



CITY OF EXCELSIOR SPRINGS, MISSOURI

201 E. Broadway, Excelsior Springs, MO 64024 | 816-630-9594

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Municipal Website Redesign and Content Management System

RFP Number:	Web2026
Issue Date:	July 31, 2026
Proposal Due Date:	August 28, 2026 by 5:00pm Central Time
Questions Deadline:	August 11, 2026
Issuing Department:	General Administration
Point of Contact:	Mallory Brown, Community Development (mbrown@excelsiorsprings.gov) and Keith Winge, Economic Development (kwinge@excelsiorsprings.gov)

1. Introduction and Background

The City of Excelsior Springs, Missouri (“the City”) is soliciting proposals from qualified firms to design, build, and implement a new municipal website, including an updated content management system (CMS), information architecture, visual design, and a documented plan for ongoing maintenance and support. The City intends to award a contract to the firm whose proposal represents the best overall value, considering qualifications, approach, accessibility compliance, and cost.

Excelsior Springs is a historic mineral-springs community of approximately 11,000 residents located in Clay County, roughly 30 minutes northeast of downtown Kansas City. The City's current website is www.cityofesmo.com.

2. Project Goals

1. Consolidate the City's fragmented web presence onto a single, modern content management system that City staff across departments can maintain without vendor involvement for routine updates.
2. Achieve full conformance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1, Level AA, consistent with the U.S. Department of Justice's Title II ADA regulations. As a jurisdiction under 50,000 in population, the City's current compliance deadline is April 26, 2028, but the City intends to meet this standard well ahead of that date.
3. Deliver a fully responsive, mobile-first design that performs well on phones and tablets, which make up a majority of the City's current site traffic.

4. Improve findability of high-traffic transactional content: utility bill pay, permits, code violation reporting, meeting agendas/minutes, and municipal code.
5. Establish clean, well-documented integrations for the City's existing third-party systems, listed in Section 3.4.
6. Reduce the City's ongoing content-maintenance burden through better content governance, templated page types, and staff training.
7. Improve search engine visibility and analytics reporting so the City can measure how residents and prospective businesses actually use the site.

3. Scope of Work

3.1 Discovery and Planning

- Stakeholder interviews with City departments, City Council, and key partner organizations (Downtown Excelsior Partnership, Chamber of Commerce).
- Full content and link audit of the existing site(s), including all subdomains and external microsites currently presented as City content.
- Recommended information architecture and sitemap, presented for City review and sign-off before design begins.

3.2 Design

- Vendor must present multiple distinct design concepts/options, developed against the City's branding guide and staff input, before a final direction is selected.
- Custom visual design (not a generic off-the-shelf municipal template) reflecting the City's brand and mineral-springs/historic identity.
- Mobile-designed, not merely mobile-compatible — the design process must start from the mobile experience and scale up, not be a desktop site that reflows. Fully responsive across all common device sizes.
- Design must be service-focused (residents and businesses can complete tasks quickly) and transparency-focused (budgets, meeting records, and City decisions are easy to find).
- Fast-loading pages across all templates; vendor to specify target performance benchmarks (e.g., Core Web Vitals).
- Design system / style guide deliverable for future consistency.

3.3 Content Management System and Required Functionality

- Vendor to recommend and justify a CMS platform (open-source or proprietary govtech platform) suited to a city of this size and staffing level.
- Role-based editing permissions so individual departments (Finance, Water, Development, Preservation, Public Works, etc.) can manage their own content within a governed structure, using multiple page templates suited to different departments/content types that City staff can select and customize without vendor involvement.
- Inline editing — authorized staff can edit page content directly on the live page view, not only through a separate back-end admin screen.
- Self-service form builder: City staff must be able to create and edit fillable/input forms themselves after launch, without needing the vendor for each new or revised form. This is a core requirement, not an optional add-on.
- RFQ / RFP / bid manager for posting and managing procurement solicitations.
- Employment/job-posting manager for open positions and applications.

- News and updates module driven by a simple fillable form so non-technical staff can post updates, with text and email notification options for residents who subscribe.
- “Report a concern” widget that accepts file/photo attachments and routes to the appropriate department.
- Emergency / late-breaking news hover or banner widget that can be activated site-wide, on any page, without a full site redeploy.
- Social media feed widget(s) for Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and X/Twitter.
- Document and file repository for City records, reports, and forms, with version control.
- A single, unified content AND document search engine built into the CMS itself — not a Google Custom Search embed — covering both page content and repository documents. Search results must be configurable so the City can prioritize and pin the most-requested items (e.g., utility bill pay, permits, agendas, employment) to the top of results rather than relying purely on keyword relevance.
- Analytics built into the CMS itself (not solely dependent on an external Google Analytics account), giving the City direct visibility into page performance, search terms used, and top-requested content.
- Native accessibility support in the CMS itself, not solely reliant on a third-party overlay.

3.4 Integrations with Existing Third-Party Systems

The City currently relies on the third-party systems listed below and requires the new site to embed or integrate with each of them directly — not simply link out to an external page — wherever the vendor/platform supports it. For each system, the vendor’s proposal must state whether it will be embedded, API-integrated, single-sign-on connected, or (only if no better option exists) linked out, along with any cost implications:

- eCode360 (municipal code)
- CivicPlus (meeting agendas and minutes)
- Click2Gov (utility bill payment)
- iWorQ (permitting and code enforcement portal)
- Community grants portal (esgives.org)
- Calendar or equivalent meeting/events calendar
- LocationOne — available sites and buildings for sale

3.5 Content Migration

- A full analysis of the current site’s content with specific recommendations on what to add, revise, or delete — this is a redesign and content reset, not a copy-and-paste migration of existing pages into a new template.
- Migration of existing content the City determines should carry forward, with the vendor responsible for URL mapping and 301 redirects to preserve existing search rankings and avoid broken links.
- Conversion of priority static PDF forms into digital/fillable formats built in the new self-service form builder, scope to be defined during discovery.

3.6 Accessibility and Compliance

- WCAG 2.1 AA conformance across all templates and published content, verified through both automated and manual/assistive-technology testing.
- Written accessibility conformance report (VPAT or equivalent) delivered at project close.

3.7 Training and Documentation

- Role-based training for City staff editors (video and/or in-person, vendor to propose format), covering both general CMS usage and every site-specific/custom widget (form builder, RFQ/RFP manager, employment manager, report-a-concern, news module, etc.).
- A written, City-specific user manual covering the site as built — not generic platform documentation.
- Vendor to propose pricing and availability for ongoing annual refresher training after launch, as an optional line item in the cost proposal.

3.8 Hosting, Security, and Support

- Vendor to propose hosting arrangement (vendor-hosted, City-hosted, or third-party cloud) with associated costs, uptime commitments, and backup/disaster-recovery approach.
- SSL, standard security hardening, and a plan for CMS/plugin update cadence.
- Post-launch support and warranty period, plus optional ongoing maintenance/support contract terms and pricing.
- City will retain registrar/DNS control regardless of hosting arrangement. And if the City ends the relationship with the vendor, the City owns the theme/custom code, full content export, and admin-level platform access.

4. Deliverables

- Discovery report, current-site content analysis with add/change/delete recommendations, and approved sitemap/information architecture
- Multiple design concepts and a final approved visual design and style guide
- Fully built and tested website on the agreed CMS, including all required functionality listed in Section 3.3 and third-party integrations listed in Section 3.4
- Self-service form builder, configured and demonstrated with at least [X] priority forms converted from the current static PDF library
- Completed content migration (redesigned, not copy-pasted) with redirect map
- Accessibility conformance report (WCAG 2.1 AA)
- Project timeline document, delivered at kickoff and maintained through launch
- City-specific user manual and staff training sessions
- 30/60/90-day post-launch support as defined in the contract

5. Proposal Submission Requirements

Proposals must be organized in the following sections. Proposals that do not follow this structure may be considered non-responsive.

A. Cover Letter

Firm name, primary contact, and a signed statement of intent to be bound by the proposal.

B. Firm Qualifications and Experience

Company background, relevant experience with municipal or public-sector website projects specifically (not general commercial web design), and a minimum of three references from comparable local government clients, including at least one Missouri or Midwest municipality if available.

C. Portfolio

Links to at least three live municipal or public-sector websites the firm has built, with a note on which CMS platform each uses.

D. Proposed Approach

A narrative response addressing each item in Section 3 (Scope of Work), including the firm's recommended CMS platform and rationale, approach to consolidating the City's current multi-site structure, and approach to WCAG 2.1 AA compliance.

E. Project Team

Names, roles, and relevant experience of all individuals who would be assigned to this project, and whether any work will be subcontracted.

F. Project Timeline

A proposed schedule from contract award through launch, including major milestones and City review/approval checkpoints.

G. Cost Proposal

An itemized cost breakdown covering discovery, design, development, content migration, training, and launch, submitted as a fixed project fee. Include hosting costs (if vendor-hosted) and ongoing maintenance/support pricing as a separate annual or monthly line item, clearly distinguished from one-time project costs.

H. Sample Contract Terms

Any standard contract, license, or terms-of-service the firm would require the City to sign, for review by the City Attorney.

6. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by a City review committee using the following weighted criteria. The City reserves the right to request interviews or demonstrations from shortlisted firms before final award.

Criterion	Weight
Relevant municipal/public-sector experience and references	25%
Quality and clarity of proposed approach, including accessibility and IA plan	25%
Cost (project fee and ongoing maintenance)	25%
CMS platform fit, ease of staff use, and support model	15%
Project team qualifications and proposed timeline	10%

7. RFP Timeline

RFP Issued: July 31, 2026

Deadline for Written Questions: August 11, 2026

City Response to Questions Posted: August 14, 2026

Proposals Due: August 28, 2026 by 5:00pm Central Time

Finalist Interviews (if needed): September 1, 2026

Anticipated Project Start Date: Fall 2026

8. Submission Instructions

Proposals must be submitted electronically in PDF format to kwinge@excelsiorsprings.gov no later than August 28, 2026 by 5:00pm Central Time. Late submissions will not be considered. Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing to Keith Winge at kwinge@excelsiorsprings.gov by the deadline listed in Section 7. Questions and City responses will be shared with all firms who have indicated intent to submit a proposal, to ensure a fair and transparent process.

9. General Terms and Conditions

The City of Excelsior Springs reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive minor informalities, and to negotiate final terms with the selected firm. This RFP does not commit the City to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal. Any contract resulting from this RFP is subject to review and approval by the City Attorney and, as applicable, the Excelsior Springs City Council.

10. Insurance Requirements

The selected firm must maintain, at its own expense, for the duration of the contract, including any post-launch support/maintenance term. This project involves integration with municipal payment systems (e.g., Click2Gov) and the handling of resident personally identifiable information (PII), so professional liability and cyber liability coverage are required in addition to standard general liability.

10. Contract Information

Any contract resulting from this RFP shall be subject to the following requirements.

1. The City will not indemnify, defend, or hold harmless the successful proposer or any other person or entity. Any provision requiring the City to indemnify, defend, reimburse, release, or hold harmless the proposer is unacceptable and shall be deleted.
2. To the fullest extent permitted by law, the successful proposer shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the City and its elected and appointed officials, officers, employees, and agents from claims, damages, losses, liabilities, and expenses, including reasonable attorney fees, arising from: the proposer's negligent acts or omissions; breach of contract; infringement or misappropriation of intellectual-property rights; unauthorized access to, disclosure of, or loss of City data; or acts or omissions of the proposer's employees, agents, and subcontractors.
3. Nothing in the RFP or resulting contract shall constitute or be construed as a waiver of the City's sovereign, governmental, official, or other immunity, or of any statutory limitation on liability.
4. The contract shall be governed by and construed under the laws of the State of Missouri, without regard to conflict-of-law principles. Exclusive venue for any action arising from the contract shall lie in the state courts located in Clay County, Missouri, or, when federal jurisdiction exists, the United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri.
5. The City will not agree to mandatory arbitration, binding private dispute resolution, or a requirement that disputes be resolved outside Missouri. Any mediation must be voluntary and conducted in Missouri.
6. The contract shall not automatically renew. Any renewal or extension must be affirmatively approved in writing by the City through its authorized representatives.

7. Any City payment obligation extending beyond the current fiscal year shall be subject to the annual appropriation of funds by the City Council. The City shall have no obligation to make payments for a future fiscal year for which funds have not been appropriated.
8. The proposer may not modify the contract, license terms, privacy policy, service terms, pricing, functionality, or other contractual provisions through an online posting, click-through acceptance, website update, or unilateral notice. Any amendment must be in writing and executed by duly authorized representatives of both parties.
9. The City may terminate the contract: for cause after notice and a reasonable opportunity to cure; immediately for material security, confidentiality, legal-compliance, or accessibility failures; for nonappropriation; and for convenience upon specified written notice. Upon termination, the City shall pay only for properly performed and accepted services through the termination date.
10. Upon expiration or termination, the proposer shall provide reasonable transition assistance, including delivery of all City data, content, configuration information, credentials, documentation, source materials owned by the City, and export files in commercially usable, nonproprietary formats. The proposer shall not withhold City data because of a payment dispute.
11. The contract must clearly distinguish: preexisting vendor materials; third-party materials custom work created specifically for the City; and City-provided content and data. The City shall own its content, data, domain names, configurations, customized designs, documentation, and project-specific deliverables. To the extent the proposer retains ownership of any element necessary for continued operation, the City must receive a perpetual, irrevocable, transferable, royalty-free license sufficient to use, maintain, modify, and migrate the website.
12. All City data remains the exclusive property of the City. The proposer may use City data only to perform the contract.
13. The proposer shall identify where City data will be hosted, stored, backed up, and processed.
14. The proposer shall notify the City promptly and within a defined maximum period, preferably 24 hours, after discovering any actual or reasonably suspected security incident affecting City systems or data. The proposer shall cooperate in investigation, remediation, public notification, regulatory compliance, and preservation of evidence.
15. The City is exempt from certain taxes and will provide applicable exemption documentation. The proposal must separately identify any taxes or fees the proposer believes apply.
16. The proposer acknowledges that the City is a governmental entity subject to Missouri public-records requirements. The City cannot guarantee confidentiality merely because the proposer marks information confidential. A proposer claiming that information is legally protected must specifically identify the material and the legal basis for withholding it.