Request for Proposals

Website Redesign & Development

RFP Issue Date: August 15, 2023
RFP Response Deadline: September 15, 2023

Submit proposals to:
Drew Tanner, Communications Director
Buckeye Hills Regional Council
dtanner@buckeyehills.org

Summary

Buckeye Hills Regional Council is a council of governments dedicated to improving the lives of residents in Southeast Ohio. By working collaboratively with elected officials across Athens, Hocking, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Noble, Perry, and Washington counties, we grow strong communities through our four divisions: Aging & Health, Home Care, Community Development, and Planning.

Buckeye Hills strives to increase engagement with member and nonmember local governments, the BHRC community, policymakers, stakeholders, older adults, individuals with disabilities, home- and community-based service providers, and other audiences. In order to achieve this goal, BHRC seeks a collaborative partnership to redesign and develop its website at buckeyehills.org to be easy to navigate, visually pleasing, allow for simple and quick updating, and convey BHRC's relevancy and value to Southeast Ohio.

The following Scope of Work components have been prepared as a guide to help interested Respondents understand the expected product from this work engagement. Respondents are encouraged to provide suggestions to this scope that would improve the end product.

BHRC is searching for a creative, highly-skilled, and collaborative consultant or consultant team with an impressive record of success to develop a new website based on our existing brand identity.

Weight will be given to firms that have experience working with governments, government agencies, or multiple brands.

Background

Target Audiences

BHRC has a wide and varied audience and stakeholder group. Below is a sample of some of our target audience groups:

- Residents in the Buckeye Hills region seeking information and assistance regarding home- and community-based care, Medicaid, Medicare, Older Americans Act services, and other resource for older adults and individuals with disabilities
- Our 8 county government and 4 municipal government members
- Home- and community-based service providers seeking to contract with BHRC to provide services to older adults or to access state- and federally-mandated training.
- Local governments that include 121 townships, 5 cities, and 53 villages in the Buckeye Hills region
- Local government staff, including municipal planners, economic development directors, transportation officials, etc.
- Partner organizations and stakeholders, including state and federal agency staff
- Consultants working on regional projects
- Individuals seeking careers with Buckeye Hills in Aging & Health, Home Care, Community Development, and Planning
- News media

Challenges We Face

- Lack of Awareness and Engagement: Our region's 244,000 residents include 49,600 individuals over the age of 65. Our largest consumer-facing programs, the PASSPORT and Assisted Living Medicaid Waiver programs, served 1,082 older adults and individuals with disabilities. An additional 4,500 are served by Older Americans Act programs administered by BHRC and its partners. However, many more individuals are likely eligible for these services. Additionally, only a small fraction of our region's 187 political subdivisions currently engage with BHRC's Community Development and Planning divisions.
- Wide Service Offering: BHRC offers an array of services that can overwhelm or confuse our audiences.
- Broad Target Audience: Our main audiences are older adults and individuals with disabilities, local elected officials, employees of local governments and economic development offices, and home- and community-based service providers.
- Difference in Member Needs: We aim to balance the needs of our region's communities, which range in size from cities like Marietta and Athens to villages like Pomeroy and Caldwell. We also try to balance the work we do on a regional level with the services we provide at the local level. This should be apparent in our new website — regional and local impact.
- Board Member Turnover: Many of our council members are elected officials that rotate frequently. BHRC is striving to do a better job of educating new board members and reaching other local government staff

- Value Proposition: BHRC strives to do a better job of telling our story and demonstrating the value of membership to our local governments and the value of our services to older adults and individuals with disabilities.

Engagement Expectations and Project Management

Once selected, the consultant will have an initial in-person meeting with the Communications Director and Communications Specialist. The consultant will also need to meet with the BHRC division directors to get a better understanding of the programs housed under BHRC. The consultant may also be asked to present in-person at BHRC Executive Committee meetings and staff meetings to get feedback on website concepts and present the final product. The Communications Director, Drew Tanner, is the project manager and will be the main point of contact throughout this process.

Project Scope: Website Redesign & Development

Assessment

The consultant will conduct a review of the Buckeye Hills website, communications assets, and visuals to identify opportunities, challenges, and alignment with BHRC's mission and priorities. Findings shall be presented to the BHRC project team and influence the approach to the project's tasks and deliverables.

Website Development

The BHRC website can be confusing to visitors due to the amount of content and current navigation architecture. We want a clean, modern website that makes it easy for all stakeholders to find information, promotes our programs and upcoming events, is easily modified by non-technical users, and clearly explains who we are and what we do. BHRC currently utilizes Squarespace as its web hosting and content management platform, but we are open to other content management system recommendations.

BHRC has a significant amount of content that will need to be updated and potentially transferred if it is determined that there is a need to migrate to a different CMS. Other content may need to be rewritten or added, which may require the use of a copywriter. The consultant will advise on this process, and our internal Communications team can assist with drafting, rewriting, and reorganizing content. After the team has reworked the copy, the consultant will review the content so that it reads well for the web, is optimized, has a consistent brand voice, and works for our different audience groups.

BHRC has some photographs and videos but may need professional assistance to obtain more local original imagery as part of this process and budget. Stock imagery should be avoided in favor of imagery that depicts the communities and people of the BHRC region.

Website Functionality & Content Requirements

- Content Management System (CMS): The website must be built on a content management system that allows for all areas of the site (webpages, images, blogs, forms, etc.) to be easily updated by non-technical users. If migrating to a new CMS, all applicable content must be

imported from the current site. User permission levels should be used to prevent accidental deletion of key modules.

- Searchable directory of home- and community-based service providers: The website must include a database of service providers that is easily searchable by our consumers using data provided by BHRC. At a minimum, the database must indicate the county or counties served, the provider's contact information, service categories, and a brief description. The directory must be easily updated by non-technical staff.

- Searchable database of funding opportunities. The website must include a database of funding opportunities, using data provided by BHRC, that is easily searchable by local elected officials, economic development staff, and other partners. At a minimum, the database must include the program's agency, application link, description, and deadlines. The database must be easily updated by non-technical staff.

- County Profiles: The website must include profile pages for each of BHRC's member counties, including links to local economic development offices, chambers of commerce, tourism offices, and economic development reports.

- Adherence to BHRC Style Guidelines: Content and design must adhere to the standards outlined in the BHRC Style Guidelines. Any variations, changes, or amendments to the Style Guidelines are subject to approval by the Communications Director.

- Search Engine Optimization (SEO): The CMS must include the ability to alter title tags, meta descriptions, alt text, and headers. The site must be built to be easily crawled by search engines.

- Social Media Integration: The site must be optimized for web content to be shared to social media networks. Additionally, the site must integrate pixels for social media marketing and retargeting.

- Video Content Integration: The site must support viewing videos posted on external sites, such as embedding from YouTube.

- Contact Forms: Website contact forms must allow messages to be directed to the relevant staff contacts.

- News and Events: The website must include a robust, built-in news platform enabled to create, edit, and publish news articles, blogs, notices, and calendar events to the website.

- Live Chat: The website must integrate with BHRC's current live chat platform.

- Email Marketing: The website company must provide email marketing capabilities that are seamless with the website and can integrate with BHRC's current email marketing provider. The website company must provide one email template that is consistent with the website design.

- Website Analytics: The website must integrate BHRC's Google Analytics and Google Tag Manager account.

- Backup and Restoration: If migrating to a new platform, the website must include simple and automated backup and restoration capabilities.

- Compliance: The site must be compliant with ADA Section 508, including text resizing and compatibility with screen reader technology and alt text with images, as well as Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, including translation capability into relevant languages.

- Search: The site must have a reliable, comprehensive built-in search tool.

- Compatibility: The site must display correctly in all major browsers and behave responsively according to industry best practices for use on varying sizes of screens and devices.

Goals

The completed website should help BHRC achieve the following goals:

- Present information and our services in an easy-to-understand way without industry jargon.
- Connect older adults, individuals with disabilities, and their caregivers with relevant program and enrollment information.
- Provide local community leaders with up-to-date strategic data, program information, and funding opportunities.
- Connect home- and community-based service providers with relevant information about contracting with BHRC.
- Position BHRC as a thought leader and expert in our field.
- Allow our diverse audience to quickly and easily find the information they are looking for, including events, home- and community-based service providers, and funding opportunities.
- Improve performance, security, and compliance (HIPPA, ADA, Title VI, etc.).

Proposal Requirements

Prospective consultants are asked to submit responses in two parts: A Letter of Interest and A Technical Response.

The Letter of Interest must specify the following:

- The name and address of the consultant(s).
- General Information on the firm and any proposed sub-consultants
- Name, title, email, and telephone number of the individuals within the firm authorized to commit the company to this contract.
- The name, title, email, and telephone number of the individual BHRC should contact regarding questions and clarifications.
- A statement that the consultant's offer will remain in effect for ninety (90) days after acceptance of the consultant's proposal by BHRC.

The Technical Response must contain a description of the consultant's proposed approach to the project, with specific attention to:

- Project understanding and approach to the *Scope of Work: Website Redesign and development* specified above.
- Recommendations to improve/support the project.
- Description of any special services required.

- A detailed Work Plan identifying the tasks to be accomplished, how staff assigned will be selected, how staff will work with BHRC, the budget hours to be expended on each task, and the anticipated work schedule.
- Resumes of key personnel proposed to work on the assignment with emphasis on relevant experience.
- Name and services for any subcontractors with a description of the level of previous working relationship.
- Description and status of comparable project experience.
- Three references from comparable types of projects completed over the last five years. Include project names and locations, names of primary client contacts, and their contact information, including e-mail addresses and telephone numbers. Indicate the role of your firm in each project and each project's date of completion.
- Pertinent examples of related work prepared and designed by the consultant with URLs, if applicable.
- A project budget that specifies:
  - Fee schedule for required functionality described in the Scope of Work. At a minimum, this schedule should provide costs for the website site redesign and directory/database components as separate line items.
  - Additional fee schedule for any optimizations/add-ons
  - Proposed maintenance fee schedule.

No partial submissions will be accepted.

Inquiries

General questions regarding this RFP should be directed to Drew Tanner, Communications Director, in writing via e-mail at dtanner@buckeyehills.org no later than 4:00 p.m. on August 29, 2023. Inquiries and responses will be posted at buckeyehills.org/rfp no later than September 6, 2023. Please note that BHRC will only respond to technical questions. Under no circumstances will BHRC provide interpretive guidance. It is the responsibility of interested firms to periodically check the BHRC website for amendments to this RFP and response to inquiries.

Evaluation

All qualified proposals submitted in accordance with the terms of the RFP will be evaluated to determine the most responsive entity. A uniform selection process will be used to evaluate all proposals.

Staff from BHRC will review and evaluate all proposals received in response to this Request for Proposal. Based upon this evaluation, BHRC staff will make a recommendation to their Executive Board for review and approval.

Proposals will be evaluated and ranked based on the selection criteria outlined below. After the conclusion of the evaluation process, the respondents will be ranked in priority order, with the highest-ranking respondent(s) being selected to negotiate a contract and scope of services with

BHRC. If a contract satisfactory to both parties cannot be negotiated, BHRC will then enter into negotiations with the next highest ranked respondents and so on until an agreement is reached.

In the event BHRC elects to negotiate a contract with a respondent, BHRC reserves the right to negotiate such terms and conditions of the contract, including, but not limited to, scope, role, price, and staffing which may be in the best interests of BHRC and its consumers.

Proposal evaluation will be based upon the following criteria:

- Expertise and creativity illustrated by the firm's work products
- Understanding of the work to be performed
- Project organization and clear definition of team roles and responsibilities
- Professional expertise of team
- Prior experience relative to the project
- Experience with creating websites that are accessible to people with visual impairments, physical disabilities, mental disabilities, or limited English proficiency.
- Completeness, feasibility, and quality of scope of services and project schedule
- Price and budget detail
- Clarity and conciseness of presentation

Selection Timeline

It is anticipated that the evaluation and selection will be completed according to the following schedule:

August 15, 2023	RFP Posted
August 29, 2023	Deadline for questions from potential respondents regarding this RFP
September 6, 2023	Responses to questions from potential respondents posted to buckeyehills.org/rfp
September 15, 2023	Deadline for Proposal submissions
September 20, 2023	Notification of successful proposal
October 6, 2023	Contract language finalized
October 6, 2023	Notice to proceed/Consultant may begin work
March 15, 2024	Project Completed

Exact dates are contingent on approvals by the BHRC Executive Committee and execution of contracts by all parties.

Submission

Proposals are due September 15, 2023, by 4:00 p.m. Proposals should be submitted electronically in PDF format to Drew Tanner, Communications Director, at dtanner@buckeyehills.org. The subject line should read "BHRC Website Redesign & Development Proposal."

Any proposal received after 4:00 p.m. on September 15, 2023 may not be eligible for consideration.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The respondent is cautioned against last-minute attempts to meet the due date and time. BHRC will not be responsible for network outages and other related internet malfunctions on the part of the respondent in submitting their proposal.

Disclaimers

Buckeye Hills Regional Council reserves the right to accept or reject any and all responses received to this posted RFP and to re-advertise for new submissions.

Buckeye Hills Regional Council will not be responsible for any costs incurred by respondents in the preparation of a response to this RFP.

Buckeye Hills Regional Council reserves the right to delay or discontinue the selection process at any time.

Buckeye Hills Regional Council reserves the right to award all, part, or none of the project in the best interest of the overall project and will not be held responsible for any impacts on respondents resulting from this decision.

Buckeye Hills Regional Council reserves the right to request modifications to any documentation submitted if it is in the best interest of the project prior to the time of selection. Buckeye Hills Regional Council reserves the right to request clarification or additional information from a respondent prior to selection.

Buckeye Hills Regional Council reserves the right to negotiate with the selected respondent to provide additional services not outlined in this RFP if necessary and in the best interest of the project.

The evaluation and selection of the respondent will be based on the information submitted in the entity's proposal, including estimated cost, scope of work, and creativity. Failure to respond to each of the requirements in the RFP may be the basis for rejecting a response. Entities should respond clearly and completely to all requirements. Entities must be as concise as possible with respect to presenting a clear and complete proposal.

Deviations and exceptions from terms, conditions, or specifications from this RFP shall be described fully on the entity's letterhead, signed, and attached to the response. In the absence of such a statement, the proposal shall be accepted as in strict compliance with all terms, conditions, and specifications, and the entity shall be held liable.

This RFP is the official media governing proposal procedures. No other documents, letters, or oral instructions shall have any influence whatsoever unless incorporated by reference herein or unless an official amendment is made to this document by the issuing office.

Evaluation criteria contained herein shall be used in evaluating respondents for selection. BHRC may contact any RFP respondent after receiving its submittal to seek clarification on any portion thereof.