

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Website Design & Development Services

North Quarter Corridor Improvement Authority (DBA Creston Corridor Improvement Authority)
Grand Rapids, Michigan

1. Overview

The North Quarter Corridor Improvement Authority (DBA Creston Corridor Improvement Authority) is seeking proposals from qualified firms to provide design and development of a new external-facing website for the Creston business district.

The website will be located at VisitCreston.com and will serve as a primary tool to support:

- Visitor attraction and corridor visibility
- Promotion of events and district activity
- Economic development and business recruitment

The selected firm will be responsible for delivering a website that is:

- Visually engaging and easy to navigate
- Mobile-first and accessible
- Simple and non-proprietary for non-technical staff to manage and update

2. Project Background

The Creston Corridor is an active and growing commercial district within Grand Rapids, Michigan, made up of locally owned businesses, neighborhood destinations, and emerging development opportunities.

The CIA supports corridor improvements, business engagement, and district-level marketing and promotion.

This website will serve as a centralized, public-facing platform to:

- Showcase corridor businesses and destinations
- Highlight events and ongoing activity
- Present the corridor as a cohesive “Main Street” experience
- Support long-term economic development efforts

The website should help communicate Creston as an active, welcoming, and evolving neighborhood commercial district with a strong local identity.

Content development will be handled internally by the CIA Branding & Communications Committee. This RFP is focused on development, structure, and functionality.

3. Project Goals

The CIA is seeking a firm who can:

- Build a clean, modern, and intuitive website
- Make it easy for users to discover businesses and events
- Create a cohesive and navigable district experience
- Ensure the site is fully manageable by non-technical staff
- Avoid long-term reliance on a developer for updates
- Deliver a solution that is scalable for future needs

4. Scope of Work

A. Website Design & Development

- Full website design and build based on provided branding
- Mobile-first, responsive layout
- Clear navigation structure and user experience

B. Business Directory

- Public-facing business directory
- Submission form for new listings and updates
- Admin approval workflow required prior to publishing
- Standard listing fields (name, description, hours, contact info, images, etc.)

C. Interactive Map

- Integration of business listings with a map
- Mobile-friendly and easy to use
- Ability to view and explore businesses by location

D. Events Calendar

- Public-facing events calendar
- Event submission form
- Admin approval workflow prior to publishing
- Ability to display upcoming events clearly

E. News / Blog Feature

- Public-facing news or blog functionality
- Ability for staff to publish updates, announcements, development news, and corridor stories

- Organized archive and categorization functionality preferred
- CMS workflows should allow non-technical staff to easily create and update posts

F. Forms & Integrations

- Business listing submission/update form
- Event submission form
- General contact form
- Social media integration
- Email signup integration (e.g., Mailchimp or similar)

G. Content Management System (CMS)

- Platform must allow for easy internal updates
- No developer dependency for routine content changes

Clear and simple workflows for:

- Adding/editing businesses
- Approving submissions
- Posting events
- Updating pages

H. Photography & Visual Assets

The proposal should include an approach for development of photographic and visual assets to support the website design and launch.

This may include original photography, coordination with local photographers, or integration of existing assets provided by the CIA.

Vendors should clearly describe whether photography is included in the proposal scope or expected to be subcontracted/provided separately.

5. Technical Requirements

The website must:

- Be built on a platform suitable for non-technical users
- Be fully mobile-responsive

Include basic SEO setup, including:

- Page structure and metadata
- Search engine indexing readiness

Website structure should prioritize discoverability for users searching for Creston businesses, events, dining, and neighborhood destinations.

- Be optimized for speed and performance
- Follow accessibility best practices (WCAG 2.1 AA preferred)

Vendors should clearly identify the proposed platform and explain how it supports long-term usability and flexibility.

6. Design Expectations

Branding has already been established and will be provided.

The website should:

- Reflect a cohesive “Main Street” district identity
- Feel active, welcoming, and easy to explore
- Prioritize clarity, usability, and navigation
- Perform well on mobile devices

7. Ownership & Access

The CIA will retain full ownership of:

- The website and all associated assets
- Domain (VisitCreston.com)
- All content and data

The selected firm must provide:

- Full administrative access upon completion
- No proprietary restrictions that limit future flexibility

8. Training & Handoff

The selected firm must provide:

- Training for CIA staff on managing and updating the site
- Basic documentation or guidance
- A short post-launch support period

9. Budget

Proposals should include clear, itemized pricing.

10. Proposal Requirements

Submissions must include:

1. Scope of Work

Detailed breakdown of services, including:

- Design approach
- Development approach
- CMS setup
- Directory and events functionality

2. Platform & Approach

- Proposed platform (e.g., Squarespace, Webflow, WordPress, etc.)
- Explanation of usability for non-technical staff

3. Work Plan & Timeline

- Project phases and milestones
- Estimated timeline from kickoff to launch

4. Cost Proposal

Provide:

- Total project cost
- Itemized breakdown (design, development, etc.)
- Any optional/add-on costs

Vendors are encouraged to provide estimated pricing ranges for optional or scalable features where scope may vary.

5. Experience & Qualifications

- Relevant project experience
- Examples of similar work
- References

6. Optional Services

- Hosting recommendations
- Ongoing maintenance options

7. Project Team & Staffing

Identify key team members, subcontractors, or consultants expected to work on the project, including photography/content partners if applicable.

11. Timeline

Milestone	Date
RFP Issued	May 21 2026
Questions Due	May 29 2026
Proposals Due	June 5 2026
Committee Review	June 11 2026
Selection	June 18 2026
Project Start	June 22 2026
Target Launch	Late Summer / Early Fall 2026 (timeline to be refined with selected vendor)

12. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Clarity and completeness of proposal
- Alignment with project goals
- Quality and usability of past work
- Proposed platform and ease of maintenance
- Cost competitiveness
- Experience and references

Preference may be given to firms based in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

13. Additional Considerations

- The CIA operates as an enabling organization and requires a system that is simple to manage internally
- The selected firm should avoid overly complex or custom-built solutions that require ongoing developer support
- The website should be built with future scalability in mind

14. Submission Instructions

Proposals should be submitted electronically to:

Gregg Hampshire
Corridor Manager
Creston Corridor Improvement Authority
hello@bestincreston.com