

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: VLCT WEBSITE SERVICE PROVIDER Q&A

Issued by: Vermont League of Cities and Towns

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Issue Date: March 3, 2026

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.