



Atlanta Regional Commission

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
WordPress and Website Support

NOTE: A discrepancy in the RFP was brought to our attention. There are references on page 2 of the RFP that are incorrect. The following are corrections to those references (under Proposal Contents):

- Qualifications and technical competence of consultant as related to the Required Skillsets listed in **Exhibit A**.
- Description of consultant's similar experience on projects related to the Scope of Services listed in **Exhibit A**. Please provide working examples.
- Hourly rates in the format on **Exhibit B**.

Who is the incumbent, what is their pricing, and will they be bidding?

Brandshake is the vendor for the current contract, and their pricing is:

- **Regular Hourly Rate:** \$125/hr
- **Emergency Hourly Rate:** \$200/hr

Terms for Emergency Rate: Requested turnaround and completion within 12 hours.

Brandshake has been notified of this RFP opportunity.

Is migration part of this project? If yes, what is the total file count with format?

No, migration is not part of this project.

What is the budget for this project? Is hosting part of this project/budget?

This is for support of our WordPress websites on an **as-needed** basis. The budget hasn't been finalized, but the current expected total is \$35,000. Website hosting is not part of the project scope or budget.

atlantaregional.org

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229 Peachtree St, NE | Suite 100
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What is the ARC's current annual spending on CMS software, hosting, maintenance, and support?

Our CMS is WordPress which is under a GNU public license and is free to use. We host our sites with Nestify, a managed WordPress hosting provider, and the cost is around \$1,200/year.

The following list details annual spending on WordPress support for all ARC WordPress websites under the current contract:

- 2019: \$27,500
- 2020: \$62,552
- 2021: \$36,544
- 2022: \$17,250

Can you please share details of the hosting partner of the current website and also who is handling the hosting?

We host our sites with Nestify, a managed WordPress hosting provider, and the cost is around \$1,200/year. We manage the account directly in-house.

What are the challenges that you are facing with the current website that you want to address with this contract?

The only notable challenges we currently have are with accessibility and navigational structure. We anticipate a significant design update to our primary website in 2023, and the scope of that project may require following WCAG guidelines for accessibility in design and development. It may also include a homepage redesign, topic page template redesign, and design updates to some of our other template pages.

Are there any 3rd party integrations that you require? Is it part of the scope of this project?

Our WordPress sites utilize many 3rd-party plugins for added features and functionality. A successful candidate will need to be an expert with plugin management, have a breadth of knowledge about the plugin market and offerings, and have experience with custom plugin development.

Candidates should also have a thorough understanding of how to leverage APIs for custom features in WordPress.

Is there any preference for local vendors, and is the project expected to be performed onsite or can it be performed from a remote location?

There isn't a preference for local vendors. Design and development may be performed remotely; however, the project team will need to be available during ARC's business hours for calls, emails, and virtual meetings to communicate project needs and provide technical support.

It is beneficial for the project team to be physically present on-site for any discovery and strategy sessions. Travel costs will not be reimbursed.

What is the total number of pages you are looking to have on the website?

We will add pages as needed per the scope of work of any future support request. ARC currently has 14 WordPress websites of varying sizes. The ARC website, atlantaregional.org, which is the largest site, has over 1200 pages.

What is the approximate no. of users who are eligible to access the website?

There are currently 63 content administrators that currently have access to the ARC website.

Have you identified the roles for which hourly rate, as well as resume, are required?

Please provide the hourly rates for anyone who will participate in any work included in the scope of this RFP. This may include project managers, designers, and developers. Please provide resumes for designers and developers.

How are you defining success from a technical perspective for this project?

Success will be determined by achieving the agreed upon objectives of a project scope or request under this contract. Those objectives and scope will be provided during the support request.

Who built the current websites – your internal team or a vendor? If you used an outside vendor, how much did you spend on the implementation of your current sites?

- The main ARC website (atlantaregional.org) was designed and developed by BlueKey.
- The Atlworks.org site was designed by RocketCamp and developed by Brandshake.
- The TransFormation Alliance (atltransformationalliance.org) website was designed and developed by Biscuit Studios.
- The 33n.atlantaregional.com and gampo.org websites were designed and developed in-house. The neighborhoodnexus.org website was designed and developed in-house. Later, significant development updates were made by Brandshake to remove the Avada framework.
- The Empowerline.org website was originally designed and developed by Darwin.
- The Georgia Mobility and Accessibility Planner (Georgia-map.com) site was designed and developed by ICF Next.
- The northgeorgiawater.org, cleanwatercampaign.org, mwdkidsclub.org, and mydropcounts.org, and mareatlas.org websites were all designed and developed by Brandshake.
- Whatsnextatl.org was designed and developed by Brandshake (this site is no longer a standalone site and is now a section on the ARC website).

The sites that were implemented under this contract by were:

- Atlworks.org (\$5,000 for development)
- Whatsnextatl.org (\$12,000 for design and development)
- Metroatlhousing.org (\$10,000 for design and development)
- Mareatlas.org website (\$5,000 for design and development)
- NeighborhoodNexus.org development updates to remove Avada framework (\$5,000)

The sites that were implemented under other contracts were:

- Atlantaregional.org (BlueKey - \$78,000)
- Empowerline.org (Darwin – \$107,000)
- Northgeorgiawater.org, MyDropCounts.org, Cleanwatercampaign.org, Mwdkidsclub.org (Brandshake – \$25,000)
- Georgia-map.com (ICF Next - \$10,000)

Are there any sites (or web apps) that are not directly referenced in this RFP that the county would benefit from consolidating into this new platform? If so, approximately how many?

To clarify, ARC is not a county. ARC is the regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency for the 10-county Atlanta region. This contract does not include the acquisition of or migration to a new platform. This contract is for design, development, and technical support for ARC's current WordPress websites and possible future WordPress builds on an as-needed basis. There are no current plans for the addition of another website.

What are some things you DO like about your current CMS? What shortcomings of the current CMS do you hope to remedy with this effort? What are some things you DO NOT like about your current CMS?

To clarify, we are not migrating anything to a new platform. This contract is for design, development, and technical support for ARC's current WordPress websites and possible design and development of future websites.

How many user accounts need to be migrated?

How many files (PDF/Word /Etc.) need to be migrated?

Please describe media entities (videos, etc) that need to be migrated.

Are paragraphs in use on-site? If so, please advise on migration needs related to paragraphs.

How many nodes exist on the current site?

Please estimate the percentage of the above nodes and files you expect to migrate to the new site.

To clarify, we are not migrating anything to a new platform. This contract is for design, development, and technical support for ARC's current WordPress websites and possible design

and development of future websites on an as-needed basis. Please carefully read the RFP before submitting a proposal.

Are there multi-lingual requirements? Is Google Translate or similar sufficient?

Yes. We currently use Google Translate, and it is sufficient for our needs.

Who/what are the primary alternatives?

Google Translate will suffice at this time.

How many levels of users are needed?

This varies. On the atlantaregional.org website we utilize a plugin to expand our user roles and definitions beyond what is provided by WordPress. However, we mainly use two roles: Content Author, and Site Admin.

Can you provide information on your workflow needs?

There are no special workflow needs at this time.

Are survey/voting tools required?

We use SurveyMonkey and Gravity Forms for our online surveys and polls.

Are you requiring photo/video galleries?

We have this feature.

Is there a need for a document library?

We have this feature on the backend. There may have a future need for a public-facing document library. We have started the development on this, but this project is currently on hold.

Do you want email newsletter distribution capabilities?

We use Active Campaign for this.

Are Ecommerce or personalization features desired?

No.

Does search need to index the contents of pdf/Doc files?

No.

Does the site search need to index content from other domains?

No.



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Please describe all integrations with other sites or data sources more complex than an iFrame or embed code.

We utilize API integration with Google Maps API. We do have a mapping feature on metroatlhousing.org that uses a more complex data source as well as our IJIA database. For the IJIA database, the data is generated from an imported csv file, and we import a new csv file for every update. <https://atlantaregional.org/infrastructure-investment-jobs-act-resource-database/>

We also have a “LCI Recipients” database that references files from a directory outside of the Wordpress install; however, it is on the same server. <https://atlantaregional.org/community-development/comprehensive-planning/search-lci-recipients/>

Will single-sign-on be used to control administrative access to the site? If yes, please elaborate.

No.

Is accessibility a desired or mandated requirement?

We are looking to improve accessibility for our atlantaregional.org website in the coming year.

Is the accessibility target WCAG 2.1 A or AA?

WCAG, but the level has not been determined.

Can you provide usage data, or estimate expected traffic to the site?

From available data from January 1, 2022 – November 13, 2022:

- Atlantaregional.org (309,785 visits, 526,389 pageviews)
- Empowerline.org (74,077 visits, 153,457 pageviews)
- Atlworks.org (141,678 visits, 231,200 pageviews)
- Metroatlhousing.org (7,257 visits, 13,617 pageviews)
- Mwdkisclub.org (3,136 visits, 5,371 pageviews)
- Northgeorgiawater.org (42,016 visits, 75,198 pageviews)
- Atltransformationalliance.org (3,194 visits, 5,594 pageviews)
- 33n.atlantaregional.com (33,675 visits, 45,520 pageviews)
- Neighborhoodnexus.org (10,439 visits, 19,208 pageviews)
- Cleanwatercampaign.org (9,074 visits, 12,727 pageviews)
- Mydropcounts.org (8,346 visits, 14,893 pageviews)

Do you need a contractual SLA for hosting (more expensive) or a best-effort SLA based on a 99.9% historical uptime (less costly)?

Hosting is not part of the scope of this contract.

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Are there special security requirements or audits involved?

Not beyond what is currently provided by our host.

Are there granular levels of permissions needed where certain people should only have access to certain sites? Or, even certain areas of sites?

Yes. We only provide accounts to staff that require access for editing content on their respective sections or sites.

Where is the CMS/website currently hosted?

Nestify.

Are you open to a cloud-hosted CMS?

Hosting is not part of the scope of this contract.

If yes, do you have an existing relationship with a cloud provider like AWS, Azure, etc?

We currently use AWS as a CDN.

What is it about your current hosting setup that is making you seek a PaaS offering?

We utilize AWS as a CDN to increase site performance and reduce the storage burden with our web hosting service. We utilize managed WordPress hosting, like Nestify, for security and stability reasons, and because it's tailored to the WordPress environment.

Are there any security standards required for your CMS platform? i.e. HIPAA, PCI, SOCII, Fedramp, etc?

No, we don't post or hold sensitive personal or financial information on our websites.

Please provide the average monthly numbers for page views of the websites combined (to the nearest 100K is fine)

Please see usage statistics in answer to prior question.

Do you experience frequent surges of traffic that impact performance at critical times?

No.

Have you dealt with any security issues or malicious traffic on your sites like DDoS attacks, SQL injections, etc? If so, what was the impact?

Nestify has a malware scanner which detected malware at one time. This was automatically cleaned and restored. There was no downtime associated with this.

Are you using anything for CDN or WAF currently?

We are using AWS as a CDN for some site files.

Do you require 24/7 support access in the case of critical (site availability) issues?

Yes.

Do you require specific response time SLAs for critical issues? If so, please specify expectations.

Yes. Our current agreement level is 12 hours.

Would you describe the existing content as structured, with consistent separation of content and code?

With some sites, yes. One site, 33n, uses the Avada framework. Our atlantaregional.org website utilizes the Beaver Builder page builder with some pages.

Are tables used for layout in the existing content?

With some of the content, we utilize responsive tables. An example can be found here: <https://atlantaregional.org/infrastructure-investment-jobs-act-resource-database/>

What percentage of the current content is obsolete and won't be migrated to the new site?

We are not migrating any of our sites.

What is your plan for editing/creating content during the redesign?

We do not currently have a plan.

Do you expect copywriting or editing services as part of engagement?

No.

Do you need us to conduct an extensive discovery process that includes extensive research into user persona development - or a more streamlined discovery based on the web team's input and best practices?

No. This contract is limited to design, development, and technical support of WordPress websites.

Can you provide examples of sites that are good models for what you want?

Not at this time.

How detailed are the existing branding guidelines?

We are in the process of a re-brand. The current guidelines are minimal – describing only logo, colors, and font families.

Do you have high-quality photography/media assets available for the new site?

Yes.

Please confirm that one design theme will carry across the entire site. If we need sub-themes of any type please specify.

If you are referring to a WordPress Theme, then yes, one theme per site.

Please confirm that the awarded vendor will primarily work remotely, with regular web conference meetings as needed.

Work may be performed remotely; however, the vendor will need to be available during ARC's business hours for phone, email, and Teams communications.

Please describe the internal team who will be responsible for the website post-launch (developers, non-tech users, etc)

Do different teams/departments manage their own sites? Or does one team own all web work?

The Digital Media supervisor oversees all WordPress sites under this contract and manages the main ARC website – atlantaregional.org. This person is also the project manager for all work under this contract. Other departments manage the sites related to their programs. For example, the Aging and Independence Department is responsible for the Empowerline.org website, and the Workforce Department is responsible for the Atlworks.org website.

We are a US company with some remote team members working from outside of the US. Is there any restriction on their ability to contribute to the project?

We don't have any restrictions as long as remote members can access Nestify. Please submit the resumes of all developers who will require access to our sites in your proposal.

How do you envision the relationship with the developer post-launch? Do you need a maintenance contract to keep sites patched and secure?

We would like to have one point of contact with our vendor for all projects, requests, and communications. This person should be accessible via email, phone, and Teams. For technical support, we would like a same-day response on all requests with a time/cost estimate to resolve the issue. For larger projects, this may require online meetings, phone calls, and/or email (all dependent on the scope of the project). We require bi-weekly online meetings to discuss the status of open projects. This may be 30 minutes long. There are occasions when we would like someone who can be available for impromptu meetings.

How often do you anticipate in-person meetings? Are these meetings scheduled and recurring?

We would only require in-person meetings for significant milestones in large projects. We haven't required an in-person meeting under this contract for three years, and we have made efforts to reduce the need for them. Even prior to the pandemic, we rarely required an in-person meeting for a project under this contract. There are currently no scheduled or recurring in-person meetings.

What specific business apps outside of WordPress do you require support for?

The scope of this contract only requires support for our WordPress websites.

What is deemed an emergency issue?

An emergency issue would be an issue that requires immediate attention such as a crashed or hacked website. Many crashes can be fixed either through our hosting support with Nestify or by rolling back our site to a previous backup which can be done in-house. There may be times when we have a large event where we will be demonstrating a feature on our site and will require a vendor to be on alert to quickly fix an issue should it arise. For those instances, we will provide notification well ahead of time.

What are response expectations for emergency issues? During and off business hours?

This depends on the nature and timing of the issue at hand. For example, if the issue is a crashed site that can't be fixed on our end by a rollback, then we expect that to be addressed as soon as possible.

As we are an India-based IT firm, is it compulsory to come to in-person meetings for any discussion? Can we have a zoom meeting, instead of the visit?

While most of support under this contract can be handled remotely via email, phone, and online meetings (Teams, Zoom, etc.), we cannot rule out the need for an in-person meeting.

Is there anything for which you need hardware?

No.