

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: VLCT WEBSITE SERVICE PROVIDER Q&A

Issued by: Vermont League of Cities and Towns

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Question Due: March 17, 2026

Proposal Due: April 3, 2026, 4:00 PM

Is it possible for a vendor located outside of the USA to submit a proposal for this project?

Yes. Proposals from vendors located outside of the United States will be accepted. However, the following requirements must be met:

- **All project data must be hosted within the United States**
- **The vendor must be able to contract and invoice in U.S. dollars**
- **Support must be available during regular Eastern Time (U.S.) business hours**

Additional considerations may apply depending on the vendor's location and the nature of the services provided. Vendors located outside of the United States are encouraged to describe in their proposal how they will address geographic, regulatory, and governmental differences. Please include relevant examples and at least one reference for U.S.-based organizations you have supported previously.

Budget Guidance – The RFP requests itemized pricing in the provided workbook but does not specify an anticipated budget range. Does VLCT have an internal budget target or ceiling for this engagement, or should vendors independently propose pricing based on methodology and scope?

Vendors should independently propose pricing based on their recommended methodology and scope, while keeping in mind that VLCT is a small to mid-sized nonprofit organization. VLCT is not providing a specific budget range.

CMS Direction – Phase 1 specifies continuity on Drupal, while Phase 2 allows evaluation of alternative CMS platforms. Would VLCT consider proposals that recommend WordPress as a long-term CMS solution, provided it meets accessibility, security, and hosting requirements?

Yes.

Search Enhancements vs. Handbook Improvements – For Phase 2, does VLCT view search functionality upgrades and handbook improvements as equally weighted priorities, or is one considered more critical to the organization's long-term goals?

Both search functionality and handbook improvements are important to VLCT's long-term goals. Improved search functionality is a critical component of the overall user experience; however, VLCT recognizes that search solutions may be more complex and require additional time to design and implement effectively. Handbook improvements are essential and are expected to proceed during Phase 2, potentially in parallel with other work. Proposals should reflect an understanding of these priorities and present a realistic, phased approach that balances impact, complexity, and timing.

Hosting Requirements – The RFP notes managed hosting with uptime guarantees but not enterprise-grade clustering. Could you clarify whether VLCT prefers a nonprofit-scaled hosting solution (cost-effective, reliable) or would consider higher-tier hosting if proposed as value-added?

VLCT is open to evaluating a range of managed hosting solutions. Proposers may recommend nonprofit-scaled hosting as well as higher-tier hosting options. Proposals should clearly describe the hosting tier offered, including uptime guarantees, scalability, security, and cost implications, and explain how the proposed approach aligns with VLCT's needs.

Security Certifications – The RFP states SOC 2/ISO 27001 are preferred but not required. Would vendors without formal certifications, but with documented security practices and penetration testing, be considered fully eligible?

Yes.

Visual Refresh – For the periodic refresh every 3–5 years, does VLCT expect this to be included in ongoing service fees, or should vendors propose it as a separately priced fixed service?

VLCT's preference is for the periodic visual refresh to be included in ongoing service fees; however, proposals that present this work as a separately priced fixed service will also be considered. If proposed separately, vendors are encouraged to provide a clear fixed-fee breakdown to support pricing transparency.

Evaluation Criteria – The scoring rubric includes cost and value at 15%. Beyond pricing transparency, are there qualitative factors (innovation, nonprofit experience, accessibility expertise) that VLCT will weigh more heavily in final selection?

Yes. Although cost and value account for 15% of the total score, VLCT will evaluate proposals holistically. Qualitative factors such as demonstrated experience supporting nonprofit or mission-driven organizations, accessibility and inclusive design practices, technical approach, security posture, and overall understanding of VLCT's needs will play a significant role in the final selection.

Innovation and value-added capabilities will be considered where they enhance long-term sustainability, usability, and service quality. VLCT reserves the right to weigh these qualitative factors alongside cost to determine the proposal that offers the best overall value and alignment with organizational priorities.

What level of access can the current vendor provide to the codebase, repositories, and database during a transition? Would it be full administrative access? If full access is not available, what format are they able to provide for the website's data and files to support content migration?

The current vendor won't provide admin or database access. Instead, we'll create a Publisher-level CMS account for the new vendor. That account allows authenticated access to content via JSON:API, including non-public content. The vendor will provide a zip file of the uploads directory that contains all user-uploaded files.

Are there any technical specifications or documentation available for the custom modules?

Yes, technical specifications and supporting documentation are available for the custom Drupal modules currently in use. These include the Core module, which manages user synchronization and provides general quality-of-life enhancements across the platform; the Careers submodule, which supports identification and management of careers-related pages; and the Content submodule, which handles basic data storage from the CV API for internal Drupal rendering and formatting. Documentation also covers the Member submodule, associated with a discontinued member portal initiative, as well as the Municipal Calendar submodule, which provides specialized import and rendering functionality for the municipal calendar. Additionally, the Toolkit submodule is documented and delivers quality-of-life improvements and rendering functionality for the Toolkit and Handbook systems.

How does the integration with Euclid/CV work (API or custom sync)? Is there any documentation for the integrations with Euclid/CV?

The integration with Euclid/CV is implemented using a combination of custom API integrations and standard API consumption. Several of the earlier integrations rely on custom API paths provided directly by Euclid, with supporting documentation shared by the Euclid engineering team via email at the time of implementation. More content-heavy data sets, such as Classifieds and Organizations, are retrieved using Euclid's standard API endpoints, which include their own vendor-provided documentation. While documentation exists for these integrations, it is distributed across vendor-supplied API documentation and historical implementation guidance rather than consolidated into a single reference.

Would the current vendor be able to provide technical knowledge transfer or transition support during the discovery phase?

The current vendor can provide some guidance, reference, and pseudocode if necessary. It depends on what the new vendor creates the website in.

About how many pages, media assets, and documents are currently hosted on the site?

As of 3/17/2025 we have the following which includes both published and unpublished content. Bold indicates the content type is a primary information delivery type, non-bold is secondary or specific use.

- **Articles: 432**
- Careers Homepage Feature Image: 1
- Careers Testimonials: 3
- **Digital Product Fulfillment: 64**
- Find Job Openings in your Area: 1
- FAQs: 181
- Home Feature: 45
- Home Spotlight: 4
- **News: 692**
- **Page: 285**
- **Resource: 664**
- Site Alert: 11
- Testimonials: 6
- Toolkit: 10
- Watch Stories: 8

- Weekly Legislative Report: 93

As well as the following file count:

- Image: 3,164
- File: 2,029
- Video: 1

The RFP mentions launching Phase 1 on Drupal, with Phase 2 evaluating other CMS platforms. Would VLCT consider a CMS migration earlier if it simplified long-term maintenance and operational costs?

Yes.

Approximately what is the monthly traffic on vlct.org and are there any seasonal spikes to account for?

Monthly pageviews: 42k-52k

Monthly active users: 9k-13k

There are no significant seasonal spikes. However we did see a substantial increase in bot traffic Oct 2025-early January 2025 that at its peak in December 2025 had us at 123k pageviews and 92k active users. This has since resolved and traffic/users are back to normal.

Is there an incumbent vendor currently supporting VLCT's website hosting, maintenance, or development?

Yes.

Will the incumbent vendor be eligible to submit a proposal for this RFP?

Yes.

Can the work for this project be performed remotely?

Yes.

If remote work is allowed, can a portion of the work be performed from outside the United States, such as from India?

Yes. However, the following requirements must be met:

- **All project data must be hosted within the United States**
- **The vendor must be able to contract and invoice in U.S. dollars**
- **Support must be available during regular Eastern Time (U.S.) business hours**

Additional considerations may apply depending on the location and the nature of the services provided. For work located outside of the United States vendors are encouraged to describe in their proposal how they will address geographic, regulatory, and governmental differences. Please include relevant examples and at least one reference for U.S.-based organizations you have supported previously.

The RFP states that Phase 1 will launch on the existing Drupal platform. For Phase 2, vendors are asked to evaluate Drupal and alternative CMS platforms. Should vendors assume that Phase 2 requires only a platform assessment and recommendation, rather than a CMS migration as part of this contract?

Phase 2 may include a CMS migration if the assessment demonstrates that is the recommended route.

Since the selected vendor will support both Phase 1 and Phase 2, will the long-term CMS/platform decision be made during the Phase 2 assessment, or should vendors anticipate that a CMS migration may be required within this contract?

Vendors are encouraged to include a CMS migration within this contract if they do not primarily work in Drupal or if at this stage they think it's likely a CMS migration would occur after assessment. However, it's not required to be considered.

The RFP states that the website is currently hosted in Microsoft Azure within VC3's web environment. Is VLCT open to migrating to a vendor-recommended hosting platform?

Yes.

If alternative hosting platforms are acceptable, would VLCT consider Acquia Cloud Platform as a managed hosting environment optimized for Drupal?

Yes, provided it's cost competitive and aligned with VLCT's technical and operational needs.

What is the approximate total storage size of the website, including the database and media assets?

About 16 GB total as of 3/20/2026.

Approximately how many registered users or members currently use the Member Login functionality integrated with the Euclid/CV system?

There are about 4600 accounts. Average number of individuals who log in at least once each month is approximately 300.

Approximately how many CMS users or administrators will require access to manage website content?

10-15 people. Individual departments create and manage their own pages under the guidance of the Communications and Marketing Department.

Approximately how many forms currently exist across the website using Cognito Forms?

About 15.

Should vendors assume that all existing Cognito Forms must remain operational during Phase 1, while the transition to Origami Forms is completed?

Yes.

For the enhanced search functionality planned in Phase 2, should vendors assume that all HTML pages and PDF documents will need to be indexed as part of the search solution?

Yes.

The RFP requires a periodic visual refresh every 3–5 years. Should vendors assume that this refresh will involve only theme and UI updates, or could it also include updates to page templates and UI components? In other words, what scope feels right to you: more of a theming and styling update, or something that also touches page templates, navigation patterns, and component design?

The periodic refresh should meet industry standards for website updates. The refresh should involve theme and UI updates as well as updates to page templates and UI components if appropriate. The primary goal is to keep the website up to date with current visual design and UI best practices.

Is there a specific format for pricing?

Please use the spreadsheet.

Can the offeror provide pricing in our own format in MS Excel?

VLCT would prefer all vendors to use the provided spreadsheet to make our review fair and consistent.

Should pricing be structured as fixed annual pricing or hourly billing?

Please see the pricing section in the RFP and use the spreadsheet template.

Should vendors assume direct migration of existing content for Phase 1, with information architecture improvements occurring primarily in Phase 2?

At this time, that is the path VLCT anticipates.

Does VLCT have a preferred search technology (e.g., Elasticsearch, Solr, Algolia), or should vendors propose the most appropriate platform?

Vendors should propose the most appropriate platform during Phase 2.

Has the VLCT website undergone a recent accessibility audit, and if so, will those findings be shared with the selected vendor?

We have not undergone a recent accessibility audit with shareable results, however our current vendor and content authors have been working towards WCAG 2 standards.

Are there any specific GA4 events or reporting requirements that must be preserved during migration?

We prefer all GA4 data be preserved.

Does VLCT have a preferred contract term or renewal structure (e.g., 3–5 year engagement) for ongoing hosting, maintenance, and support services.

We'd prefer at least a 3 year contract term but are open to other timeframes.

The RFP mentions technical support with a ticketing system. What is the existing Ticketing system? What is expected from the proposed Ticketing system?

The current ticketing system is hosted and provided by the current vendor. Vendors are encouraged to have a system that records and tracks issues and requests.

Member login integration: What features do members have access to after logging in?

Members are able to log in to register for events, purchase items from the store, and post classifieds. Additionally members can submit inquires, update their contact information and more through their member dashboard.

RFP mentions managed hosting with full disaster recovery. Can you provide more information on what is expected?

For the purposes of this RFP, managed hosting with full disaster recovery refers to a solution in which the vendor is responsible for the ongoing operation, availability, and recoverability of the hosted environment.

RFP mentioned a compliant datacenter. Can this requirement be elaborated?

A compliant datacenter is one that is U.S.-based, secure, and supports reliable operations through industry-standard physical security controls, regular backups, and resilient infrastructure. Vendors may demonstrate compliance via certifications and high-level descriptions rather than detailed security implementations.

Is API documentation available for the Euclid/CV AMS integration, and will the Euclid/CV team actively support the new vendor through the member login and content-mirroring transition?

API documentation is available (see question above). The Euclid/CV team is available to provide the necessary information for integration.

Where does the Origami Forms migration stand today? Which forms are still on Cognito, which have moved to Origami, and do you expect that transition to be complete before or after the August 11 go-live?

All forms are still currently located in Cognito. Some may have transitioned prior to the August 11 go-live. We do not anticipate needing to rebuild forms for go-live as the existing ones are embedded on webpages and can continue to work that way indefinitely.

Should the selected vendor plan to maintain VermontTownCareers.org and its Drupal theme as part of this engagement? Are there any other subdomains or secondary properties we should be aware of that aren't called out in the RFP?

Yes, VermontTownCareers.org needs to be maintained. That is currently the only subtheme and subdomain.

Please provide the current hosting server configuration (CPU, RAM) and any other managed services (for example Database, Redis/Memcache) and their configuration (resource allocation).

Server configurations are not being provided as part of this publicly available RFP. See above question for approximate total storage size of the website, including the database and media assets.

Are you using a failover hosting setup?

VLCT is not providing specific security or infrastructure details as part of this RFP. Vendors are encouraged to propose an appropriate hosting and failover approach based on industry best practices.

Are you open to directly contracting for the hosting service or you require us to become a middleman?

No, we do not want to contract directly for the hosting service.

What is your AI strategy and policies?

We currently use an AI chatbot from Citibot.

What type of AI features do you envision and expect for this project at minimum and at maximum?

Vendors can propose what they feel is appropriate.

Do you have automated tests or at least documented functional test scenarios for the current site?

VLCT is not providing specific security or infrastructure details as part of this RFP. Vendors are encouraged to propose an appropriate approach based on industry best practices.

Project Decision Maker - Would there be a 'product owner' for this project? i.e. a designated team member to be a focal point of contact to provide yes/no answers?

Lisa Goodell, Marketing Programs Manager, and Emmanuel Ajanma, IT Director are the leads for this project.

IT knowledge in-house - Are any VLCT staff members considered 'IT-focused' who will be readily available to handle technical questions via email and join meetings if deemed necessary?

VLCT does not have in-house developers on staff. Lisa Goodell, Marketing Programs Manager, and Emmanuel Ajanma, IT Director are the leads for this project.

Integrations - Any other integrations to the site besides what's provided in the RFP?

In addition to what's already documented within the RFP for login and cognito forms we also have an AI chatbot "Muni-Pal" that currently in beta form. [Muni-Pal BETA | Vermont League of Cities and Towns](#)

Data Protection: What is your current data protection plan and do you have any policies in place?

VLCT is not providing specific security or infrastructure details as part of this RFP.

Online Handbooks: What are the primary pain points with the current "Toolkit" rendering that the Phase 2 rebuild should prioritize solving?

Navigation through the various parts, print/pdf, and use/integration with the site as a whole.

Single Sign-On (SSO): Does VLCT have a preferred SSO provider or protocol (e.g., SAML, OAuth) for the Phase 2 evaluation?

No.

Evaluation Criteria - Any other evaluation criteria in consideration for an ideal business partner and/or proposal?

VLCT will evaluate proposals holistically. Qualitative factors such as demonstrated experience supporting nonprofit or mission-driven organizations, accessibility and inclusive design practices, technical approach, security posture, and overall understanding of VLCT's needs will play a significant role in the final selection.