



Columbus, Indiana

Request for Information to Create a Community Portal

Issuance of RFI:
9/12/2012

Response Deadline:
10/12/2012, 5 PM EST

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Columbus, Indiana is the county seat of Bartholomew County with a population of 44,000 – BUT as our current brand states, we are *Unexpected. Unforgettable* because we are:

- Home to Cummins Inc., a Fortune 500 company and the largest diesel engine manufacturer in the world;
- Ranked 6th in the nation by the American Institute of Architects for innovation and design. With buildings designed by famed architects such as I.M. Pei, and Eero Saarinen;
- Home to the late industrialist and philanthropist J. Irwin Miller, once touted as a presidential candidate;
- Columbus has one of the few international schools in Indiana which has an IB (International Baccalaureate); and
- Home to the 5th largest community Foundation in the state of Indiana.

Located just 35 miles east of Bloomington and 45 miles south of Indianapolis, Columbus is small in size, but it is on par with our larger neighbors to the west and north of us in terms of its quality of life. Columbus, which is home to a diverse immigrant population due to recruitment from this community's many international companies, also serves as one of the bedroom communities for the Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center, which is the home base for members of the Army National Guard and Army Reserves, Marine Corps and other units that train and mobilize here.

Is Columbus a large metropolis with a large minority population? It is not, but it is a community that is constantly looking beyond the horizon to attract the needed talent for the ever-growing economic engine fueled by locally based and international companies. Columbus is well known for its progressiveness due to the social conscience of its major employers. It has world-renowned architecture and the town is growing in diversity – in its people as well as its businesses. There are currently 51 languages spoken in the local school system.

Led by recently elected Mayor Kristen Brown, the City of Columbus (<http://www.columbus.in.gov/>) is one of the most desired cities in America. Columbus is not only proud of its growing and stable business climate, but it is concerned about the quality of life all of its citizenry and that focus has attracted residents from over the world to live here.

The current success of the city has been led by a public private partnership that has allowed the town to expand and provide a high level of city services for local residents. Heritage Fund - the Community Foundation of Bartholomew County (<http://www.heritagefundbc.org/>) has been actively involved in efforts to continue to grow the quality of life within the community. The Heritage Fund is focused on:

- Providing responsible stewardship of gifts donated for broad charitable purposes;
- Developing leadership to address community issues;
- Serving as a catalyst for positive change in partnership with others; and

- Promoting philanthropy broadly within the community.

With all of its success, Columbus believes that it can do better and has to do better in order to attract needed talent to Columbus and keep that talent. In 2004, Heritage Fund embarked upon its first Welcoming Community project. The purpose of the study was to assess the welcoming factor in Bartholomew County among various groups of people – with a focus on the “creative class” or those individuals who can create a vibrant business climate and stimulate future economic growth. The study brought an understanding of the importance of technology, talent and an open community which embraces differences. The idea of improving the welcoming factor of Columbus has been echoed by community leaders such as Cummins CEO Tom Linebarger, whose company has a significant international workforce in Columbus – and it’s increasing.

1.2. Current State

In 2011, The Heritage Fund conducted a follow-up study to measure improvements to Columbus’ welcoming factor since 2004. Its goal was to answer the question – have there had been changes in perceptions regarding the community’s welcoming factor? The study identified among other things that there was a large gap in making Columbus a welcoming city in regard to a central place where community information could be found.

More specifically, WCII identified that, although progress was made on other fronts, there remains no single place where people can go on a web or on a mobile device where:

- There is an accurate representation of the physical presence of the city in the virtual world;
- Residents and visitors can find out what is going on at any time;
- There is a window to the world of opportunity where people can contribute to or participate in activities- this is particularly important for newcomers to the community;
- Virtual visitors to Columbus can be provided a glimpse into the diversity that exists in Columbus;
- Diverse populations can see a representation of themselves and their activities in Columbus; and
- The vibrant cultural, arts and entertainment side of Columbus can be showcased.

The City of Columbus, through its Technology Advisory committee (<http://tech.columbus.in.gov/>), has partnered with Heritage Fund to jointly sponsor the exploration of the creation and implementation of a plan to address this important gap which impedes the improvement of Columbus’ welcoming factor.

1.3. Desired State

The sponsoring parties have determined that the creation of a Community Portal that could serve as both an economic development tool as well as a community integration tool would best address the community information resource gap identified by WCII. The team recognized that challenge of undertaking such a project would not necessarily be the typical technical challenges associated with programming a web site, but instead the difficulty with crafting a delivering a message that was consistent with the goals of the Community Portal and delivering this experience via the web in the most intuitive way possible. It was decided that engaging a public relations and marketing firm via a

Request for Information (RFI) would be the logical next step in designing the high level plan or model for creating a solution.

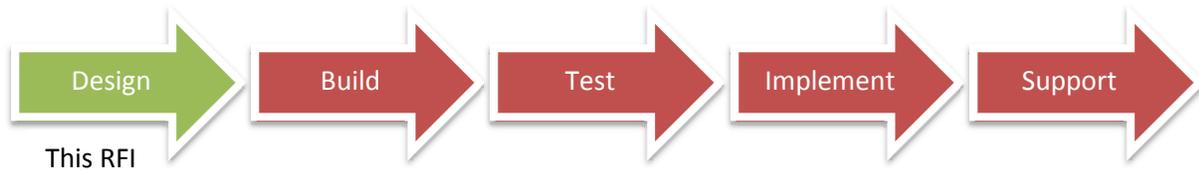


Figure 1 RFI Scope

The intended outcomes of this RFI include a high level project plan, resource plan and budgetary estimate to create the following framework for a Community Portal.

- Recommended processes, policies, procedures to support governance of the Community Portal
- PR, messaging and recommended marketing campaign to encourage its use throughout the community
- A conceptual model and high level menu taxonomy of Community Portal
- Recommendations for a streamlined user interface leveraging existing branding
- Creative alternatives that meet the state goals described herein

The overarching focus of a Community Portal is the development of a solution that would link community organizations using a website that:

- Has a great user experience and is welcoming for newcomers to the community;
- Permits member organizations to manage their own content, yet makes it available to all community members;
- Supports the distinctive character, branding and domains (if required) of the content owners;
- Reduces the overall cost to member organizations by pooling resources; and
- Is managed by a set of clear policies.

2. General Instructions

2.1. Invitation

Respondents are invited to submit information regarding a plan necessary to create a Community Portal for Columbus, Indiana.

All materials related to the RFI will be available on the World Wide Web at <http://tech.columbus.in.gov/>.

The City of Columbus will receive submissions via email until 10/12/2012 at 5 PM EST.

2.2. Submittal Format

Responses shall be kept brief, concise, and should not to exceed ten (10) pages excluding supporting material (diagrams, sample contracts, marketing material, detailed descriptions of equipment).

Responses must be submitted by email and are restricted to email text with Word, Excel, Power Point, and PDF attachments.

2.3. Submittal Procedure

The Respondent is asked to submit an electronic copy of its submission via email only to jlogston@columbus.in.gov by 5 PM EST on 10/12/2012 and must include "RESPONSE: RFI for Community Portal" in the subject line of the email message. A reply message will be sent to the Respondent acknowledging receipt.

Questions should be directed via email only to the City's Director of Operations and Finance, at jlogston@columbus.in.gov.

2.4. Process

Based on the responses received from this RFI, the sponsoring parties will evaluate them and determine the appropriate mechanism to move forward in the development of a Community Portal.

The sponsoring parties reserve the right to reject any and all responses, to request additional information from respondents, and to consider information from potential respondents that may be received outside of this RFI process.

Requests for telephone calls and vendor meetings are not being granted as part of this RFI process.

3. Requested Content

The respondent should prepare (and enumerate) its response to include the following elements:

1. Executive Summary – Provide a high level overview of the proposed solution, technologies and services.
2. Background – Provide company background information outlining an overview of your organization.
3. Solution Description – Provide a description of your solution including, at a minimum, the following high level information:
 - a. Recommended processes, policies, procedures to support governance of the Community Portal
 - b. PR, messaging and recommended marketing campaign to encourage adoption
 - c. Conceptual model and high level menu taxonomy of Community Portal
 - d. Recommendations for a streamlined user interface leveraging existing branding
4. References – Provide a list of references including contact information and project overview of projects where the respondent has designed a community portal solution similar the one described herein.

Additionally, respondents may include the following optional section.

5. Additional Information – The Respondent is welcome to provide additional information including, but not limited to, recommendations and cost estimates for:

- a. The creation of physical marketing collateral
- b. The creation of the Community Portal
- c. Support services including site maintenance, hosting, training, etc.

3. Included Reference Materials

The following are background reference materials that will provide additional insight into the solution requested herein. Respondents are strongly encouraged to review these materials before submitting a response.

1. Columbus Indiana Brand Graphics Information and Standards Guide
<<*ColumbusBrandGuide.pdf*>>
2. Welcoming Community Project Report
<< *Welcoming Community Project.pdf*>>
3. Welcoming Community II Project Report
<< *Welcoming Community II report March 6.pdf*>>