



Report to Council

Report Number: REP-COM-01-2025

Subject: Website Redesign, Implementation, Hosting & Support

Date of the meeting: Monday, April 28, 2025

Prepared by: Amélie Deschamps, Communications Coordinator

Circulated to and/or collaborated with: Aimée Roy, Clerk

Approval: Pierre Leroux, CAO

In agreement with the recommendation based on the contents of this report.

Recommendation

[That Council authorizes the allocation of \$45,359.64 in the 2026 budget to complete the municipal website project, for a total project cost of \$ 75,359.64.]

Financial Considerations

Total project cost: \$ 75,359.64

Amount in reserves for the project: \$30,000.00

Amount requested in 2026 budget: \$45,359.64

Context

In 2024, the Administration identified the urgent need to replace the current municipal website. The existing site, launched in 2021, lacks the flexibility and structure necessary to effectively deliver services and information to residents. It has also begun experiencing technical issues, such as slow performance, error messages, and storage limitations.

While the 2021 site was developed for \$40,000, the agency responsible acknowledged that they underestimated the work involved. Ultimately, our quickly expanding needs outpaced the capabilities of our website, leading to issues related to structure, usability, performance, and accessibility.

Recognizing that websites of this scale typically have a lifespan of 4 to 5 years, and anticipating continued challenges, the Administration explored opportunities for a more robust solution. Three neighboring municipalities shared similar needs, and the decision was made to issue a joint Request for Proposal (RFP) for a common website provider in early 2025. This collaborative approach strengthens consistency and allows each municipality to benefit from a shared contractor and comparable service level.

Although our procurement policy did not require a formal RFP process for this project, the Administration proceeded with one regardless, given the specialized nature of web development and the wide variation in pricing and quality. This approach reflects a commitment to transparency and best value.

The RFP process is now complete, and a proponent has been selected. The chosen vendor's pricing is in line with other submissions and reflects industry standards for websites of this size and complexity. Our website is scheduled to be developed following Clarence-Rockland's, with an expected launch in 2026.

To move forward, Council's approval of the remaining amount in the 2026 budget is required to allow us to finalize the agreement with the vendor and proceed with the build.

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A total of up to \$ 75,359.64 is anticipated for the redevelopment of the municipal website. This amount reflects the cost of the vendor's basic website package, along with selected modules essential to meeting our municipality's specific needs, as well as one year of hosting and support. The non-refundable tax and a 2.5% contingency amount have also been added to this total. See Appendix C detailing the total project cost.

Council allocated \$30,000 in reserves at the 2025 budget to support the website redesign project in anticipation of the RFP process. Given that the total project cost is estimated at \$75,359.64, the Administration is requesting that an amount of \$45,359.64 be earmarked in the 2026 budget. This financial commitment is necessary to allow the Administration to proceed with the contract.

Previous budgets included an annual allocation of approximately \$5,000 to \$6,000 for website hosting and support. As these services are incorporated into the total project cost, this budget line will be removed from the 2026 budget. Notably, the cost of hosting and support will be added back to budget proposals in 2027 and subsequent years.

The full website package cost presented in the selected vendor's proposal is \$72,640 (excluding HST). While the full proposal included a broad range of optional features and services, only those most relevant to our priorities have been included in the final scope for our municipality. It was structured this way to allow the four municipalities to select only the features most aligned with their needs. Appendix B provides a comparison of pricing from the eight proponents whose pricing envelopes were opened, showing that the full package cost from the selected vendor falls within the average market range.

Relevance to priorities

This initiative aligns with the municipality's strategic priority of enhancing service delivery, particularly in the area of communications. A modernized website will significantly improve ease of access to information for residents and strengthen the municipality's ability to share updates, resources, and services in a timely and user-friendly manner. It will also support greater transparency by making important municipal information more readily available and easier to navigate.

Communication Plan

We will promote the launch of our new website after it goes live to manage traffic during the initial testing phase. To avoid high traffic in the first few days, we will focus on testing the website's live action and ensuring smooth functionality before promoting it.

As part of the promotional strategy, we will present a series of spotlight features on social media, highlighting the website's new structures, widgets, and its simpler user experience. These short posts will provide the public with a sneak peek of the improvements, aiming to engage them with the updated website's design and functionality.

The overall goal is to create a smooth transition to the new website while maintaining user confidence and engagement.

Other Considerations

If Council is interested in the additional modules listed in Appendix C, they can be added to the project scope.

Alternatively, it would be an option to wait and implement these modules once the website is fully operational and in future budgets. This phased approach would allow for a smoother rollout while providing flexibility to incorporate additional features in future years as they become more relevant or necessary. It is important to note that the prices of these modules may increase over time if we choose to add them in future phases.

Attachments

Appendix A – RFP-COM-01-2025

Appendix B – RFP Process and Results

Appendix C – Detailed Project Cost