



**STATE OF TENNESSEE**  
**Department of Environment and Conservation**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**  
**FOR**  
**State Parks Website and Mobile App**

**RFI # 32701-02905**  
**October 20, 2016**

**1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:**

The State of Tennessee, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) issues this Request for Information ("RFI") for the purpose of identifying new trends and companies who have the capacity, technology and experience to re-develop TNStateParks.com using responsive design and to produce a mobile app to enhance the visitor experience in our parks.

Through this RFI, TDEC intends to elicit information on industry solutions that exist in the production of a new website and mobile app. TDEC will review responses to questions contained within this RFI. TDEC intends to follow up with respondents to observe the functionality of a vendor's solutions in virtual demonstrations. The demonstrations will follow a pre-defined agenda that TDEC will provide. The information from the written submissions and virtual demonstrations will assist in determining how TDEC will proceed in developing these new user experiences.

The website solution should have the ability to meet the department's strategic vision and

- Integrate with analytics software capable of tracking site traffic; events; campaigns; cross-domain sales funnel; and conversions.
- Utilize modern technology and design concepts, including responsive and visually driven design.
- Integrate with TDEC's future reservation system
- Process and display API data, such as the data currently used to display events here: <http://tnstateparks.com/events>
- Possess e-commerce capabilities, or the ability to integrate with future e-commerce systems.
- Support file storage and management (photos, PDFs, etc.)
- Tiered site administration for multiple users
- Support ESRI and ArcGIS maps and data
- Support embed, responsive videos from providers like Vimeo and YouTube.
- ADA compliant
- Provide a quality mobile user experience on desktop, phone, tablet and other (future) mobile devices.

The mobile application focus is on users visiting the parks. The app should have the ability to

- Synchronize content automatically with new website, maintaining consistency and accuracy of data without redundant data entry.
- Provide certain key elements of application's user experience and content in a manner that is available offline (when the user does not have access to cell service). This could include ESRI maps, images, text, etc.
- Support geo-referenced maps, similar to apps like Avenza.
- Support in-app purchases of content such as geo-referenced maps.
- House app-specific content as well as content synced from website.
- Incorporate augmented reality into user experience, including transparent video overlay and destination markers prompting visitors to engage with park content.
- Support ESRI and ArcGIS maps and data
- Push specials and promotions to users
- Allow users to log in with a social profile or create an account.

We appreciate your input and participation in this process.

## **2. BACKGROUND:**

In 2012, TDEC launched the TNStateParks.com website using Expression Engine as the content management system. Over the past four years, the site has accumulated over 12.5 million sessions, 50 million page views and served 7.4 million users. The site has played a key role in increasing revenues for Tennessee State Parks and boosting the online presence of these natural resources.

In November 2016, technical support for the version of Expression Engine TDEC utilizes will expire. While this will not affect the short-term functionality of the site, it presents an opportunity for TDEC to consider other CMS options and to build a site with increased functionality for the end user.

Over the past three years, the gap between mobile and desktop generated sessions on TNStateParks.com has narrowed. In 2016, mobile users accounted for 50.62% of all site sessions. That number does not include the 11.10% of sessions generated from tablet devices. It is apparent in TDEC's data, and industry reports, that this trend will continue over the near future. While it is important to have a responsive website design, it is apparent that a robust mobile application could greatly augment the visitors experience to Tennessee State Parks.

One of the greatest needs is to provide users with relevant information despite limited cellular and data coverage in many of the parks. Visitors need to have access to park addresses, phone numbers, alerts, maps, hiking trail information, etc. during their trip. They need to be able to find their pinpoint on one of TDEC's geo-referenced maps. When they do have access to the internet, the app needs to assist them with planning a trip to the park, and provide methods, like augmented reality, for visitors to engage with the park once they arrive.

Top 10 Pages on TNStateParks.com (by Pageviews since Sept 2012):

- Find a Park - 2.5 million pageviews (5.03% of total site pageviews).
- Homepage - 1.9 million (3.86% of total site pageviews)
- Fall Creek Falls – 1.8 million (3.68% of total site pageviews)
- Camping – 703,000 (1.4% of total pageviews)
- Places to Stay – 697,000 (1.39% of total pageviews)
- Rock Island – 650,000 (1.30% of total pageviews)
- Things to Do – 61,000 (1.22% of total pageviews)
- Cummins Falls – 610,000 (1.22% of total pageviews)
- Fall Creek Falls Camping – 596,000 (1.19% of total pageviews)
- Fall Creek Falls Cabins – 567,000 (1.13% of total pageviews)

Top Traffic Sources ( percentage by Channel since Sept 2012):

- Organic Search – 62.01%
- (not set) – 15.28%
- Direct – 13.35%
- Referral – 7.24%
- Social - 1.59%

**3. COMMUNICATIONS:**

3.1. Please submit your response to this RFI to:

Lindsay Oliveras, Sourcing Account Specialist  
 Central Procurement Office  
 312 Rosa L. Parks Ave. 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
 Nashville, TN 37243  
 615-253-4762, Lindsay.Oliveras@TN.gov

3.2. Please feel free to contact the Central Procurement Office with any questions regarding this RFI. The main point of contact will be:

Lindsay Oliveras, Sourcing Account Specialist  
 Central Procurement Office  
 312 Rosa L. Parks Ave. 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
 Nashville, TN 37243  
 615-253-4762, Lindsay.Oliveras@TN.gov

3.3. Please reference RFI # 32701-02905 with all communications to this RFI.

**4. RFI SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:**

EVENT		TIME (Central Time Zone)	DATE (all dates are State business days)
1.	RFI Issued		October 20, 2016
2.	RFI Response Deadline	2 P.M.	November 2, 2016
3.	Schedule Virtual Demonstrations		November 3-4, 2016

4.	Vendor Virtual Demonstrations	8:30-2:30	November 14-18, 2016
----	-------------------------------	-----------	-------------------------

**5. GENERAL INFORMATION:**

5.1. Please note that responding to this RFI is not a prerequisite for responding to any future solicitations related to this project and a response to this RFI will not create any contract rights. Responses to this RFI will become property of the State.

5.2. The information gathered during this RFI is part of an ongoing procurement. In order to prevent an unfair advantage among potential respondents, the RFI responses will not be available until after the completion of evaluation of any responses, proposals, or bids resulting from a Request for Qualifications, Request for Proposals, Invitation to Bid or other procurement method. In the event that the state chooses not to go further in the procurement process and responses are never evaluated, the responses to the procurement including the responses to the RFI, will be considered confidential by the State.

5.3. The State will not pay for any costs associated with responding to this RFI.

**6. INFORMATIONAL FORMS:**

The State is requesting the following information from all interested parties. Please fill out the following forms:

<b>RFI #32701-02905</b>	
<b>TECHNICAL INFORMATIONAL FORM</b>	
1.	RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME:
2.	RESPONDENT CONTACT PERSON: Name, Title: Address: Phone Number: Email:
3.	Provide a brief description of your company's experience providing this type of website and mobile app development solutions to clients.
4.	TDEC is looking for answers to the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What is your opinion of our current website design, structure and usability?</li> <li>b. What content management system would your company recommend to manage the website, given the needs stated in this RFI?</li> <li>c. What creative and logistical process would your company use to develop a mobile application and website jointly?</li> <li>d. What process would you use to define and prioritize user experiences for building out content and functionality of the site/app?</li> <li>e. How does the process of designing both a responsive website and mobile application simultaneously differ from the process of designing them separately?</li> <li>f. How similar should the site structures be between the app and the website?</li> <li>g. How would you design the website and application to ensure that app content stays current with website content? What technical architecture would you utilize?</li> <li>h. What problems do you foresee with implementing augmented reality in a state parks app?</li> <li>i. Are there new/cutting edge technologies or methods that TDEC should consider when designing the website or mobile experience for customers?</li> <li>j. How would analytics reporting and conversion tracking differ in a mobile application?</li> <li>k. Are the requests and requirements in Section 1 of this RFI realistic? Do you foresee any challenges designing a website and mobile application that meets these goals?</li> </ul>
5.	Additionally, TDEC would like to see <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Suggested timeline for a project of this scope.</li> <li>b. Suggested staffing for a project of this scope.</li> </ul>
6.	Would your company like to provide a virtual demonstration to TDEC staff as a follow up to the written response to this RFI? Yes or No

**COST INFORMATIONAL FORM**

1. Describe what pricing units you typically utilize for similar services or goods (e.g., per hour, each, etc.):
2. Please provide price ranges for both a website and mobile application design together and separately:

**ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

1. Please provide input on alternative approaches or additional things to consider that might benefit the State: