

Request for Proposal

Website Redesign and ADA Accessibility

Ocean Highway and Port Authority of Nassau County, FL

Website Redesign & ADA Accessibility Compliance Implementation

Issued by: Ocean Highway and Port Authority (OHPA) of Nassau County, Florida

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1. Introduction

The Ocean Highway and Port Authority of Nassau County (OHPA), a chartered Florida independent special district, a political subdivision of the State of Florida, is soliciting proposals from qualified web design firms to update and modernize the OHPA website. This project will:

- Enhance usability, navigation, and transparency for the public;
- Ensure accessibility compliance with the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II Final Rule** (28 CFR Part 35); and
- Achieve compliance with **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA**, as incorporated into the Department of Justice's (hereinafter referred to as "DOJ") 2024 Final Rule.

As a **government entity**, OHPA is required to ensure equal access to digital services for all members of the public, including individuals with disabilities. Compliance must be achieved by **April 26, 2027**.

2. Project Scope

The selected vendor will be responsible for:

a. Comprehensive Website Redesign

- Redesign OHPA's website to improve usability, transparency, and responsiveness;

- Ensure intuitive navigation, clear calls to action, and consistent branding aligned with OHPA’s public mission;
- Ensure that OHPA’s website contains the required information and documents for publication as required by Florida Statutes applicable to independent special districts, including but not limited to website requirements set forth in Sec. 189.069, Florida Statutes; and
- Present information in a way that supports open government and community engagement.

b. ADA Compliance Implementation

- Conduct a full accessibility audit of OHPA’s current website;
- Redesign and remediate content to achieve **WCAG 2.1 Level AA compliance**;
- Apply Title II ADA requirements, ensuring equal access to government programs, services, and activities;
- Provide documentation of accessibility testing, including both automated tools and manual testing with assistive technologies;
- Establish a workflow for OHPA staff to maintain ongoing compliance;
- Ensure compliance with Appendix A, ADA Compliance Checklist and Appendix B, Exceptions, attached to this Request for Proposal; and
- Vendor is required to execute an ADA Compliance Certificate, in the same form as Appendix C, attached to this Request for Proposal certifying that the proposed deliverables comply fully with federal and state law requirements for public, government agency websites.

c. Records & Document Accessibility

- Ensure all **public-facing documents** (meeting agendas, minutes, reports, forms) are accessible or remediated into compliant formats; and
- Provide guidance on handling **archived and exempt documents** in line with DOJ exceptions.

d. Security & Data Protection

- Implement cybersecurity best practices to safeguard sensitive information, while maintaining public transparency requirements.

e. Mobile Responsiveness & Cross-Browser Compatibility

- Ensure accessibility across devices and platforms, including mobile and tablets.

f. Content Management System (CMS)

- Deploy a government-ready CMS that allows OHPA staff to:
 - Publish content easily;
 - Maintain ADA compliance; and
 - Support records retention and public disclosure requirements.

g. Training & Knowledge Transfer

- Train OHPA staff on CMS use and accessibility best practices; and
- Provide a plain-language **ADA digital compliance guide** for ongoing reference.

h. Compliance with Florida Law, Section 189.069, Florida Statutes

- The following information must be included on OHPA's official website and comply with all requirements of state and federal law, including but not limited to ADA compliance:
- The full legal name of OHPA;
- The public purpose of OHPA;
- The name, official address, official e-mail address, and, if applicable, term and appointing authority for each member of the governing body of OHPA;
- The fiscal year of OHPA;

- The full text of OHPA’s charter, the date of establishment, the establishing entity, and the statute or statutes under which OHPA operates, if different from the statute or statutes under which the special district was established;
- The mailing address, e-mail address, telephone number, and website uniform resource locator of the OHPA;
- A description of the boundaries or service area of, and the services provided by OHPA;
- A listing of all fees or charges imposed and collected by OHPA, including the rates or amounts for the fiscal year and the statutory authority for the levy of the fee or charge;
- The primary contact information for OHPA for purposes of communication from the Florida Department of Commerce;
- The annual budget of OHPA and any amendments thereto in accordance with s. 189.016, Fla. Stats.;
- The final, complete audit report for the most recent completed fiscal year and audit reports required by law or authorized by the governing body of OHPA. If OHPA has submitted its most recent final, complete audit report to the Auditor General, this requirement may be satisfied by providing a link to the audit report on the Auditor General’s website;
- A listing of OHPA’s regularly scheduled public meetings as required by s. 189.015(1), Fla Stats.;
- The link to the Department of Financial Services’ website as set forth in s. 218.32(1)(g), Fla. Stats.; and
- At least 7 days before each meeting or workshop, the agenda for OHPA meetings. The information must remain on the website for at least 1 year after the event.

3. Proposal Submission Requirements

Proposals must include:

- **Executive Summary** – 1-page maximum outlining vendor’s fee structure and

breakdown of services with costs;

- **Company Profile & Government Experience** – Expertise in public-sector web design and ADA/WCAG compliance;
- **Project Approach & Timeline** – Detailed methodology aligned with government compliance deadlines;
- **Portfolio & Case Studies** – Prior work for municipalities, port authorities, or other government agencies;
- **ADA Compliance Strategy** – Tools, methods, and testing protocols to ensure ongoing WCAG 2.1 Level AA compliance;
- **Cost Proposal** – Complete pricing, including design, development, document remediation, training, and support;
- **References** – At least three public-sector clients with similar scopes of services; and
- **Deliverables and Accountability Matrix** – provide deliverable and accountability matrix with deliverables and dates of delivery expected.

4. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- **Accessibility & Technical Expertise (30%)** – Demonstrated ADA compliance experience;
- **Project Approach & Feasibility (25%)** – Methodology and ability to meet DOJ deadlines;
- **Cost Competitiveness & Value (20%)** – Alignment with public-sector budgets and scope;
- **Portfolio Quality & Past Performance (15%)** – Relevant successful government projects; and
- **Client References & Satisfaction (10%)** – Strong, positive references from other public entities.

5. Submission Instructions & Timeline

All proposals must be submitted electronically in Adobe PDF format by **January 9, 2026** to admin@portoffernandina.org , no later than 3:00 PM EST.

Projected Timeline:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| RFP Release Date: | December 5, 2025 |
| • Deadline for Questions: | January 2, 2026, *No later than 3:00 PM EST |
| • Proposal Submission Deadline: | January 9, 2026, *No later than 3:00 PM EST |
| • Evaluation Period: | January 10, 2026 through January 23, 2026 |
| • Vendor Selection Announcement: | January 28, 2026 |

Appendix A – ADA Compliance Checklist

(Full WCAG 2.1 AA checklist as drafted earlier — covers alt text, captions, contrast, navigation, forms, compatibility, testing, etc.)

1. Perceivable (Information and user interface components must be presentable to all users)

Text Alternatives

- Alt text provided for all non-text content (images, icons, charts).
- Decorative images properly marked to be ignored by assistive technology.

Time-Based Media

- Captions provided for all prerecorded video/audio.
- Live captions provided for streamed/live events where feasible.
- Transcripts provided for audio/video content.
- Audio descriptions provided for video content when visual context is necessary.

Adaptable Content

- Content structured with headings, lists, and landmarks.
- Information available without relying solely on visual cues.

Distinguishable

- Color contrast minimum of 4.5:1 for text and 3:1 for large text.
- Text resizable up to 200% without loss of content or function.
- No reliance on color alone to convey meaning.
- Audio control: users can pause/stop sounds that play automatically.

2. Operable (User interface components and navigation must be operable)

Keyboard Accessibility

- All functionality available by keyboard alone.
- Logical tab order maintained throughout.

Enough Time

- Adjustable time limits on forms or transactions.
- No automatic timeouts without warning and extension option.

Seizures and Physical Reactions

- No flashing content exceeding thresholds (3 flashes per second).

Navigable

- Descriptive page titles.
- Consistent navigation across the site.
- Skip-to-content and skip-to-navigation links included.
- Clear focus indicators for links/forms.
- Meaningful link text (no “click here”).
- Multiple ways to locate content (search, menus, sitemap).

3. Understandable (Information and operation of UI must be understandable)

Readable

- Language of each page identified in code.
- Plain-language summaries used for public-facing documents.
- Abbreviations and jargon expanded/defined when used.

Predictable

- Navigation and interactive elements behave consistently across pages.
- No unexpected context changes (e.g., auto-redirects or form submissions).

Input Assistance

- Error messages are clear and specific.
- Instructions provided for required fields.
- Form fields are labeled programmatically.
- Suggestions provided for correcting input errors.

4. Robust (Content must be compatible with assistive technologies)

Compatibility

- Tested with multiple screen readers (NVDA, JAWS, VoiceOver).
- Proper use of ARIA (Accessible Rich Internet Applications) attributes.
- Semantic HTML used for headings, tables, and forms.
- Responsive design maintained without breaking accessibility features.

5. DOJ ADA Final Rule Requirements

- **WCAG 2.1 Level AA Conformance** by **April 26, 2027** (OHPA is under 50,000 population).
- **Accessible Documents:** Public-facing PDFs, Word, and Excel files remediated for accessibility.

- **Exceptions:** Archived documents, third-party posts, secured records, and preexisting social media are exempt unless requested (see Appendix B).
- **Alternate Versions:** Conforming alternate versions only permitted when direct accessibility is not technically feasible.
- **Maintenance:** Accessibility must be sustained for new and updated content post-launch.

6. Testing & Validation

- Automated scanning with accessibility tools (axe, WAVE, Lighthouse).
- Manual keyboard-only navigation testing.
- Screen reader testing (NVDA, JAWS, VoiceOver).
- Mobile accessibility testing (iOS + Android).
- Accessibility compliance report delivered at project closeout.

Appendix B – Exceptions to Accessibility Requirements

Per DOJ ADA Final Rule (28 CFR Part 35, Subpart H), the following categories of content are **exempt from mandatory WCAG 2.1 Level AA compliance** for government entities, unless specifically requested by a member of the public:

1. **Archived Web Content** (e.g., old meeting minutes not actively used).
2. **Preexisting Conventional Electronic Documents** (unless required for ongoing services).
3. **Third-Party Content** not controlled by OHPA.
4. **Password-Protected or Secured Personal Documents** (e.g., account or property records).
5. **Preexisting Social Media Posts.**

Appendix C – ADA Compliance Certification Form

Ocean Highway and Port Authority (OHPA) Website Redesign & ADA Accessibility Compliance Implementation Compliance Certification

As the authorized representative of [Vendor Name], I hereby certify that the redesigned OHPA website, CMS platform, and all related deliverables provided under this contract:

1. Conformance to Standards

- Conform to the **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA**, as incorporated by reference in the **DOJ ADA Title II Final Rule (28 CFR Part 35, Subpart H, effective June 24, 2024)**.
- Meet OHPA's obligations under **Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act** to ensure equal access to government services, programs, and activities provided via the web.

2. Testing & Verification

- Have been tested using:
 - Automated accessibility tools (e.g., WAVE, axe, Lighthouse),
 - Manual keyboard-only navigation, and
 - Screen reader technologies (e.g., NVDA, JAWS, VoiceOver).
- Have passed internal quality assurance testing demonstrating accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

3. Exceptions

- Only the exceptions permitted under DOJ's Final Rule (archived content, preexisting documents not in use, third-party content, password-protected documents, and preexisting social media posts) have been excluded from WCAG 2.1 AA remediation.
- OHPA has been provided with a documented **Exception Handling Plan** for managing requests for accessible versions of exempt content.

4. Ongoing Compliance

- Training and documentation have been provided to OHPA staff for maintaining accessibility in future updates.
- The CMS delivered is configured to support ADA-compliant content publishing.

Certification

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that the above statements are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, and that the deliverables provided meet or exceed the accessibility requirements outlined in this Request for Proposals and applicable federal and state law.

VENDOR NAME:

By:_____

Print Name:_____

STATE OF FLORIDA

COUNTY OF _____

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me by means of ☐ physical presence or ☐ online notarization this (numeric date) day of (month), (year), by _____ (print name) as _____ (title) for _____ (business name).

(NOTARY SEAL)

Signature of Notary

Name of Notary: _____

Personally Known _____ OR Produced Identification _____
Type of Identification Produced _____