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# DOWNTOWN HOUSTON REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS WEB PORTAL DESIGN

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## **Project Overview**

Central Houston Inc (CHI), and its affiliate organizations, Central Houston Civic Improvement (CHCI), the Houston Downtown Management District (HDMD) and the Downtown Redevelopment Authority (DRA) are seeking a qualified firm with a proven track record and experience assisting districts and urban places to develop a consolidated and user-friendly website. Houston is a rapidly changing urban center that is home to major industries, innovation and is becoming one of the world's most dynamic mixed-use neighborhoods. CHI and its affiliates seek to be the voice of, to, and for the community - connecting the growing residential and workforce populations within the commercial district and bringing a sense of cohesion and placemaking to the area. The new, website should embody all four of the organization's legacies and purposes and should create a nod to their future operating under one newly developed brand, shared vision, and mission.

## **Organizational Overview**

CHI is a 501(c)6 nonprofit corporation that has led or assisted in countless efforts that have reimagined, reshaped, catalyzed, and improved Downtown Houston. CHI has historically convened business, real estate, non-profit, governmental agencies, and philanthropic leaders together to advance strategic planning, investments, and other community-building initiatives. CHI serves as the administrator to CHCI, the HDMD and the DRA.

- HDMD – a locally applied, state created public entity, the HDMD has been in operation since 1996. The HDMD implements a special assessment on real estate within Downtown Houston and operates under the direction of a 30-member board of directors. CHI has provided the staff and administration to HDMD since its inception. The HDMD was renewed most recently in 2020 for a term of 5 years.
- DRA – comprised of a 9-member board of directors appointed by the taxing entities, manages Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) #3. A TIRZ is a public, local government tool created by the City of Houston which captures incremental increases in property tax value generated over time within a defined geographic area. The TIRZ is in effect within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Zone, which are changed from time to time, while the City Council reviews and approves DRA project plans and budgets reflecting the financial means to accomplish those plans. Since 2014, CHI has provided the staff and administration to the DRA via a contract with the City of Houston. TIRZ #3 is currently authorized through 2043.

## **Vision**

At the intersection of global commerce and local culture, Downtown is Houston's heart of opportunity, excitement, and joy.

## **Mission**

Champion and enhance Downtown Houston as a connected and thriving place for everyone

## Current Situation

The organization is currently undergoing a rebranding process to reflect the new direction of the organization provided by its [Strategic Alignment Plan](#). The plan provides a strategic focus and path forward for the next five years for the four organizations operating in tandem. The plan was developed throughout 2022 with input from a wide variety of stakeholders who participated in focus groups, surveys, and other meetings. The new website should serve as a unified, externally facing umbrella for the existing entities to help simplify stakeholders' understanding of the organization(s) and improve communications efficacy. For samples of the current situation, there are three organizational websites, [www.downtownhouston.org](http://www.downtownhouston.org), [www.centralhouston.org](http://www.centralhouston.org), and [www.downtowntirz.com](http://www.downtowntirz.com). Plus, additional websites [www.downtowndistrict.org](http://www.downtowndistrict.org), [www.marketsquarepark.com](http://www.marketsquarepark.com), and [www.downtownlaunchpad.com](http://www.downtownlaunchpad.com)

## Project Scope and Deliverables

The selected firm will work with the Stakeholder Engagement Committee, the group tasked with overseeing implementation of Goal 5 of the strategic alignment plan, to develop a cohesive information architecture and design direction that unites the organizations within an on-brand, intuitive, and comprehensive website. The selected agency will be expected to fulfill the following deliverables, in close collaboration with CHI's Director of Engagement and select Executives and staff members.

1. Develop a consolidated platform that:
  - a. Delivers up-to-date news and information about businesses and events in the District, including maps, event calendar, and directory of businesses.
  - b. Includes information about the organizations, including documents and reports, in an easily navigable environment.
  - c. Alerts users to street-closure impacts with option for subscribers to receive alerts via text message and/or e-mail.
  - d. Includes project pages that enable users to find detailed information about organizational initiatives such as public safety, public realm maintenance and beautification, economic development, public art projects streetscape improvements, and more.
  - e. Correlates the respective funding organization's brand identity with the services it provides.
2. Provide recommendations on rollout and launch strategy.
3. Work with CHI staff to comb through six existing websites and extract all necessary content and input into new web portal.
4. Setup a user-friendly CMS for internal members to consistently monitor and update website once relaunched.
5. If available, provide ongoing website management, updates and support.

## Proposed Timeline:

The selected firm will begin working with CHI management and the oversight committee upon executing a contract. Initial research and development will occur in April 2023 with the launch of the new website targeted for the summer of 2023.

## **Budget**

The current budgeted amount for the project is \$75,000. Additional components may be added as developments occur, and subject to agreement by both parties.

## **Instructions:**

Please submit a single electronic PDF file submission via email to Jenna Beasley at [jenna@downtowndistrict.org](mailto:jenna@downtowndistrict.org) to consist of the following sections:

- Title Page: includes company name, address, phone number, email address and primary contact person
- Proposal Submission Requirements to include:
  - Your company description, including your values and approach,
  - Description of due diligence and service approach, including an outline of the proposed process and specific approaches as well as key milestones,
  - Experience and similar successful projects for organizations similar to CHI previously undertaken by your company and individuals,
  - Staff, including a description of proposed staff availability, and expertise specific to the RFP,
  - References, including name, phone number, email address for references from 2-3 previous clients for similar projects, and
  - Budget, inclusive of proposed development and design staff and their hourly rates.

## **Evaluation Criteria**

The criteria used in the evaluation of the proposals will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Demonstrated capacity to successfully build a website for a place-making and management organization such as CHI (25%)
- Effective stakeholder engagement approaches (15%)
- Firm experience; including depth and breadth of proposed project team (20%)
- Value and pricing structure (20%)
- Review of references (10%)
- Participation of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE), defined as minority- or woman-owned business enterprises (MWBE) (10%). Proof of DBE or MWBE status, such as certification by the City of Houston, may be required.

## **Due Dates and Notifications**

Proposals Due: Monday, March 31, 2023 by 5 PM

Contract Award/Project Begins: Monday, April 10, 2023; subject to change

## Questions

Qualified vendors are encouraged to send an email to [jenna@downtowndistrict.org](mailto:jenna@downtowndistrict.org) ASAP indicating their intent to submit a quote or proposal.

Faxed submittals are not acceptable. Late bids are not acceptable and will not be considered in this process.

Any questions regarding this Request for Proposal (RFP) should be emailed to Jenna Beasley at [jenna@downtowndistrict.org](mailto:jenna@downtowndistrict.org). Answers will be forwarded to all vendors who sent an email indicating their intent to submit. Phone calls and other solicitation will not be accepted.

### **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL WEB PORTAL DESIGN FOR CHI, HDMD AND THE DRA**

Central Houston Inc (CHI) Houston Downtown Management District (HDMD) and the Downtown Redevelopment Authority (DRA) will receive responses to this Request for Proposal (RFP), for a creative firm to develop and launch a new consolidated website. Proposals will be received until 5:00 P.M., local time on Friday, March 31, 2023, by Jenna Beasley, Communications Manager, to [jenna@downtowndistrict.org](mailto:jenna@downtowndistrict.org). Proposals submitted to HDMD after the submission deadline will not be accepted. Respective of this advertisement, telephone or mail queries or requests for information will not be addressed by the HDMD.

Beginning Tuesday, March 07, 2022, this Request for Proposal (RFP) may be reviewed and downloaded as an electronic file from the HDMD's website: <http://www.downtowndistrict.org/procurement-rfp-opportunities/>. Based on the Proposals submitted, an evaluation and selection committee will identify the highest-ranked winning proposal. Staff will negotiate and recommend to the HDMD Board for authorization to contract with the selected consultant based on the evaluation criteria.

Proposers shall comply with City of Houston Code of Ordinances, Chapter 15, Articles II, V, VI, and XI and the Mayor's Executive Orders No.1-7 Pay or Play (POP) Program for Houston Public Works for the public procurement procedures of the City of Houston Office of Business Opportunity (OBO) established in March 2008 and the entity responsible for the administration of the Minority/ Women-Owned (M/WBE), Persons with Disabilities Enterprises (PDBE), and Hire Houston First programs. The successful Proposer will be required to make good faith efforts to achieve an M/WBE and PDBE participation goal of twenty percent (20%).