

CONFIDENTIAL

Request for Proposals

Government In My Backyard (GIMBY)™

www.gimby.org

A project of Understanding Government

<http://understandinggov.org>

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Reserved URL: www.gimby.org

Please note that the enclosed materials are confidential and not for distribution. While we do not request that bidders sign a non-disclosure agreement, we count on complete discretion and have selected vendors known for their integrity and respect for intellectual property.

OBJECTIVE

Understanding Government, a non-profit organization based in Washington D.C., is seeking a web development firm to maintain and further develop our Drupal-based website GIMBY, or Government in My Backyard, to be located at www.gimby.org). The Phase 1 site is built and is set to launch with its existing features in June 2012, and will be developed further in accordance with user response and strategic needs.

The scope of the project includes

- Routine maintenance of the site, including bug and compatibility fixes, daily backups, crash recovery and troubleshooting as needed
- Back-end user support
- Template and CSS edits
- Designing and building new features

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Understanding Government is dedicated to improving and expanding journalism about the executive branch of government, and reporting on the government agencies that play such an important role in Americans' lives.

We are getting ready to launch a new website called GIMBY™, or Government in My Backyard, aimed at demystifying the executive branch and making government understandable, approachable, and accessible. GIMBY will give citizens a quick, easy, and interesting way to find out what government agencies are doing where they live, to contact those agencies (or their elected representatives about those agencies), and to generate discussion, reaction, and action to change government for the better.

The information and tools on GIMBY come from a range of sources – from government agencies themselves to newsfeeds to GIMBY-originated reporting and research. GIMBY brings this content together and provide a different kind of news source about government, helping citizens get the information they need about expenditures, projects, problems and people in government where they live, and then to communicate with each other and take action on issues they care about.

Along with daily news feeds, blogging, original reporting, and other hyperlocal content, www.gimby.org is a one-stop resource for information about important government agencies and programs. Thus, it features individual **agency pages**, each of which explains what an individual federal agency does on one comprehensive web page, also providing links to useful related web resources.

Government agencies matter most because of the problems they solve – or don't solve. So www.gimby.org also features **issue pages** on topics like clean air, clean water, public education, job creation, and consumer protection, with links to the federal and state agencies responsible for working on them. In the future, GIMBY will provide

information on what key government projects and expenditures are happening in a given zip code.

To provide a fresh editorial voice, GIMBY will also employ 2-3 bloggers and a few freelance reporters to write original content about federal government activities in different parts of the country. In Minnesota, for example, the Department of the Interior is monitoring a radical renovation of the famous Iron Range – with new mines and metal-refining projects that could significantly affect the region’s environment. In California, federal monies are going towards everything from high-speed rail to bringing the legendary salmon runs back to the state’s rivers. In South Carolina, the Dept. of Energy is cleaning up waste from a nuclear-materials plant at a cost of \$3.3 billion. Working with local reporters and newspapers, GIMBY will put these stories on a national news platform, and make it easy for readers to get news and commentary about issues in their hometowns.

AUDIENCE

GIMBY is aimed at a general audience, and we believe that, based on our content, we will gain numerous occasional visitors from all walks of life. As for the primary long-term target audience for GIMBY, it includes action-minded US citizens who are

- 35-65 year years old
- 50/50 male-female gender split
- Total HHI of \$75,000
- Online 10-20 hours per week
- Newspaper or newsmagazine subscribers/readers
- Online news and blog subscribers/readers
- Culturally and politically mixed English speakers (primary or ESL)
- Civically engaged citizens who:
 - attend or speak at their local city council meetings
 - write elected officials (their own and others)
 - regularly vote in local, state and national elections
 - are community-minded neighborhood activists
 - give to charities regularly

The secondary audience of GIMBY would include community stakeholders, government agency employees, elected officials, policy wonks, media, and other influencers in the American body politic.

WEBSITE GOALS

- Provide citizens with information, engage them in a vibrant discussion and facilitate their interaction with government
- Create and activate a thriving online community that takes on big issues and big ideas and is ready to act on them
- Get people thinking about the federal executive branch in their lives based on real things happening in their communities

- Get people to 1) See; 2) React; 3) Act on what's going on where they live that involves the federal government
- Empower citizens to be proactive about addressing the federal government before a problem or issues appears or grows beyond easy solutions
- Provide examples of how government solves problems, not just creates (or prolongs) them

EXISTING AND PLANNED FEATURES

Features already developed for the site include

- Agency pages
- Issue pages
- Blogs
- News feeds
- Social media buttons
- E-mail alerts

Features that may or will be developed under this RFP include

- Forms for contacting government agencies
- User comment module
- Discussion boards and other features to facilitate interaction
- User logins and profile pages
- Interactive maps, charts and graphs
- Submission infrastructure for user-generated content
- Other interactive features as needed

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

All work produced for GIMBY must:

- not require plug-ins as a default.
- meet the accessibility requirements of section 508, subsection 1194.22, of the Rehabilitation Act.
- function properly on all major modern browsers (IE 8+, Firefox 4+, Chrome, Safari), including mobile device browsers (iOS, Android).

Open-source software is preferred.

RFP TIMELINE

Tuesday, April 10: RFP sent to prospective bidders

April 11-17: Understanding Government executive director Ned Hodgman and managing editor Trish Anderton available for conversation and e-mails with prospective bidders.

Tuesday, April 24: Proposals due, meetings with finalists

Tuesday, May 1: Winning vendor notified and parties set work plan and schedule

BIDS AND PROJECT BUDGETING INFORMATION

Please submit bids in the form of an hourly rate to cover both routine maintenance and new programmed elements for a projected total effort of 32 hours per month.

As an emerging non-profit organization, we will give preference to bidders who can furnish non-profit-friendly pricing.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Ned Hodgman, executive director Tel. (202) 775-8080
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Thank you for your interest and we look forward to talking with you about making GIMBY an outstanding and innovative web property.