

**Request for Proposal:
Website Design, Development & Hosting**

Contact: Amanda MacDonald,
Downtown Grimsby
Email: info@grimsbydowntown.com

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: June 13, 5:00 pm

1. About the Downtown Grimsby Business Improvement Area

The Downtown Grimsby BIA advocates for and represents Downtown businesses and property owners in an effort to promote tourism, local shopping, economic development, communication, property values, and the community as a whole.

As per Municipal Affairs and Housing, we strive for the following:

- To oversee the improvement, beautification and maintenance of municipally owned land, buildings and structures in the area beyond that provided at the expense of the municipality generally; and to promote the area as a business or shopping area.
- To promote cooperative and joint planning of comprehensive Downtown improvement projects by the municipality, business groups, and the community at large.
- To revitalize and maintain the BIA as a vital local neighbourhood.

Vision for Website

As a membership organization, the Downtown Grimsby Business Improvement Area (BIA) primarily focuses on enhancing the visitor and customer experience while promoting its members. This approach recognizes that attracting visitors is crucial for the success of our members, which include a diverse range of retailers, restaurants, and service providers.

There is a notable absence of a dedicated tourism website for Grimsby, revealing an opportunity for the BIA to become the primary source of information. Stepping into this role means the BIA can fill a significant gap, making it easier for potential visitors to discover what Grimsby offers, while also aligning tourism efforts to benefit BIA members.

Creating a tourism website has several benefits:

- **Easy Access to Information:** A single place where visitors can find everything they need to know about Downtown Grimsby, from places to eat and shop to events and accommodation.
- **Visibility:** Such a website would make Grimsby more discoverable online, attracting more visitors.
- **Collaboration:** This project encourages collaboration with local governments, cultural institutions, and community groups.
- **Insights:** Running the website provides valuable data on what visitors are interested in, enabling the tailoring of future offerings.
- **Marketing:** It's an effective way to promote Grimsby and its unique attractions to a broad audience.

By becoming the go-to source for information, the Downtown Grimsby BIA supports its members and plays a crucial role in promoting Grimsby as an attractive destination, driving economic growth through a focus on visitors.

2. Audience/Stakeholders

Our membership encompasses the entire Downtown Grimsby Business Improvement Area, comprising a diverse range of property owners, merchants, restaurants, and service-based enterprises. From niche boutiques to well-known franchise chains, our members are united by a singular ambition: to attract a greater influx of tourists and business activity to Downtown Grimsby, thereby bolstering the area's economic vitality.

While detailed research is pending, anecdotal evidence highlights our target demographic as predominantly individuals and families aged 30 to 60, with specific interest groups including:

- Urban professionals working in Downtown Grimsby, who are potential patrons for daytime shopping, evening dining, or attending local events.
- Suburban residents are drawn to the downtown area for its unique dining experiences and cultural events.
- Families seeking engaging, community-focused events that offer diverse experiences for all ages.
- Dedicated shoppers loyal to the distinct and varied retail offerings found only in Downtown Grimsby.
- Tourists exploring the area are likely to visit restaurants and spontaneously shop in nearby stores, contributing to the local economy.

3. Proposal Requirements

This is a competitive process open to anyone. A paper copy of this RFP is available upon request. Proposals must be submitted as a PDF sent in an email to:
Amanda MacDonald @ Amanda@grimsbydowntown.com

The deadline for submissions will be June 13th, 2025, at 5 PM.

An electronic copy of the proposal in PDF format must be submitted prior to the deadline to: Amanda@grimsbydowntown.com. The subject line of the electronic submission must read "Website RFP Submission."

If a vendor has questions in regards to the proposal, we ask that you please submit your questions via email: Amanda@grimsbydowntown.com. All questions and answers will be provided to all companies that have expressed interest in the RFP within **two days** of the proposal deadline.

The price you quote should be all-inclusive. If your price excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of the excluded fees, along with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees. Please quote HST separately.

Those parties interested in submitting a proposal are advised that this project will be awarded to the vendor who offers the best overall proposal, and not necessarily to the proposal with the lowest price. The BIA will negotiate contract terms upon selecting the successful vendor. All contracts are subject to review by the BIA and approval by the Board of Directors. The project will be awarded upon signing an agreement or contract outlining terms, scope, budget, penalties for non-

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performance (including but not limited to failure to meet deadlines), and other necessary items.

The BIA reserves the right to add, modify or delete proposal requirements or terminate the competitive process without awarding this project to a vendor. The BIA's decision is final and cannot be appealed.

Site Ownership: All content, coding, and graphics will become the sole property of the BIA

4. Purpose, Description, and Objectives

Purpose:

Our goal is to create a simple, appealing, and easy-to-navigate website with a focus on tourism and local shopping, as well as a business resource hub for members and the broader community.

Objectives:

- To strengthen the BIA's brand identity
- To increase awareness and interest in the BIA and its services
- To add value to BIA membership
- To present comprehensive information and resources in an easy-to-use format
- To increase the BIA's search engine optimization
- To provide an online tool for current members to stay connected

5. Project Costs

The quote must encompass all design, production, and software acquisition or licensing necessary for the website's development and maintenance. Please quote HST separately.

List pricing for:

- New website design (front page, internal pages & navigation system)
- New content management program
- Training and support
- Ongoing technical support services (if required)
- Mobile Device Website – a website that can be easily seen within mobile device browsers or an App
- Google Maps and Google listing plug-in with Dynamic Map integration
- Form Integration
- Events Calendar
- Membership Profiles
- Adspace management
- Embedded videos
- Photo Gallery
- API/Third-Party Integration Services for Social

6. Scope and Guidelines

The project's scope includes the main BIA website.

The BIA will provide all content in Word documents and photos that should be on the website, as well as information and files currently available, such as the BIA logo, links to external resources, photos, and video.

The site must include a content management system that allows **in-house staff to easily and cost-effectively update content and modify the site design after the initial launch.**

Project Scope: The scope of the project shall include, but is not limited to:

- Visual Design
- Functional Design
- Mapping
- Production (to be cost-effective, should BIA staff be trained on the new content management system or keep the old system)
- Deployment
- Training
- Support

Development Guidelines:

- Content Management System requirements:
 - Editing tools – fonts, colours, borders, etc.
 - The tool requires English spell check built in; updated information must be validated in real time
 - be able to import from multiple formats, including .doc, .xls, and .pdf, etc.
 - be able to import multiple graphic formats, including JPG, BMP, GIF, etc.
 - Ability to link to internal and external sources
 - Ability to save draft versions of content
 - Tool needs to have the ability to recognize and track changes
 - Ability to handle concurrent users
 - Scalable to grow with future BIA need
- Visually Appealing – pages must not be entirely text-based
- The BIA logo, main menu, and contact information should be prominently displayed on every page as a standard header or element.
- Consistent Design – as stated above, each section of the site should have a common look and feel. The use of photographs, fonts and layout should be consistent throughout the site.
- Easy to Navigate
- Enable search capabilities using keywords or phrasing that will identify content from throughout the site and propose other creative strategies to drive traffic to the BIA's site.
- It is intended that materials which become property of the BIA (stock photos/colours/graphics) will be used by the BIA for PowerPoint and/or other presentations.

presentations or marketing materials as needed from time to time by the BIA, Ability to integrate video into web pages

- Possible ability to host webinar-type programs (for future purposes)
- Photo Album – a photo album program must be in place either within the chosen content management system or as its own standalone program.
- Calendar – we would like a calendar program to post upcoming Community Events. We use Titan for all BIA events.
- RSS feed available to subscribers
- Integration with current social media tools – Facebook/Twitter/LinkedIn
- Blogging capabilities
- Must be compliant with both the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation.

Site Specifications: Your proposal must account for all these requirements:

- Site must be compatible with IE, Chrome, Firefox, Safari
- Website must be responsive, adjusting the design to fit the screen of the user
- Website must not require plug-ins as a default
- Site should be easily accessible to the novice as well as the experienced internet user
- Fast loading pages – the website must be designed with a balance of text and graphics such that pages load in 4 seconds or less on an average computer
- Search Engine Compatibility – should be optimized for searches that include:
 - references to the Town of Grimsby and Niagara Region
 - references to business organizations/associations in Grimsby and Niagara Region
 - searches for product/services categories
- Ability to view articles and download user files
- Website must be available to the administrator from any internet connection
- The website must have a single administration interface for account management and content management
- Ability to add multiple administrators
- All pages are printer-friendly

Reporting:

- Website must integrate with a Google Analytics account
- Detailed reporting of up time and down time, and any service outages or slowdowns are required
- A view showing current users accessing information and the type of information being accessed, if not provided by Google Analytics

Performance:

- Systems must be stable and include redundancy on a physical site level in the event of a failure or hardware malfunction
- Systems must have a reliable backup to avoid data loss in the event of a problem
- The system requires adequate bandwidth from a hardware standpoint for convenient connection speeds

Testing:

Testing of the site must be done by the vendor on all applicable platforms to ensure the website works as promised. Explain the testing plan through the development process. The Marketing and Communication Committee will be involved in the final User Acceptance Testing before the site is published.

Tracking:

The website must integrate with Google Analytics.

7. Vendor Qualifications

- List the three websites your firm has produced that best reflect your work and relevancy to this project.
- Briefly list the role your firm played in each project. The URL should be submitted. Only live sites will qualify during the evaluation.
- Describe your experience in producing sites for not-for-profit and/or community-focused projects
- Provide current reference information for three former or current clients
- Provide a company profile, length of time in business and core competencies. Include subcontractors who would be working directly on this project.
- Please discuss your testing and support plan
- Please explain your service level agreement structure
 - average response time
 - support hours
 - availability for on-site support or troubleshooting
 - average response time for bug fixes and enhancements
- Time frame for completion
- Terms and conditions

Thank you for expressing interest in bidding. We appreciate your ongoing support of Downtown!