior, conversion rates, click through rates, site speed and performance, and content engagement.

Question 14: Apart from 12,600 pages, 340 Calendar entries, 360 workspaces and 80 web forms, are there any other content or data involved in the data migration process?

Answer 14: Not likely, however, the content audit will clarify. Most of these data above will not be migrated. Vendor will have full access to CMS database for migration scripting if needed.

Question 15: What is the location of the office from which work will be performed?

Answer 15: We anticipate that this engagement will be done remotely and encourage all potential vendors to submit their proposals, regardless of the physical locations of their offices. It is worth noting that, as part of the scope of this contract, there may be community engagement sessions proposed as the best way to meet the project's needs and objectives. In these cases, and in order to ensure flexibility and cost-efficiency, the City will conduct the in-person engagements on behalf of the vendors that are not located in Tacoma and its environs. These in-person sessions should not deter qualified vendors from applying.

Question 16: Do you expect the vendor to manage the hosting?

Answer 16: No, providing website hosting is excluded. However, the City is looking for 1 year of technical support on our WPEngine instance, as described in the RFP (Section 4.2.3).

Question 17: Are there any 3rd party software or tools that need to be integrated? If yes, can we assume that the department provides APIs for Integrations?

Answer 17: There will be limited/basic integrations with supporting tools such as Google Analytics, TV Tacoma video features, and social media. Any "heavy" line of business integrations are excluded from the scope. Further, there may be page redirects to other supporting applications such as 311 system (SeeClickFix), Open Data Platform, Accela, City Council's Legistar, TPU (Tacoma Public Utility), our Public Disclosure Request site, and so on.

Question 18: Who developed and is currently maintaining the current website?

Answer 18: Current .NET CMS was developed by CivicLive (formally Intrafinity). The City Information Technology Department manages the CMS and CMS servers. CivicLive is available for escalations of incidents and technical support when needed.



Question 19: Is there any incumbent currently maintaining the website? If yes can you please mention them?

Answer 19: No, there is no incumbent maintaining the website. The existing website is primarily maintained by City of Tacoma employees, with tier two support from CivicLive.

Question 20: Can you please list your references for the website if any?

Answer 20: We do not currently have any references for the website. We are expecting interested vendors to provide their references.

Question 21: To accomplish the project, do we need to allocate any full-time onsite resources at your office?

Answer 21: No. Most of the City employees work remotely and this is a remote engagement.

Question 22: Can you please provide the number of users and their roles interacting with the system?

Answer 22: There are currently approximately 5 CMS administrators and 130 web stewards (creators and editors) that represent 15 departments. Other users include citizens, visitors, and business owners that equal over 300K users. Current site had 1.3 million unique visits per year.

Question 23: What are all the reporting formats that you would like to see?

Answer 23: The City will work with the vendor to refine those requirements.

Question 24: Can you clarify if the \$500,000 budget is for the entire two-year period or just the website build?

Answer 24: We do expect the CMS Implementation, Content Strategy and Migration, and the 1 year of technical support to fall within that given budget maximum. The budget maximum is set at \$500,000 and anything over will require City Council approval.

Question 25: Can you confirm that the budget and/or the scope does not include web hosting through WPEngine?

- Answer 25: No, the WPEngine hosting cost is not part of the RFP, the City will manage this internally.
- Question 26: 2.2 RFP Timelines lists the submittal due date as November 21, but it also says that November 14th is the due date. Given that questions are not anticipated to be responded to until November 7, would Tacoma consider honoring (or extending) the deadline of November 21 to give vendors an appropriate amount of time to develop their solution based on the responses



- Question 27: Appendix B CMS Capabilities states "The table below lists the desired CMS capabilities, provide detailed information on how your solution meets each requirement: Please indicate where the capability will not be met by WPEngine out-of-the-box (OOB) and what module/plugin will be used for each such capability." Our understanding is that the scope of this contract does not include WPEngine. Can the City confirm that we should respond to these questions as they relate to the WordPress CMS and not WPEngine Hosting Platform?
- Answer 27: You are correct in your understanding. The scope of this contract primarily pertains to the WordPress CMS (Content Management System) and not the WPEngine hosting platform. Therefore, we kindly request that you respond to the questions in Appendix B specifically in relation to the capabilities and functionalities of the WordPress CMS. While the City acknowledges that WPEngine is a hosting platform that will be used in conjunction with WordPress, our interest in this section is to assess how your solution addresses the desired CMS capabilities within the WordPress environment. WPEngine has a variety of out of the box plugins that integrate with WordPress CMS such as SSO, we would like to know about those that are not existing WPEngine plugins or WPEngine integrations. Please provide detailed information on how your solution meets each requirement for the WordPress CMS. You do not need to provide information related to the hosting platform or any specific hosting-related capabilities.
- Question 28: For the Appendices required for submission, can the City provide an editable version of these documents? Or can the City confirm that we are permitted to re-build these Appendices for our response to allow for easy fill-ins?
- Answer 28: A copy of the signature sheet will be available for download <u>link</u>. The other appendices can be rebuilt if needed.
- Question 29: 3.1 Submittal Checklist. Can you clarify if the separate items should be submitted as separate documents? Or can the entire package be submitted as a single file?
- Answer 29: The entire package can be submitted as a single file.
- Question 30: Can the City clarify requirements for translation? Would you prefer a solution that allows for manual translations, automated translations, or a hybrid of both? Does the City have a list of languages that will be prioritized?
- Answer 30: The range of languages required has not been defined yet, however the top 5 are Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Tagalog, Ukrainian, Cambodian, and Russian. The Media and Communication Office (MCO) will provide the range of languages, as well as approve the implementation. They have volunteer translators to assist with translation and testing. Preference is for users to view a translated page with easy steps, where they do not need to search for the translation feature. Whichever solution you recommended.



- Question 31: Can the City clarify the in-scope requirements for microsites are microsites in scope? If so, what customizations would microsites require for design, content and/or functionality? Are there URL structure requirements for microsites - their own domain, sub-domains, custom URL folders? What are some examples of microsites?
- Answer 31: Microsites are out of scope.
- Question 32: Is SiteCrafting considered the incumbent for this work? Are they eligible to bid on this project? Will SiteCrafting, who did the analysis and wireframes, be bidding for the project? Will the firm that did the Research Findings Report, SiteCrafting, be allowed to submit a proposal? If so, do you know if they will submit a proposal?
- Answer 32: The are no incumbents for this work. SiteCrafting is allowed to submit a proposal. At this time, the City does not know if SiteCrafting will submit a proposal.
- Question 33: How important is it that a Tacoma-based agency does this work? Will additional points be given to local agencies?
- Answer 33: The scoring does not include points for vendor location *alone*. However, based on our Equity in Contracting section, firms *in Washington State* that meet the equity criteria will earn an additional 5 points, totaling 5% (see RFP Section 6.1.8).

Question 34: (1.) How in-depth does the City want the content sustainment plan to be? (2.) Is the City looking for an overview or templates for possible posts?

Answer 34: (1) We expect that at the end of project, the Media and Communications Office, CMS administrators, and web stewards will have a process implemented and documented for approving and maintaining relevant content on the CMS. This is also described in the *Recommendations for the Content Update Process* section of the Assessment findings report (page 59).
(2) The City is looking for templates (not just an overview) for possible posts. This is described in section 4.2.1 of the RFP. Some examples are also provided in the Assessment findings report.

Question 35: What kind of content is expected to be downloaded by users?

Answer 35: PDF's of forms, media, occasional Excel sheets, and Word documents.

Question 36: Who is in the selection advisory committee and what background do they have working on technical projects?

Answer 36: The Selection Advisory Committee (SAC) for this project is comprised of individuals with diverse and relevant backgrounds, including experience working on technical projects. The SAC is carefully selected to ensure a balanced representation of technical, project management, and subject matter expertise. The individuals involved in the committee have a history of working on technical



projects, and their collective experience covers a range of areas that are relevant to this project. They will effectively evaluate and make recommendations regarding the proposals submitted. Their primary goal is to ensure a fair and thorough evaluation of all proposals in line with the project's requirements and evaluation criteria.

Question 37: Can the City expand upon the use cases for the custom scripts that the CMS Administrator might create?

Answer 37: Occasionally in the past if there was functionality that was not doable out of the box, a script can be added to manipulate the DOM. For example, changing accordion menu behavior, or an attribute for content within an iFrame. Custom scripts may also be used for CMS database actions, such as exporting content. Note that some custom scripts might be avoided/modernized by using plugins, such as those to support content publishing/approval workflows.

Question 38: What are the City's current use cases for the integrations such as ArcGIS, SmartSheet, Tableau, SeeClickFix, and Microsoft 365?

Answer 38: The current cityoftacoma.org website embeds with iFrames: Maps, SmartSheets, and MS forms. SeeClickFix has a launch page designed on the CMS that links to the SeeClickFix app. There may be opportunities to improve this. There will be limited/basic integrations with supporting tools such as Google Analytics, TV Tacoma video features, and social media. Any "heavy" line of business integrations are excluded from the scope. Further, there may be page redirects to other supporting applications such as 311 system (SeeClickFix), Open Data Platform, Accela, City Council's Legistar, TPU (Tacoma Public Utility), our Public Disclosure Request site, and so on.

Question 39: Does the current CMS support content exports for the purposes of content migration that can be automated into the new website?

Answer 39: Yes, it is possible with database scripts. The vendor will have full access to the CMS database for the project.

Question 40: Can the City expand upon the requirement to be able to import from Word and Excel documents?

Answer 40: This requirement is to support our web stewards' current content updating process. They typically update their pages by copy/pasting content from Word documents. We would like them to be able to continue updating their web pages in this way (or a similar way).

Our current Content Management System (CMS) offers a user-friendly feature that allows content stewards to seamlessly import content from Microsoft Office Word and Excel documents, and other text documents. This means that if the editor has an existing content in a Word or Excel file, the editor can easily transfer it into our CMS without the need for manual re-entry or reformatting. Additionally, our CMS offers the editors the option to strip formatting from imported document. This feature simplifies the process of updating and



managing content on your website, making it more efficient and timesaving for users.

Question 41: Would the City consider an external search engine provider like ElasticSearch or SOLR to meet your stated requirements, in addition to other enhancements like AI/ML assisted search capabilities?

- Answer 41: Yes, the City would consider any search technologies that can be easily integrated into WordPress. Vendors may propose solutions that leverage AI/ML. The City will work with the vendor to determine the viability of incorporating AI/ML for advanced searching. It may require a deeper dive if it involves expanding the project scope or impacts City policy on AI.
- Question 42: The City has included a detailed deliverable regarding Discovery activities to be utilized in the redesign process are there gaps in Discovery that you feel will need to be addressed in this project i.e., stakeholder or audience research, other types of audience analysis, comparator research, etc.? Are there other deliverables like a Content Audit that have been completed that will be shared with the selected partner?
- Answer 42: We have indeed outlined a detailed Discovery process, but we welcome your insights and recommendations regarding any potential gaps that may need to be addressed. This includes suggestions for additional research or analysis, such as stakeholder or audience research, comparator research, or any other related activities you believe would enhance the project. Regarding the availability of deliverables, while we haven't disclosed a Content Audit specifically, our Assessment findings contain the most information that we have on this. We acknowledge a need for a more comprehensive Content Audit. If there are specific deliverables you believe should be considered or if you would like to discuss potential collaborations in this area, please feel free to reach out to us. We value your input and look forward to a collaborative and successful project.

Question 43: What are the City's expectations for an optimized content migration? How much time are department members willing to spend on reviewing content to be archived?

Answer 43: Recommendations from the Assessment findings report and the subsequent CMS Design process will provide guidelines on what could be considered relevant. The City expects that most of the current content will not be migrated. The Content Strategy and Migration proposed by the vendor will include a phase for discovery of stale vs relevant content in collaboration with the web stewards and core team members. To optimize the discovery, the ITD administrator will be able to provide reports and statistics from the database, and from Google Analytics.

Question 44: Does the pricing breakdown relate to a payment schedule?

Answer 44: Not exactly, the pricing breakdown provided in the RFP does not automatically imply a payment schedule. The pricing breakdown is primarily intended to help us understand the cost structure and components associated with your proposal. The payment schedule, if applicable, will be discussed and determined during the



negotiation phase with the selected vendor. It will be based on mutually agreedupon milestones, deliverables, and payment terms as part of the final contract.

Question 45: The Security Assessment Worksheet provides security requirements that we would associate with hosting of the website. Is it correct to assume that these portions would be completed by the hosting partner, WPEngine, and responding vendors can defer to their response?

- Answer 45: Yes, it is correct to assume that the portions of the Security Assessment Worksheet associated with hosting the website can be addressed by the hosting partner, WPEngine. The response to those requirements associated with WPEngine can be noted as such. The City will follow up with WPEngine on those. The City intends to ensure that both WPEngine and the vendor collectively meet the security standards defined in the Security Assessment Worksheet, resulting in a comprehensive and secure hosting solution that meets these requirements. We appreciate your diligence in this matter and look forward to receiving your comprehensive response.
- Question 46: Are there any City-owned systems that the selected vendor will need to access to and/or training/onboarding to deliver this project?
- Answer 46: Vendors will be onboarded with City network credentials to access the CMS servers and database.
- Question 47: Does the City anticipate utilizing the selected project management tools like Asana and Jira?
- Answer 47: The City will make use of a MS Teams project team, and our project managers may use MS Project or SmartSheet.

Question 48: Does the City require the selected vendor to complete any security background checks and/or technical certifications?

Answer 48: No additional technical certifications required.

Question 49: Will selected vendor staff be required to take any City training?

- Answer 49: No.
- Question 50: Is there anything significant about the deadline for this project? (e.g., to coincide with the launch of a new campaign, event, annual meeting, etc.)?
- Answer 50: No. The results of the vendor scoring may be required for review for City Council. To allocate time for RFP reviews, vendor interviews, and vendor scoring, we are targeting January 9th, 2024, for council.
- Question 51: Do you have any preferences or requirements regarding face-to-face meetings?
- Answer 51: This work can be done remotely. The City will work with the vendor to determine the best approach for the community engagements.



Question 52: Why are you embarking on this project now?

- Answer 52: Funding was approved for the 2024-2025 biennium budget.
- Question 53: Will you provide a dedicated project management counterpart on the City of Tacoma team that our project manager will have direct access to? If so, who will this be? Following on the above question, who will be responsible for coordinating and prioritizing stakeholder feedback?
- Answer 53: Yes, the City will provide a Project Manager that the vendor PM will have direct access to. The City PM will coordinate internal communications. In terms of coordinating and prioritizing stakeholder feedback, the responsibility will be shared between the City's PM and the vendor's PM. Both parties will collaborate to ensure that stakeholder feedback is collected, organized, and prioritized in a manner that aligns with project goals and timelines. This collaborative approach is designed to facilitate effective communication and the successful execution of the project.

Question 54: Can you name five examples of brands and/or websites that should be used as examples of what to do (or what not to do)?

- Answer 54: While we appreciate your request for specific brand or website examples, we aim to maintain a fair and unbiased evaluation process for all responding vendors. Instead of providing specific examples, we encourage you to showcase your expertise by presenting relevant design and usability best practices in your proposal.
- Question 55: Are there specific milestones or dates we should be aware of, such as launch dates or other events?
- Answer 55: No.
- Question 56: For the desired CMS capabilities, are there any specific third-party integrations or plugins you are already considering? Do you already have licenses for these tools, or will we need to procure them?
- Answer 56: Currently, in use on the City WordPress sites for security is iThemes, which we are licensed for. We can take recommendations and expect to cover any plug-in costs for implementation and renewals.
- Question 57: Regarding the translations referenced in Appendix B, who will be overseeing and managing this aspect? Additionally, are you envisioning automated translations, such as those offered by Google Translate, or are you seeking native, human-performed translations?
- Answer 57: The range of languages required has not been defined yet. The Media and Communication Office will provide the range of languages, top 5 are Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Tagalog, Ukrainian, Cambodian, Russian., as well as approve the implementation. They have volunteer translators to assist with translation and testing. Preference is for users to view a translated page with



easy steps, where they do not need to search for the translation feature. Whichever solution you recommended.

Question 58: Will any meetings need to be in-person, or will they all be remote?

- Answer 58: This work will be done remotely.
- Question 59: We are a remote business in California US, are we required to have a WA state business license upon submission?
- Answer 59: A Washington State business license or Tacoma Business license is not required.
- Question 60: Must all 5 years of experience be in the public sector per Appendix A, question 4?
- Answer 60: No.
- Question 61: Is there a certain SSO provider required (SAML, OAuth, etc.)?
- Answer 61: SAML

Question 62: For ADA, keyboard only access is requested. Is this for all pages?

Answer 62: All visitors to the cityoftacoma.org site should have the same access to services, such as emailing council members or paying a pet license and access to important content such as emergency notifications or office closures. Logically, keyboard access is required for pages and navigation that provides connection with services and important content.

Question 63: You state that "most" content will not be migrated. Approximately what percentage of content will need to be migrated?

- Answer 63: Anywhere between 10%-15%. It's hard to give a number without content analysis and metrics.
- Question 64: Mobile-first responsive design supporting all devices and browsers <- can you specify what minimum versions of the browsers?
- Answer 64: Latest Edge, Chrome, and Safari at a minimum. See <u>Usage share of web</u> <u>browsers - Wikipedia</u> for top versions.

Question 65: Are we to use the wireframes provided or do we need to refine them before going into the design phase?

Answer 65: The City expects a refinement of the wireframes to determine gaps and enhancements before going into the design phase. The City does not expect a vendor to use the wireframes exactly as is.



Question 66: Is there already a new sitemap that goes with the wireframes that should be used, or will we be creating a new site map/architecture?

- Answer 66: The project will require new information architecture. However, the provided recommendations show an initial architecture.
- Question 67: Does City of Tacoma have a brand guideline created or does the bidding agency need to develop one?
- Answer 67: Branding will be provided by the City's Media and Communications Office (MCO). They are currently restyling the branding, and the vendor is expected to follow the MCO branding and guidelines.

Question 68: What is the technology stack of the current website?

Answer 68: Custom built .NET 3.5, C#, SQL 2016 backend.

Question 69: What is the desired technology stack for the new website?

- Answer 69: WordPress CMS to be deployed on WPEngine. PHP, MySQL
- Question 70: What is the desired WCAG version and level?
- Answer 70: WCAG 2.0 Level AA is encouraged. WCAG 2.0 Level A is the current policy.

Question 71: Are there particular security requirements specified?

Answer 71: Requirements are in Security Assessment Worksheet.

Question 72: Could you confirm the timeframe for the project?

Answer 72: January 2024 to December 2024: Project Execution with 1 month warranty January 2025 to December 2025: One-year technical support.

NOTE: Acknowledge receipt of this addendum by initialing the corresponding space as indicated on the signature page. Vendors who have already submitted their bid/proposal may contact the Purchasing Division at 253-502-8468 and request return of their bid/proposal for acknowledgment and re-submittal. Or, a letter acknowledging receipt of this addendum may be submitted in an envelope marked Request for Proposals Specification No. IT23-0239F Addendum No. 1. The City reserves the right to reject any and all bids, including, in certain circumstances, for failure to appropriately acknowledge this addendum.

cc: Mary Kay Larson / Information Technology James Osundwa / Information Technology