



REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF QUALIFICATIONS (RFSQ) No. 26-012

DATE: January 27, 2026

Project Title: New Website Design and Hosting

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) invites qualified and experienced firms to submit Statements of Qualifications to build a new website and provide hosting services.

A. Intent

This Request for Statements of Qualifications (RFSQ) is issued to determine the most qualified and experienced service provider that can meet the RDN's requirements, expectations and timeline.

The RDN will review submissions received in response to this RFSQ and enter discussions with the top-ranked respondent to negotiate the terms, scope, timeline and cost based on the actual scope of work required (the Work). Should these negotiations fail to result in a contract for the Work, the RDN may then elect to negotiate with the next highest ranked service provider and so on until an agreement is reached or the process is cancelled.

In any event, the RDN shall not be bound to enter a contract with any respondent to this RFSQ and, at its sole discretion, may elect to collapse this process.

B. Background

The RDN is a regional government located in central Vancouver Island that has a large geographic footprint and includes four municipalities (City of Nanaimo, District of Lantzville, City of Parksville and Town of Qualicum Beach) as well as seven electoral areas. It is home to over 170,000 residents (based on the 2021 census).

The RDN is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of 19 elected officials. Of those, seven represent the rural electoral areas and are elected specifically for the RDN Board. The remaining 12 are elected officials from the four member municipalities. They are appointed to the RDN Board by their council member peers to represent the interests of their respective municipality.

The RDN delivers a wide range of services including transit, recreation, parks, drinking water, wastewater, solid waste management, bylaw, permits, planning, emergency services, fire services and more. Services received depend on where a resident lives within the RDN.

The RDN website (www.rdn.bc.ca) is significant, with hundreds of pages, documents and links. It is a primary communications tool for the RDN to inform residents about services, programs, events, legislative information and more.

The site has functioned well to provide residents with the information about RDN programs and services; however, a new website built to the WCAG AA 2.2 standard is needed to:

- Ensure that information can be found quickly and easily through a new sitemap
- Ensure we are meeting the website user needs of residents and the organization, particularly from an accessibility perspective
- Address inconsistencies in format across departmental pages that has occurred due to both a decentralized structure for updating content and capacity limitations
- Ensure we are meeting the website user needs of residents, the organization and elected officials

C. Contemplated Scope of Work and Timeline

Scope of Work

New Website

The RDN seeks a vendor to build a new website who has proven and current local government website experience where the sites are currently live and are modern, inclusive, responsive and accessible through standard devices and web browsers and WCAG 2.2 AA compliant.

The successful proponent will be tasked with:

- Developing a new site map
- Developing a new design/visual appearance using existing brand guidelines as well as recommending new ones where applicable e.g. changing to the BC Sans font
- Migrating existing functionality and content to the new website
- Provide a website editing guide
 - The RDN also welcomes ideas for complementary tools (budget dependent) such as real-time, editing tool pop-ups to align with the website style guide
- Providing training to staff responsible for adding and maintaining website content

The new website must meet the following criteria:

- Be engaging and inviting, and built to the WCAG AA 2.2 standard
 - Increase functionality and usability for users including community members
 - Increase access to information and documents
 - Provide effective integration with current and future RDN software
 - Allow RDN staff to modify and update content in a distributed authoring and approvals environment without additional technical support (a hierarchy of permissions required)
 - Be fully searchable
 - Continue to support RDN's chosen open-source content management system, Drupal, to ensure continued avoidance of proprietary system lock-in, orderly transition between service providers and ongoing platform-level security
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Notes:

- An accessibility audit and content cleanup have been completed for the most frequently used webpages in advance of this project.
 - Over 400 most frequently visited pages were edited for plain language, consolidation and technical fixes
- The RDN has an extensive photo library; however, a small number of feature photos may need to be provided by the successful proponent to fulfill the scope of work.
- Current website stats (subject to change as pages get archived prior to project launch)
 - 1,210 public-facing webpages and 20 Directors' Dashboard pages
 - 19 custom, online forms
 - 767 documents – 102 on the Directors' Dashboard
 - 425 photos
 - Database size: 135.1 MB
 - Associated content file size: 45.3GB

Website Hosting

The RDN is looking for website hosting for a five (5) year term.

The vendor must be able to provide secure and resilient cloud-based hosting services that meet the RDN's operational requirements and ensure protection of privacy.

The ideal website hosting will include the use of a verifiable quality management system such as ISO27001, and third-party attestation of compliance against a standard such as SOC2 Type II with full scope, alongside additional RDN-specific requirements such as SSO integration with Entra ID, MFA requirements for all administrative access, and encryption in transit and at rest.

Web hosting services would include:

- Website maintenance, including accelerated updates to operating system, Drupal CMS and plugins or extensions
- Development and support of custom website functionality such as forms
- Routine independent backups of the website
- Periodic testing of the restore process for backups
- Troubleshooting functional and rendering issues
- After-hour emergency and holiday website support requests including content and approvals assistance in the absence of key staff
- Implementation and sustainment of third-party integrations, such as Google Analytics, and management of allowed third party code through a custom Content Security Policy (CSP)

Additional Work

In 2027 and/or following years (if budget allows), additional website work may include:

- An annual website accessibility audit to ensure the RDN maintains the WCAG AA 2.2 standard
 - Additional development work, plug-ins or other features to keep the website responsive to internal and external needs
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Timeline

The scope of work should begin as soon as possible after a successful proponent is confirmed with the website ready to launch by August 31, 2026. Staff training can extend until the end of September 2026.

D. Statement of Qualifications and Evaluation

The statement of qualifications should be no longer than twelve (12) single sided pages in length, minimum 10 pt font (not including cover page, cover letter and appendices). The RDN reserves the right to not consider, in its evaluation of Responses, any pages submitted in excess of this limit. Please include the following for evaluation purposes:

1. Qualifications and areas expertise of the Firm and nominated Project Manager. Please include CV/Resume of the Project Manager and explain how this individual will provide value for the RDN. Describe your Firm's approach to the work. This should include experience with:

- Designing and building new websites using WCAG AA 2.2 standard
- Tree testing and card stacking to build effective sitemaps
- Extent of experience and expertise in sustaining Drupal CMS environments
- Developing and integrating plug-ins, add-ons or custom code to deliver high-value features
- Ensuring alignment with web development security best practices (OWASP, etc)
- Offering comprehensive training for CMS users
- Experience of Firm and nominated Project Manager in previous relevant work. Provide at least three (3) recent relevant and verifiable examples of service engagements with similar organizations stating the value of contracted services*, duration of contract and details surrounding length and scope of service(s) performed, along with contactable reference contact details for the work. Include examples of projects that meet the following criteria:
 - Website and application design, from start to finish, at the WCAG AA 2.2 standard
 - Maintaining and providing technical support for websites 24/7
 - Utilization of Drupal CMS
 - Staff training

*Please note: Pricing for this project is not being evaluated or requested at this stage. However, examples of relevant service engagements stating the value of contracted services in Canadian dollars is requested

2. Website hosting services outlined in the Scope of Work and the following technical requirements:

- Feed integration with eScribe
 - Full-text search capabilities for PDF files on a per-library basis (e.g. Policies, Bylaws, ...)
 - Tools to allow for sustainment of accessibility standards
 - Online style guide tool for use during real-time editing
 - Indigenous language support meeting the requirements of the British Columbia Indigenous Languages Technology Standard (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/data/including-indigenous-languages/indigenous_languages_technology_standard.pdf), including the use of BC Sans font and full search capabilities
 - Translation (the RDN may opt to continue with Google Translate)
 - Website analytics (the RDN may opt to continue to use Google Analytics)
 - Future requirements may include ArcGIS integration, eCommerce, AddSearch, email integration, social media integration
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3. Secure and resilient website hosting ensuring the following capabilities:
 - Canadian data residency
 - Drupal CMS on an independent server with a dedicated IP address (no shared hosting)
 - Patching of operating system, Drupal, and module vulnerabilities within two days, with more urgent escalation available for critical zero-day vulnerabilities
 - A strong commitment to ensuring orderly progression between major Drupal versions in advance of “end of life” with fully understood and communicated costs
 - Acceptance of routine and ongoing third-party vulnerability scanning by RDN security service providers
 - Integration with Microsoft Entra ID for all RDN staff access
 - All proponent administrative access protected with multifactor authentication, with a minimum strength of TOTP (Passkey / certificates preferred)
 - All proponent servers and workstations with administrative access to RDN hosting and services to be protected with advanced (EDR/XDR) security software
 - Incorporation of a quality management system such as ISO27001 to ensure ongoing security
 - Incorporation of secure development practices (e.g. OWASP) for custom development
 - Implementation and sustainment of a site-specific Content Security Framework list of allowed third party code sources (as implemented on the RDN’s current site)
 - Attested security posture using a recognized framework such as SOC2 Type II or NIST CSF. Alternately, proponents may complete the attached security questionnaire
 - Site backups retained in a disconnected system using separate credentials, such that backups survive a compromise of the host and primary administrative credentials
 - Site backups routinely tested to ensure ability to restore services to a one-day window in the current month
4. An overview of how your firm and nominated Project Manager keeps current on online accessibility standards and best practices.
5. An overview of any value-added services the firm will offer at no additional cost to the RDN.
6. A statement of how your firm will ensure that the RDN retains ownership of all content and ensure orderly transition of services to an alternate provider if selected at contract termination, including continued licensed access to any Drupal CMS functionality developed for the RDN.
7. A statement of your firm’s ability to complete the work within the timeframe described.
8. A statement of your firm’s approach to advancing equity and sustainability in corporate operations and service provisions, including any certifications in this regard.
9. A statement of your firm’s ability to agree to or incorporate the terms of the attached privacy schedule into the agreement.

The Regional District of Nanaimo will evaluate the Statements of Qualifications (the “SOQ”) on a consensus basis and assign one score out of 100 based on the above evaluation criteria. The individual evaluation criteria will not be assigned points. Any or all SOQs will not necessarily be accepted.

E. Submission Date and Time

Statements of Qualifications should be received on or before 3:00 p.m. local time on February 20, 2026. The RDN, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to accept late submissions.

F. Questions and Submissions

Questions and submissions should be directed to:

Rebecca Taylor
Communications Coordinator
250-713-2400
engagement@rdn.bc.ca

G. Addendums

If the RDN determines that additional information is required, the RDN will post an Addendum on the RDN (www.rdn.bc.ca/current-bid-opportunities) and BC Bid (www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca/) websites. It is the sole responsibility of interested vendors to check for additional information prior to submitting their response.