

***DRAFT #1***

***PROPOSAL FOR ARPA FUNDING: TOWN OF CHESTER WEB SITE***

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***PROPOSAL INFORMATION:***

Town of Chester – Board of Selectman

***PROJECT DESCRIPTION:***

The existing Town web site was launched in 2012 and needs updating to improve functionality and ease of use by public and Town staff. The objective of this project is to present a quality comprehensive web site that is concise, clearly communicates with residents and businesses, and is simple to use. The new web site will improve search access to boards and commissions agenda and minutes, allow more page space for the descriptive roles and responsibilities of the Town's volunteer boards and commissions and facilitate compliance for timely posting FOI announcements.

Five municipal web site vendors, including our current consultant, submitted their qualifications and fees for year -1 web design and launch and future 5-year contract expenses. For a concise comparison of services vendors were asked comparable questions such as technical support response time, user training, design and launch hours, security, ADA support, payment terms, and availability of live telephone assistance. Quotes were reviewed in four basic areas: 5-year total cost of contract, functionality of content management system, after sale support services, and existing Connecticut municipal website references. The functionality of the web site design that allowed Town staff to self-administer posted information, create interactive content without outside assistance and the vendor's explanation of total cost of services were also important considerations.

***ARPA FUNDS REQUESTED:***

\$11,500 of ARPA funds is requested for the year-1 design preparation and launch of the new web site. The following 5 - years expenditures would be paid from the general operating

budget: Year (1) \$0, (2) \$3,000, (3) \$3,090, (4) \$3,183, (5) \$3,278. The total 5-year contract cost is \$24,051. For this project, the Board of Selectmen have chosen Government Sites by Civic Plus. Civic Plus's contract provides a recurring web site redesign in year- 4 which is saving advantage of upfront costs of \$8,500 to \$10,500 should a new web design be desired.

Civic Plus has a strong positive client base in Connecticut currently serving (82) municipalities.

Civic Plus received glowing recommendations from neighboring towns of Essex, Deep River, and Westbrook. Other neighboring towns using Civic Plus are Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, and Haddam.

### ***PROJECT BENEFITS AND IMPACTS:***

The new web site will benefit residents and businesses by providing information about the services and responsibilities of Town government plus links to the numerous organizations that contribute to the vitality of our community and the ambience of the lower Connecticut River Valley. Further the web site will enable Town staff, boards, and commissions to post meeting calendars, monthly agenda, minutes, and report timely information of the decisions that impact the fiscal, educational, and environmental quality of Chester. An easy-to-use Town web site will have a positive first impression on new visitors and its facility will ensure continuance of returning users. Chester's web site is an essential communication medium that should be continually updated when content and technology enhancements are warranted.