



Mitchell County Convention & Tourism Solomon Valley Economic Development

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FOR NEW WEBSITE

Date of Issue: October 16, 2023
Proposal Due Date: November 10, 2023

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Lucille Heller, Mitchell County Convention & Tourism Director

Mitchell County Convention & Tourism Solomon Valley Economic Development

Request for Proposals for New Website

1. Project Overview

Mitchell County Convention and Tourism (MCCT) and Solomon Valley Economic Development (SVED) are partnering to create a new website that will showcase both tourism and community and economic development in one comprehensive website. Mitchell County Convention and Tourism and Solomon Valley Economic Development partner on many different projects. At this time, tourism has their own website (<https://www.mitchellcountykstourism.com/>) and Solomon Valley Economic Development is a page on the Mitchell County government website (<https://www.mitchellcountykansas.com/economic-development.html>). Both entities play an important role in showcasing the high quality of life in Mitchell County. As our communities continue to work hard to recruit both new residents and visitors to our county, it is more important than ever to have a strong online presence.

At this time, tourism has a nice website with beautiful graphics, but the website platform needs to be updated so we can include more visually appealing content, like video footage. Moving over to a new website platform is a great opportunity to make additional changes and updates to the website while still maintaining much of the original content that has been developed over the past decade. Additionally, tourism and economic development have long discussed the benefit of creating one website focusing on quality of life and recruitment in Mitchell County. The website for community and economic development is currently located on Mitchell County's website which primarily focuses on the county government functions. We think a new website will bring new life into our online presence and more vividly show everyday life in Mitchell County.

2. Introduction to MCCT and SVED

Mitchell County Convention and Tourism Committee was established by the Mitchell County Commissioners in 2003 to serve county lodging facilities, restaurants, service stations, and tourist attractions events, campgrounds, transportation systems and convention facilities. Using guest tax funds, the committee promotes overnight lodging. It also plans for future development of tourism in the county through growth of facilities and usage of recreational resources, while seeking efficiency in this growth. The ten-person committee represents locations throughout the county, and is approved by the County Commissioners.

The mission of Solomon Valley Economic Development is to facilitate future growth by collaborating to build vibrant communities and celebrate success. SVED has existed for over 60 years. We are a 501c6 membership-based organization overseen by a Board of Directors. Our organization works to support existing and future business development by connecting businesses to different resources, funding opportunities, incentives, recruitment materials, and more. We also work hard to support community efforts that contribute to the high quality of life in rural communities with the goal of recruiting new residents and workforce, as well as retaining our existing residents, especially our young adults.

3. General Objectives

The objective of MCCT and SVED is to have a user-friendly website with mobile functionality that highlights tourism and everyday life in Mitchell County. All content for the websites is readily available on the existing websites apart from using updated pictures. In addition, the website should be able to

easily accommodate updates by the MCCT and SVED Executive Directors. Please see the “Minimal Project Expectations” for additional details. Due to the amount of information shown on our existing websites, MCCT and SVED feel it will be important to start the overall process by working with the chosen firm to develop a written/visual site map for the proposed new website.

4. Inquiries

MCCT Executive Director, Lucille Heller, and SVED Executive Director, Emily Benedick, have prepared this RFP. Please direct questions or comments concerning the proposed website project to:

Name:	Emily Benedick	Name:	Lucille Heller
Title:	SVED Director	Title:	MCCT Director
Phone:	785-738-3000	Phone:	785-564-2118
Email:	ebenedick@beloitks.org	Email:	mckstourism@gmail.com

5. Submission of Proposals

Proposals can be submitted as a PDF via e-mail to Lucille Heller and Emily Benedick at the email addresses above. Proposals can also be mailed or hand-delivered to 209 E Main St, Suite 104, Beloit, KS 67420. **All proposals are due no later than 3:00pm on Friday, November 10th.** Mailed proposals must be postmarked by November 10th.

Proposals received after the above date and time will be considered late and will not be accepted. MCCT and SVED will not pay costs incurred in the proposal preparation, including the costs for printing, demonstration, negotiation process, etc. All costs for the preparation of the proposal shall be borne by the proposing firm.

6. Projected Timeline

- October 16, 2023: Request for Proposals for Website
- November 10, 2023: RFPs due to Mitchell County Convention and Tourism
- November 17, 2023: Website Contract Awarded
- November 2023 to March 2024: Website Development
- April 2024: Draft of Website Presented to MCCT and SVED Boards for Approval and Comments
- June 1, 2024: Final Draft of Website
- July 1, 2024: Official Website Launch to Public

7. Proposal Requirements

The proposal shall include, as a minimum:

- Discussion and interpretation of the scope of work including those tasks or aspects that you believe require special attention, alternate approaches or revisions suggested based on experience, and descriptions of work elements presented in the proposed scope of work that should be expanded and/or modified to address any special considerations or approaches;
- Description of technical support offered after completion;
- Description of user training;
- Overview of previous experience with similar website development;
- Identify project manager and other staff who will work on the project;
- Detailed timeline with milestones;
- Detailed project budget, not to exceed \$10,000;
- Please provide 3 references

By submitting a proposal, the bidder agrees that Mitchell County Convention and Tourism and Solomon Valley Economic

Development may contact all submitted references to obtain any and all information regarding Bidder's performance.

8. Minimum Project Specifications

Introduction: At this time, tourism has their own website (<https://www.mitchellcountystourism.com/>) and Solomon Valley Economic Development is a page on the Mitchell County government website (<https://www.mitchellcountykansas.com/economic-development.html>). At this time, both websites are on the Weebly platform. We are in need of a more user-friendly, clear platform with better graphic capabilities.

Budgetary limitations: MCCT received a Kansas Department of Commerce Tourism Marketing Grant to help cover the costs of the new website. Without this funding, the project would not be possible. Thanks to the grant and generosity of several Mitchell County entities, we have a total budget of \$10,000. For that reason, MCCT and SVED appreciate project alternates and approaches to keep the overall cost below \$10,000.

Intended Use: The most basic use of the website is for both visitors; and new, future and existing residents, investors and any other stakeholders to obtain information about Mitchell County. If you review our existing websites, "information" can include anything from amenities to business incentives, to tourist destinations, to MCCT and SVED membership information, to upcoming events and more! We would like the website to better attract visitors and residents.

Components: Because we are not professionals in this area, this is not an exhaustive list. We hope initial conversations with the chosen firm will help us develop a final list of wants and needs for the new website. We do not have a specific web host in mind, and we are open to suggestions based on our specific needs. Some necessary components of the website and website developer include:

1. Website can be easily updated by MCCT and SVED Staff (User Accounts for both MCCT and SVED)
2. "Calendar of Events" pages or programs to allow submission of events and activities with the approval of an administrator by third parties.
3. Availability to run contests, such as a photography contest, with submissions. Possibility of offering a coupon to a restaurant or attraction.
4. Proficiency in Search Engine Optimization;
5. Proficiency in Front and Back End Coding;
6. Visually appealing and user friendly for both Desktop and Mobile Access;
7. Ability to track analytics and MCCT and SVED to produce related reports.

A few websites that we find easy to navigate, visually appealing and full of great information are:

- Lincoln County: <https://www.livelincolncounty.com/>
- Clay County Economic Development: <https://www.growclaycounty.org/>
- Clay County Tourism: <https://www.claycokansas.com/>
- Lafayette, IN: <https://www.greaterlafayettecommerce.com/>
- Four Corners Economic Development: <https://www.4cornersed.com/>

9. Notification of Withdrawal of Proposal

Proposals may be modified or withdrawn by an authorized representative of the firm or by formal

written notice prior to the final due date and time specified for proposal submission.

10. Evaluations

MCCT and SVED will evaluate each proposal based on:

- Technical content provided
- Technical support offered after completion
- User training provided
- Previous background and experience
- Adequacy and completeness of the proposal
- Ability to meet our project budget of \$10,000
- Ability to meet the proposed timeline

The intent of Mitchell County Convention and Tourism and Solomon Valley Economic Development is to hire the most qualified firm to meet the needs of MCCT and SVED within the funds budgeted for this project. Any contract is subject to the approval by a committee with representation from both the SVED Board of Directors and MCCT Board of Directors.

11. Contractual Obligations

The successful firm will be required to enter an “Agreement for Services” with Mitchell County Convention and Tourism. The Agreement of Services will include:

Inclusion of Proposal: The proposal submitted in response to this RFP will be incorporated as part of the Agreement for Services.

Indemnification and Insurance: The successful firm shall indemnify and hold the Mitchell County Convention and Tourism and Solomon Valley Economic Development and its officers, agents, employees, and assigns, harmless from any liability imposed for injury whether arising before or after completion of work hereunder, or in any manner directly or indirectly caused, occasioned or contributed to, or claimed to be caused, occasioned or contributed to, in whole or in part, by reason of any act or omission, including strict liability or negligence of firm, or of anyone acting under firm’s direction or control or on its behalf, in connection with or incident to, or arising out of the performance of this contract.

Costs: All costs are to be stated in exact amounts. All costs must be specifically detailed in the proposals.

Timeline: The successful firm should include a detailed timeline in their proposal in order to provide evidence that the timeline outlined in this RFP can be accomplished. The timeline provided by the successful firm will also be included in the Agreement for Services.

Selection: The final award is subject to the approval of the Mitchell County Convention and Tourism Board.

12. Right of the MCCT and SVED to Reject Proposals

Mitchell County Convention and Tourism and Solomon Valley Economic Development shall award the contract to the proposal that best accommodates the various project requirements. Mitchell County Convention and Tourism and Solomon Valley Economic Development reserves the right to: (i) award any

contract prior to the proposal deadline or prior to the receipt of all proposals, (ii) award the contract to more than one Bidder, and (iii) refuse any proposal or contract. A committee with representation from both the SVED Board of Directors and MCCT Board of Directors will review all RFPs submitted and aid in the final decision for award.

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"Making Your Business Look Good"

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