

RFP FAQ

Below, you will find answers to most of the questions we received from our RFP posting. Some technical and specific questions we are not yet answering at this time, as we would see those discussions as part of the process with our selected vendor. We received several questions that were covered in the RFP, so if you do not see your question answered here, it may already be in the RFP.

We want to clarify that **the budget is for the full redesign and launch of the website**: the phased approach mentioned in the RFP was given as an option knowing the tight timeline for a November 15 launch. If a vendor chose to do a phased approach, we would expect an estimated "core" 20 pages, decided collaboratively, to be launched by November 15, with an agreed timeline for the remaining pages to be launched as part of the complete project.

The RFP has been updated and can be found on our website: <https://esplanade.org/rfp/>
Contact Emma Rose Rainville at erainville@esplanade.org for submission of your proposal.

Technological

1. *Is there an on-site requirement, or can the work be done fully remotely?*
Work can be done fully remotely.
2. *Is WordPress strictly required, or equivalent platforms acceptable provided they meet the requirements outlined in the RFP?*
Vendors are welcome to suggest other platforms that they see to be a better fit.
3. *Does EA currently have an internal IT team to manage server security, or are you looking for the vendor to provide a managed hosting environment?*
EA does not currently have an IT team, but we would be open to consideration of recommendations for a different hosting environment.
4. *Do you have any preferred approach for content management within WordPress (for example Gutenberg block editor, ACF-based flexible content modules, page builders, etc.)?*
No specific preferred approach, open to vendor suggestions.
5. *Are there specific requirements for backups, uptime, disaster recovery, compliance, hosting standards, or security monitoring?*
No specific requirements.
6. *Will EA provide separate environments for development/testing and production launch, or should the vendor include these as part of the proposal with costing on actuals.*
The vendor would need to provide the environment for testing as part of their proposal.
7. *Are cookie consent management, privacy preference centers, or GDPR/CCPA compliance requirements expected?*
No expectations.
8. *Are there existing SEO rankings, URLs, redirects, or analytics that must be preserved during migration?*

No.

9. *Are there any SEO goals or performance targets the new site should meet?*
Not at this time, we are looking to build this in the future.

Integrations

1. *Which third-party platforms are confirmed for launch, and which are we open to replacing?*
- **Non-negotiables**
 - **FareHarbor**
 - **DonorPerfect- our internal CRM**
 - **GivenGain - external partner software for BAA Marathon**
 - **Flexible**
 - **Humanitix**
 - **Platform needs to be free and easy to navigate and update**
 - **Google Calendar**
 - **Needs to be accessible**
 - **One Cause**
 - **Special event management software**
2. *Which of the third-party platforms are considered mission critical at launch versus acceptable for phased rollout after launch?*
- **FareHarbor**
 - **DonorPerfect**
3. *Is EA expecting the selected vendor to directly setup, manage, and configure third-party platforms or primarily to integrate existing accounts?*
Just to integrate, but would be helpful to have assistance to set up any platforms that are suggested alternatives by the vendor.
4. *Regarding SharePoint-hosted galleries, should the website support automated syncing/display, or will content be managed manually by the internal team?*
We will be discontinuing our current SharePoint system of sharing photo galleries, if vendor recommendation provides a more contemporary solution.
5. *What are the current platforms used for transactions and donations? Are all four current donation platforms expected to remain active post-launch, or is there intent to consolidate ahead of the redesign?*
- **DonorPerfect**
 - **Humantix**
 - **One Cause**
 - **GivenGain**
- The four donation platforms each have functionality that is specific (and one platform is required by an external partner). We plan to maintain these different functionalities but are open to suggestions of alternatives for Humanitix and One Cause.**
6. *For reservation and visitor service workflows, does EA anticipate staff managing these primarily through WordPress, external systems like FareHarbor, or a hybrid operational model?*

A hybrid operational model: reservations for courts and community rooms will be managed through FareHarbor, event management and volunteer management will be managed internally.

7. *Integration depth - for the listed third-party integrations, are you envisioning native plugin handoffs (embedded widgets) or deeper bi-directional API sync?*
Not at this time.
8. *For the integrated mapping, are you interested in an interactive map with dynamic markers for the park and facilities with filterable amenities and categories for each entity, or standard Google Maps embeds? Would you like the map to include markers and if so, could KML data be provided by the EA to be used for detecting a user's current location to find the nearest entity?*
At this time we are interested in standard Google Maps embeds.
9. *Social media embeds. Should Instagram and Facebook appear as live embedded feeds on the site, or linked only? Live embeds have API dependency implications worth confirming upfront?*
Ideally live embeds however creative solutions to dynamic content welcomed.
10. *Are APIs and technical documentation available for these integrations?*
No API integrations are anticipated.
11. *What actions need to be tracked in your CRM integration?*
While we aspire to do this in the future, this is not a requirement in the near term.

UX

1. *Is multilingual support planned for the initial launch or a future phase? Are there specific languages, translation workflows, or accessibility requirements already identified for launch?*
Not planned at the moment.
2. *The RFP references potential "sign-in" interfaces for vendors, attendees, and volunteers. Is this a Phase 1 or Phase 2 priority, and are any backend systems already in place to support authenticated user flows? Are you envisioning authenticated user portals with account management functionality, or simplified pathways that connect users into existing third-party systems?*
We have removed this language from the RFP as it is not a goal for the website in the near term.

Pages

1. *How many pages are anticipated in the final sitemap to help us scope the migration accurately?*
We have included a sitemap of our current pages, but do not expect a 1:1 migration. We would like the vendor to propose a sitemap that will help us consolidate content appropriately.
2. *How often do you anticipate needing to update global areas like the "Alert" banner for weather advisories?*

During the summer, this is often a regular occurrence for our events so we would estimate that we would need this functionality regularly.

3. *How many unique home page designs and subpage designs (mobile and desktop) would you like to be included in the design phase of the project?*
If this is about how many design comps are desired during the design phase, at least two but ideally three concepts would be presented.

RFP Process

1. *What is the general timeline for this project? When exactly is Phase 1 and Phase 2?*
The “Phase 1” and “Phase 2” mentioned in the RFP is an approach that we are open to, but is not required. We know that a launch in November is a short timeline, so have included the option of a phased approach. If the timeline for our building opening is extended, we are open to extending the engagement with a vendor at our discretion.
2. *What will the general feedback and approval process look like? How many rounds of design revisions are anticipated at each phase before final approval?*
This would be worked out in partnership with the vendor. As mentioned in the RFP, we would ensure weekly access to senior leadership to expedite approvals and feedback to keep the project moving.
3. *In-kind partnership. The RFP offers recognition benefits for in-kind contributions above \$10,000. Is EA open to proposals that blend a cash fee with in-kind services — for example, reduced fee in exchange for a named partnership on the Pavilion’s contributor wall and press materials?*
Yes, we are open to these kinds of proposals for in-kind recognition.
4. *How does EA envision the discovery and alignment phase, does the organization have capacity to participate in structured working sessions (e.g., workshops, co-design activities), or is the expectation that the vendor works more independently and presents for review?*
Yes, we would be very open to structured working sessions.
5. *Selection process - does EA anticipate a vendor short-list and interview round after the June 1 deadline, or will selection be made directly from written submissions? If interviews are planned, what is the target timeframe?*
Yes, we anticipate an interview round following the June 1 deadline, planned between June 1-12. We are actively reviewing the proposals as they are submitted and will start inviting interviews as we review. If companies are unavailable for interviews, we may be able to substitute with some questions over email.
6. *Can companies from other countries apply? Is your preference given to a Boston based team?*
We are accepting applications from other countries.
7. *What would define success internally six to twelve months after launch beyond visual improvement? For example, operational efficiency, increased participation, improved discoverability, donation growth, or visitor engagement.*
 - **Improved user experience and ability to find what people are looking for on our site.**
 - **Improved ability to manage updates on the back end (operational efficiency)**
 - **Ease of booking spaces for our users**

8. Who are the previous or current incumbents managing the existing WordPress site, and will they be involved in the transition or data migration process?
We are in touch with the original developer of the site and are able to go to them for input if needed though we are not planning on migrating content but rather a rebuild. The site has been primarily managed by EA staff.

Current Site

1. Are there any existing analytics reports or user behavior insights that can help identify the most visited pages and user journeys?
See attached here for a snapshot analytics report of website users for the past 12 months. Further data can be provided to vendors later in the process.
2. Site map access. The RFP references "Existing pages are linked here" but the link doesn't render in the PDF?
The site map is now listed on the bottom of the updated RFP (linked at the top).
3. We see that esplanadeassociation.org redirects to esplanade.org. Are you planning to build out esplanadeassociation.org as a separate site with different purposes/audiences, or will it remain solely a redirect?
Solely as a redirect.
4. Could EA share the existing hosting details for esplanade.org — provider, plan, control panel, DNS registrar, current PHP version, and any plugin licenses currently in force?
While we are not prepared to share back-end details, any specific questions related to these issue are welcome during the interview stage.
5. What is the existing taxonomy structure (categories, tags, custom taxonomies, content types) — and should it be retained, restructured, or rebuilt from first principles?
We do not intend to retain any of the current website structure and would want a proposal from the vendor for an updated structure.

Content

1. Does EA currently have a strong library of photo and video assets that reflects the organization's next chapter, including the Pavilion and Charlesbank vision? Or would EA be open to incorporating a focused media capture/storytelling component into the engagement to help elevate the emotional and experiential aspects of the new site?
EA has a strong library of photos and has reserved some budget for more photo and video assets to be created once the new Pavilion is opened to reflect the new aspects of our work.
2. Content delivery schedule. Since all content is provided by EA, can you share a rough sense of when content for the 20 Phase 1 pages will be ready? Would we be uploading the content into the CMS, or your staff?
EA will work with the vendor on a content schedule to align with the production needs. As mentioned earlier, the phased approach is an option but not a requirement.

Maintenance

1. *Will different departments/team members manage different sections of the website? If yes, what user roles and permissions will be required?*
The website will be managed by the Marketing and Communications team going forward, but documentation and training should be provided so that these responsibilities could be easily transferred in the case of promotion or new hires.
2. *Since the website should support dynamic and seasonal experiences, do you expect the internal team to independently manage homepage campaigns, banners, and seasonal content updates?*
Yes.
3. *How would your team ideally like to manage and update content on a day-to-day basis?*
On a day-to-day basis, we anticipate updating page content and copy, news and announcements, events and calendars, images and media assets, and document attachments. Most website updates will be performed by our Design & Communications Coordinator. Key priorities for updates are flexible page management and editing capabilities.

Branding/Design

1. *Are there existing brand guidelines, design systems, or content standards that must be carried forward, or is there openness to evolving the visual identity alongside the new digital experience?*
We have current brand guidelines which are linked in the RFP. We would consider evolving the visual identity as part of the website redesign.
2. *Currently, your brand guidelines do not specify in detail how colors should (or should not) be used. In the cases where there is color combinations that fail color contrast requirements in certain contexts, would you be open to changing them to make the contrast work?*
Yes, we are open to making changes to colors if they are not compliant with accessibility standards.
3. *In Design and Branding, you mention distinct visual identities for groups such as the GroundBeat Concert Series and annual Boston Marathon Charity Team. Do these partners already have their own identities and brand guidelines, or would we be proposing designs for how they can be distinct and yet within your overall branding?*
GroundBeat is an EA program with a distinct branding which we would be open to shifting. The Boston Marathon Charity Team is required to use certain Boston Athletic Association brand guidelines which we are not able to adjust.
4. *Do you expect custom illustration, animation, motion design, or video treatment as part of the launch scope?*
We would be open to these being components of a proposed design.

Budget

1. *Is the current budget intended to support only Phase 1 launch deliverables, or should it also account for a meaningful portion of Phase 2 migration and expansion work?*

Please note that this budget is for the full project of completing the website. We are open to a phased approach to developing the website, but it is not required, and that does not impact the budget.

2. Does the \$90,000 figure cover design and development services only, or is it expected to include third-party plugin licenses, hosting, and other infrastructure costs?
The \$90,000 budget is for design and development services only. The third-party platforms have been budgeted separately.
3. Is the 45-day post-launch support the full extent of the vendor engagement, or is an ongoing maintenance retainer anticipated and budgeted separately from website rebuild budget?
Depending on need after launch, we may engage the vendor for maintenance or updates but do not have a budget to share for this at this time.

Timeline

1. QR code continuity. Existing QR codes presumably point to current URLs. Is there a list of QR codes in active use (signage, printed materials) that must continue to resolve correctly after the URL structure changes?
Most of our QR codes have been for short term links (single events, or temporary signage), so we are not concerned with QR code continuity at this time.
2. Launch date flexibility. The Pavilion opening is "late 2026, construction dependent." If construction is delayed, does the website launch date shift accordingly, or does it remain fixed at November regardless?
If the timeline for the opening of our building is shifted, we may be able to shift the timeline for launch of the website, at our discretion.
3. Could Phase 2 extend another month past Phase 1 launch?
Yes, if a vendor chose to use a phased approach, we would work to agree on the phase 2 completion date which could extend beyond November 15.
4. Will the Phase 1 launch site consist only of 20 core pages, or would we be launching 20 pages within the existing website, leaving legacy content in place?
If the vendor chose to use a phased approach, we would anticipate it launching as a new site and not keeping the legacy content in place.

Accessibility

1. Should existing PDFs, reports, and publications also be updated for accessibility compliance?
Yes, as part of the content, EA will provide this.
2. Are there accessibility requirements beyond WCAG 2.1 AA?
At the moment, these are the requirements that we are aware of. EA has an Accessibility Coordinator on staff and also has an accessibility consultant, Think Outside the Vox, who will provide review support of the website for accessibility purposes.
3. Existing accessibility audit. You note the current site has been flagged as non-compliant. Has a formal WCAG audit been conducted? If so, can you share the findings? This helps us scope the remediation effort more precisely.

We do not intend to keep the non-compliant structure; we are interested in a new design which would be fully compliant.

4. *Are there any specific accessibility compliance tools, testing processes, or third-party audits expected before launching?*
So long as compliance objectives are met, we have no proscribed tools or protocols that are expected.

Archive

1. *How much archival content exists today, organizational history, past programs, past performances, and in what formats (documents, images, video)? Is any of it already digitized and tagged, or does taxonomy need to be built from scratch?*
This content exists on today's website, but we are very flexible about how the archival content comes into the new site's designs. Vendor is not expected to convert content to new design.
2. *Should archived/past events and programs remain publicly searchable, or should some content become internal/private? How do you want to handle "Archived" content? When someone searches for a concert from three years ago, should it look different from an event happening tomorrow? Should archive/history content and advanced search/filtering be included in the initial launch scope, or should vendors propose a scalable structure that can expand over time as more historical content is added?*
Ideally, the archived content will be searchable via an onsite search tool. Hidden or intranet content is not a requirement of the new site design or the archive. We are open to vendor-provided recommendations and approaches for this.
3. *Will your content editors manage what items become archived, or would we be building in a function that would enable automatic archiving based on time elapsed, or an event date?*
Our team will manually move content to the archive, however, we are open to vendor recommendations or best practices for how best to achieve this.