



Request for Proposals

Community Websites Initiative

Sept. 7, 2021 Update

Draft 1.3

1. Basic Information

RFP Issue Date: Sept. 7, 2021

Proposal Due Date: October 11, 2021 (6 weeks days from date of opening)

Eligibility: Companies (or groups of companies) with experience and expertise in developing dynamic, effective websites and connecting existing and new websites.

Issuer: Tiffin-Seneca Economic Partnership (TSEP)

Address: 96 S. Washington St., Tiffin, OH 44883

Subprojects:

1. New TSEP and Downtown website improvements, including connectivity (**Page 3**)
2. City of Tiffin Website Improvements (**Page 5**)
3. Seneca County Commissioner website improvements (**Page 8**)
4. Seneca County Sheriff's Office website improvements (**Page 10**)

We seek a firm that has demonstrated success in developing websites outstanding in look, navigability, and functionality for a variety of organizations. Specific experience in developing websites with the functionality we seek is important. Specific experience in successfully developing economic, downtown, chamber, tourism, and/or city/county government sites is a plus. Experience in effectively working with larger groups of collaborative partners is critical.

2. Project Background

Over the past several years, Tiffin and Seneca County have enjoyed significant economic growth, placing fourth in the country last year out of 581 micropolitans (non-metro counties with significant population) for large economic development projects. Its state- and nationally-accredited downtown is one of the top downtowns in the state and region, with more than 70 new businesses opening up since 2014. In the past year, the Chamber of Commerce has grown its membership by more than 30 percent, its social media has experienced exponential growth, and they have now become the second strongest Chamber in Northwest Ohio, with more than 400 members. Both the City of Tiffin and Seneca County were one of the few municipalities and counties that ended 2020 with positive net revenue, and both have strong, innovative leaders and teams that approach things in a collaborative and strategic manner. These organizations are passionate about, and deeply committed to, effectively marketing the community and continually improving their efforts to do so.

In 2016, these organizations embarked together on an 18-month community branding initiative. What was found after interviewing more than 500 community members and comprehensive research done outside the community is that what makes our community unique is the connection we all feel to our friends and family, and to this place we call home. This connection ensures our businesses are supported, our growth as a community continues, and that newcomers and long-time residents alike can find a life fulfilled here.

The initiative resulted in a uniquely connected brand family connecting more than seven separate groups – the county (Seneca County), city (City of Tiffin), chamber and tourism (Seneca Regional Chamber and Visitors

Services), economic development and downtown revitalization (Tiffin-Seneca Economic Partnership, formerly Seneca Industrial and Economic Development Corp. or SIEDC), and planning (Seneca Regional Planning). Here is the video launching the brand, which also talks about our collaborative spirit: <https://youtu.be/LquublwmqV0>.

Attached to this document is the Community Brand Guidelines for the community's brand and logo. This includes the design of the logo(s), color families, fonts and examples of the applied branding.

A year later, in July 2019, several members of TSEP staff, Tiffin Mayor Aaron Montz, and others met to develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) to identify a firm to help TSEP develop new TSEP and Downtown Tiffin websites. The most important takeaway from the meeting was that the key organizations need to be part of the Website RFP Committee and work to develop the RFP together (versus having them review it at the end before issuance) – in a fashion similar to the Community Branding Initiative. From the meeting minutes: “The thought process here is that there are several reasons to do so: (1) some organizations (like the City) are interested in doing alternates (an option for the firm to redo their site as well); (2) there could/will be integration of the sites at some level (e.g., calendar integration, ‘hamburger’ menus, links); and (3) there could be landing pages/hubs which direct to/integrate with other sites in the larger partnership.”

The Collaborative Websites Initiative was temporarily put on hold until the following year. Then, in 2020, COVID-19 hit, new community development and entrepreneurship initiatives were launched, and Tiffin and Seneca County experienced one of the best economic development years on record. TSEP brought on a new Operations Manager in July 2021 and now is ready and able to move forward in bringing the collaborative partners together to move forward with the initiative.

3. Project Description

With the contract resulting from this RFP, TSEP – together with the City of Tiffin, Seneca County, the Seneca Regional Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Services, and other stakeholders – intends to develop a modern, first-rate, collaborative internet website presence. We have structured the project into four subprojects, and we are seeking a firm to price out each individual subproject. TSEP's intention is to move forward with Subproject 1, with Subprojects 2 through 4 subject to approval and funding by the participating organizations.

3.1 Subproject 1 – TSEP and Downtown Websites + Connectivity

The Seneca Industrial and Economic Development Corp. (now TSEP) was created in 1983 to lead economic development in Tiffin and rural Seneca County. Its first, simple static website (seneca-edc.com) was developed in the early 2000s and featured 8 pages with information on the organization, members, projects, etc. ([click here](#) to see what it looked like before it was retired in 2014.) In 2014, a new website (tiffinseneca.org) was internally developed using wordpress.com as a platform and is designed to be an information hub for a content-based marketing strategy that promotes projects, resources, competitive advantages, and quality of life. It currently has approximately 900 posts, 58 pages, and annually averages 60,000 visitors and 86,000 views. Downtown Tiffin does not have its own website. It has a dropdown menu on the tiffinseneca.org website with a home page, a link to a github.io business directory, and a standalone page of downtown events accessible by its own URL (downtowntiffinevents.com). Both TSEP and Downtown Tiffin maintain a Facebook page, and TSEP utilizes some additional social media platforms as well.

We would like to revamp the TSEP website and develop a new one for Downtown Tiffin. We do not have a preconceived idea of what the sites should look like and how they should function, or how it should be structured or designed; we are looking for a firm to guide us based on both what we need and want as well as best practices in web design.

In an ideal world, we could have two sites that accomplish everything we want and do it in a way that provides a first-class user experience. We understand that may not be possible. That being said, here are some of the elements we would like our site to have:

- **Appearance & Navigation:** The sites have a very professional, top-notch appearance and navigation system. They are mobile-, tablet-, and desktop-friendly.
- **CMS:** The sites provide an easy-to-learn and -use content management system that TSEP staff can access directly to update and change content, create new pages, and alter drop down menus. We want to be able to maintain the site on our own. The proposal needs to include training in the CMS for staff.
- **Content**
 - **Posts/Pages:** The sites allow us to keep and include our existing content (posts/pages) and continue to develop more on an ongoing basis to support our content-based marketing approach (current function of our website).
 - **Documents:** The sites allow us to upload and make accessible important documents (e.g., strategic plans).
 - **Video:** The sites incorporate video that we have produced and will be producing in the future in a fast-loading, compelling, and engaging way.
 - **Properties:** The sites allow us to provide a built-in, online GIS-enabled user interface to search for, learn about, and (eventually) virtually tour available commercial and industrial property (much of which has not been listed with a real estate agent), and to keep that interface updated via some type of database.
 - **Social Media:** The sites integrate our social media platforms into the sites.
 - **Learning Management System:** We have started exploring the use of LMSs for business, volunteer, partner, and member training (e.g., LearnDash). Ideally, the sites would include an LMS.
 - **Events Calendar:** The sites would have an events calendar feature tailored to each, that should come from a single, easy-to-maintain database. Examples of TSEP events would include resource webinars and events, as well as TSEP events. Examples of Downtown Tiffin events

would be events in downtown Tiffin, resource webinars relevant to downtown businesses, and TSEP events specific for the downtown (e.g., Downtown Celebration & Summit). This could be a great opportunity for integration and connectivity between these and other partner sites (e.g., Chamber and Destination Seneca County).

- **Metrics:** The sites will provide robust analytics (e.g., WordPress stats, Google Analytics) to allow us to easily measure traffic and engagement.
- **Diverse Activities:** They will take into account the comprehensive nature of the TSEP organization (see our annual report at tsepreport.com for an overview), as well as the diverse activities of Downtown Tiffin, which mirror much of TSEP within the specific geographic area of downtown but also has its own uniqueness (e.g., [Main Street](#)).
- **Diverse Audiences:** They will take into account the diverse audiences that engage with TSEP, including the following:
 - Businesses, entrepreneurs, investors, and consultants looking for site selection information and services, incentives and resource programs, and contact information;
 - Governments, foundations, nonprofit organizations, residents, and other stakeholders looking to participate in the community development process, receive help and assistance with community development ideas and projects;
 - Existing and potential members, partners, volunteers and other stakeholders looking for information on development and organizational activity, committees and plans, membership and sponsorship, and other information.
- **Security:** Site should have a government-class proprietary system with the latest security certificates and provide a secure connection for users. Include in proposal how various server hosting support would be addressed: server uptime, server redundancy and/or failover options, security patches, technical support, server updates, data backup schedule, performance monitoring and reporting.
- **ADA Compliance:** The website build would have Americans with Disabilities Act website accessibility compliance in mind at the start, and be able to update as standards change.
- **Technical Support:** The proposal would include a plan to provide assistance for technical issues, data backups, security patches (if needed), cyber security and basic maintenance.

Furthermore, we are looking for the selected firm have experience and expertise in connectivity and assist us with the following:

- **Similar Look & Experience:** Ensuring the TSEP and Downtown Tiffin websites have a similar look and feel.
- **Referrals:** Providing ways for the TSEP and Downtown Tiffin websites and partner sites (e.g., City of Tiffin, Seneca County, Seneca Regional Chamber, Destination Seneca County, Seneca County Commissioners) to refer site visitors to each other's sites and organizations in an effective manner.
- **Additional Connectivity:** Ensuring that the TSEP and Downtown Tiffin sites connect to each other in additional meaningful and easy-to-navigate ways. To the extent other partners (e.g., City of Tiffin, Seneca Regional Chamber, Seneca County Commissioners) are upgrading, refreshing, and/or revamping their websites and additional connectivity is feasible and desired by the partner, ensuring effective connectivity is also applied to their sites.

3.2 Subproject 2 – City of Tiffin

The City of Tiffin, founded in 1812, is the county seat of Seneca County, Ohio. The City’s population was 17,963 at the 2010 census. The National Arbor Day Foundation has designated Tiffin as a Tree City USA, and it is home to Heidelberg University and Tiffin University.

The City has had a few websites in its history, with the most recent web overhaul happening in 2018 following the unveiling of the Community Brand (tiffinohio.gov). The site is primarily an information hub, with posts about upcoming meetings or announcements, links to forms and pages for various City Departments. The City of Tiffin has a Facebook and Twitter Page and recently began using YouTube to host videos, primarily recordings of City Council meetings.

The City of Tiffin is considering an overhaul of the City of Tiffin’s website, including pages for the various departments in the City. As with TSEP, they do not have a preconceived idea of what the sites should look like and how they should function, or how it should be structured or designed.

In an ideal world, the site would be inviting and easy-to-use for residents seeking information. Here are some of the elements the City would like its site to have:

- **Appearance & Navigation:** The site should have a very professional, top-notch appearance and navigation system. It should be mobile-, tablet-, and desktop-friendly.
- **CMS:** The site provides an easy-to-learn and -use content management system that City of Tiffin staff can access directly to update and change content, create new pages, and alter drop down menus. We want to be able to maintain the site on our own. The proposal needs to include training in the CMS for staff.
- **Content:** The City’s site should incorporate the following types of content it frequently shares with the public, its constituents, stakeholders, and customers.
 - **News & Announcements:** The site should continue to be a place where the public can go to find announcements of upcoming meetings or notices posted by the City of Tiffin, as well as see news releases on announcements of public projects/programs. The ability to use announcement banners on specific pages that could be customized for various departments (more information later) would be a benefit.
 - **About and FAQ:** The site should have a robust “About Us” page that is regularly updated with statistics, news stories and potentially a shout box that could have news stories and social media mentions showcased on the website. Some departments already have “About Us” sections, and would like that information preserved to be used again. Additionally, a Frequently Asked Questions page for the entire city, with separate FAQs for each department (more information later).
 - **How Do I?:** Like the FAQ, a page that allows users to input a “question” and then get guided suggestions to find the answer on the website, without having to call City Hall.
 - **Documents:** The site allows staff to upload and make accessible important documents (e.g., employment forms and documents, tax forms, permits). Forms would ideally be strictly in browser, for citizens to fill out necessary information without leaving the site, and have the ability to take payment directly if applicable.
 - **Department Pages:** The site should have separate pages for the various departments and include relevant information including hours, contact information for the department and various staffers.

- **City Codified Ordinances:** Accessible and searchable database of the City’s laws, that can easily be updated as they change each year.
- **GIS Map:** A link to the City Engineer’s GIS map with zoning, tax abatement zones, wards and other information layers available.
- **Online Payment/Bill Pay:** Having the ability to collect payment from the website associated with applications or programs would be beneficial. Additionally, online payment for income taxes or sewer collections would also be preferred.
- **Video:** The site incorporates video, such as City Council meetings and other content that may be produced in the future.
- **Social Media:** The site integrates the City’s social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, other future platforms).
- **Events Calendar:** The site would have an events calendar feature that could be integrated with the Chamber, Destination Seneca County, Downtown Tiffin, Seneca County, Tiffin-Seneca Public Library and other entities.
- **Wish List:** There are a number of items that City Department Heads would like that may need to be created at a later date:
 - **Citizen Accounts:** A section for citizens to create an account with a username and password that can be used to make payments, track past “purchases/registrations” and sign up for text or email alerts.
 - **Employee Accounts:** A section for employees where they can view job descriptions, read policies, check payroll, view health plan information and change enrollment status or file claims with Human Resources.
 - **QR Integration:** Potential creation of QR codes for specific pages.
 - **Integration Ready For “Reporting App”:** The City of Tiffin had previously entered into a contract with a third-party on an app to report problems (road issues, crime, questions), and would like the ability to better integrate that with the website in the future. Possibility of something being built into the website to report problems and submit pictures could be desired, though is a lesser priority.
- **Metrics:** The sites will provide robust analytics (e.g., WordPress stats, Google Analytics) to allow City officials to easily measure traffic and engagement.
- **Diverse Audiences:** They will take into account the diverse audiences that engage with the City, including the following:
 - The General Public, seeking information such as forms and permits, contact information for various departments or information on upcoming meetings or community events.
 - Contractors or other firms needing forms or permits to complete work in the City of Tiffin, or gain information on regulations from a particular department.
 - Businesses, entrepreneurs, investors, and consultants looking for site selection information and services, incentives and resource programs, and contact information. To achieve this, the site would allow these users to quickly and efficiently be directed to the Tiffin-Seneca Economic Development website, where most of the relevant information would already exist.
- **Security:** Site should have a government-class proprietary system with the latest security certificates and provide a secure connection for users. Include in proposal how various server hosting support would be addressed: server uptime, server redundancy and/or failover options, security patches, technical support, server updates, data backup schedule, performance monitoring and reporting.

- **ADA Compliance:** The website build would have Americans with Disabilities Act website accessibility compliance in mind at the start, and be able to update as standards change.
- **Technical Support:** The proposal would include a plan to provide assistance for technical issues, data backups, security patches (if needed), cyber security and basic maintenance.

3.3 Subproject 3 – Seneca County (Commissioners)

Seneca County was created in 1820 and later organized in 1824. As of the 2010 census, the population was 56,745. Its county seat is Tiffin. The county's current website is run through WordPress (senecacountyohio.gov). It was developed by the county's information technology consultant, Buckeye IT.

The website is designed as an information hub for all things related to the county, however users often don't organically visit the site but instead are directed to it through the County's various social media channels.

The home page features photos of the Seneca County Board of Commissioners, with a link to the biography of each. Other pages include information and photos about elected officials and department heads. There are also pages with forms, notices, job openings and more. Also on the home page is a link to the county's most recent YouTube video and a link to the home of the county's podcast.

Other links on the website include agendas, indexes, and video minutes from every commissioners' board meeting in the past five years. Since 2018, our Public Relations Coordinator has posted pre- and post-meeting press releases as well as other county-related web content.

We at the county are happy with the current website, but feel it is quite minimalist. There are also some design flaws and aesthetic issues that need remedied. Among the challenges to the County's web presence is that there are several elected officials at the county level, each with different visions and varying levels of interest in having an effective, professional web presence. While it would be ideal to have a uniform web layout/structure for every county department, it is largely limited due to the structure of these offices. The County Commissioners Office would like for this project to provide a separate landing page for each county office. These pages could provide basic information about the department and its personnel while also including a link to that department's official website. Some of our departments may also endeavor to join us through this RFP process, but it is not something we can mandate.

Currently, we are pleased with the information that is displayed on our website but feel the biggest need for improvement is in the area of aesthetics/layout. With this project, we hope to continue providing the same types of information, but in a more aesthetically pleasing way. One other major desire is to fit into the uniformity of the other entities involved in this project. We feel in Seneca County that the thing setting us apart from other communities is our high level of communication, cooperation and collaboration with other public and private entities. We hope to display this, not only with our actions in the board room, but also through a visual representation via our web presence. Any proposal would continue to help us be as transparent and accessible as possible by providing the same types of content and information, but in a re-imagined and more aesthetically pleasing way.

To meet these goals, the site would be inviting and easy-to-use for residents seeking information. Here are some of the elements the County Commissioners would like its site to have:

- **Appearance & Navigation:** The site should have a very professional, top-notch appearance and navigation system. They are mobile-, tablet-, and desktop-friendly.
- **CMS:** The site provides an easy-to-learn and -use content management system that county staff can access directly to update and change content, create new pages, and alter drop down menus. We want to be able to maintain the site on our own. The proposal needs to include training in the CMS for staff.

- **Content:** The City’s site should incorporate the following types of content it frequently shares with the public, its constituents, stakeholders, and customers.
 - **Posts/Pages:** The sites allow us to keep and include our existing content (posts/pages) and continue to develop more.
 - **County Office Pages:** As stated above, the ability to create sub pages for each County Office with basic information about the Office and its personnel while also including a link to that Office’s official website.
 - **Documents:** The sites allow us to upload and make accessible important documents, photos and videos.
 - **Video:** The sites incorporate video that we have produced and will be producing in the future in a fast-loading, compelling, and engaging way.
 - **Social Media:** The sites integrate our social media and podcasting platform into the sites.
 - **Events Calendar:** The sites would have an events calendar feature tailored to county events that should come from a single, easy-to-maintain database. We would envision this calendar including county meetings. We also would like to share township and village meeting dates, times and locations. A great feature could be to have filtered results and to include other community events that are not officially run by the county.
- **Metrics:** The sites will provide robust analytics (e.g., WordPress stats, Google Analytics) to allow us to easily measure traffic and engagement.
- **Security:** Site should have a government-class proprietary system with the latest security certificates and provide a secure connection for users. Include in proposal how various server hosting support would be addressed: server uptime, server redundancy and/or failover options, security patches, technical support, server updates, data backup schedule, performance monitoring and reporting.
- **ADA Compliance:** The website build would have Americans with Disabilities Act website accessibility compliance in mind at the start, and be able to update as standards change.
- **Technical Support:** The proposal would include a plan to provide assistance for technical issues, data backups, security patches (if needed), cyber security and basic maintenance.

3.4 Subproject 4 – Seneca County (Sheriff's Office)

When organized in 1824, Seneca County gained its first Sheriff, Agreen Ingraham, who served in the office from 1824-1828. Seneca County Fred Stevens was elected to the position in November 2020 and began serving in that role on Jan. 1, 2021.

The current Sheriff's website (<https://senecacountyso.org/>) features links for divisions (Road Division, Dispatch, Corrections) and links for Sheriff's Sale, Sex Offender Registry, Job Postings and Services provided by the office (Concealed Carry License, Finger Printing), as well as links for other departments that may be useful to the public.

The Seneca County Sheriff's Office is considering an overhaul of its website. As with other entities, they do not have a preconceived idea of what the site should look like and how they should function, or how it should be structured or designed.

In an ideal world, the site would be inviting and easy-to-use for residents seeking information. Here are some of the elements the Sheriff would like its site to have:

- **Appearance & Navigation:** The site should have a very professional, top-notch appearance and navigation system. It should be mobile-, tablet-, and desktop-friendly.
- **CMS:** The site provides an easy-to-learn and -use content management system that Sheriff's Office staff can access directly to update and change content, create new pages, and alter drop down menus. We want to be able to maintain the site on our own. The proposal needs to include training in the CMS for staff.
- **Content:** The Seneca County Sheriff's site should incorporate the following types of content it frequently shares with the public, its constituents, stakeholders, and customers.
 - **News & Announcements:** The site should allow the public to find announcements or notices posted by the Sheriff's Office (such as weather emergencies, recent job opportunity openings or programs offered by the office).
 - **About and FAQ:** The site should have a robust "About Us" page can be regularly updated with statistics and facts. Currently the site features a section that lists all of the past sheriffs, which could be integrated here. Additionally, a Frequently Asked Questions page should be created.
 - **Documents:** The site allows staff to upload and make accessible important documents. Forms could be utilized and would ideally be strictly in browser, for citizens to fill out necessary information without leaving the site.
 - **App Integration:** The Sheriff's Office is releasing a smartphone app this month, which would need to integrate with the website. The app includes a directory of links for community resources, area's most wanted, sex offender search, conceal carry information and weather and emergency weather information. Additionally, jail and inmate information will be available, with inmate rosters, inmate funds, visitation schedules, visitation requirements and court case statuses. Finally, users will be able to submit anonymous tips through the app.
 - **Submit Tips:** Like the Sherriff's Office app, the website should be able to allow citizens to submit anonymous tips.
 - **Division/Service Pages:** The site should have separate pages for the various divisions or services offered by the Sheriff's Office.

- **Social Media:** The site integrates the Sheriff's Office social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, other future platforms) and allows for posts to be entered once across platforms and web.
- **Video:** The site should be able to incorporate video in the future.
- **Metrics:** The site would provide robust analytics (e.g., WordPress stats, Google Analytics) to allow Sheriff's Office staff to easily measure traffic and engagement.
- **Diverse Audiences:** They will take into account the diverse audiences that engage with the Sheriff's Office, including the following:
 - The General Public, seeking information such as forms, permits, contact information or links to other services offered by the Sheriff.
 - Businesses, entrepreneurs, investors, and consultants looking for area information such as statistics on crime rate.
- **Security:** Site should have a government-class proprietary system with the latest security certificates and provide a secure connection for users. Include in proposal how various server hosting support would be addressed: server uptime, server redundancy and/or failover options, security patches, technical support, server updates, data backup schedule, performance monitoring and reporting.
- **ADA Compliance:** The website build would have Americans with Disabilities Act website accessibility compliance in mind at the start, and be able to update as standards change.
- **Technical Support:** The proposal would include a plan to provide assistance for technical issues, data backups, security patches (if needed), cyber security and basic maintenance.

4. Proposal Requirements

The following elements will be required in proposal submissions

- Cover letter.
- Timeline for the project.
- Project statement, describing the applicant's understanding of the goals and objectives, as well as the approach and philosophy regarding the project.
- Proposed project team members – include a description of the organization, an organizational chart, and the primary role and responsibility of each team member. Clearly designate the team leader for this project and the responsibilities of other contributing members.
- Individual experience – include information on the background of key members and detail their specific contributions to past projects, as it relates to this project.
- Specific project experience – provide examples of similar projects that were successfully executed.
- List of references – at least three client references, for projects completed within the past five years. Include the name, email, and telephone number of the contact person. List services provided to each client.
- Project cost – attach a separate budget proposal showing the total cost of your proposed services. Include a breakdown of cost for each subproject.
- Additional information may be provided to support applicant's ability to successfully complete this type of project.

5. Submittal Requirements

Candidate firms should submit their proposals with four hard copies and one electronic copy in PDF format by October 11, 2021 (5:00 pm Eastern Standard Time) to Corrina Haynes, Operations Manager at the Tiffin-Seneca Economic Partnership, at haynes@senecacounty.org and by U.S. mail to:

Corrina Haynes
Operations Manager
Tiffin-Seneca Economic Partnership
96 S. Washington St., Suite A
Tiffin, OH 44883

Please direct any questions about the RFP to Nick Dutro, Economic Development Manager, via email at dutro@tiffinseneca.org or phone 419.767.0328 (cell).

6. Evaluation Criteria

The following elements will be considered in evaluating the consultant's qualifications:

- Successful recent and relevant experience.
- Competency of firm, including reputation and integrity.
- Professional background and success of key personnel assigned to this project.
- Ability to work with diverse clients and successfully facilitate a collaborative website development process.
- Ability to meet deadlines.
- Proposed fee schedule.

7. Evaluation & Selection Process

Interested firms must be able to have key personnel who will be working on this project attend an in-person interview with the Collaborative Website Initiative Committee to be considered for this project. Interviews will be held in Tiffin, Ohio, in October 2021, with specific dates, times, and locations yet to be determined. Selection and contract negotiation is expected to finish in October or November. The project would move forward after that in accordance with the time frames developed by the selected firm.

8. Right to Reject

This Request for Proposal does not constitute a commitment by TSEP or any other partner to award a contract, and it reserves the right to waive any informalities and to reject any or all proposals and to cancel the Request for Proposals. The awarded contract shall be made on the proposal that serves the best interest of the partners and community.