



Request for Proposals

MADE X MTNS Website Development and Framework Evolution

RFP release date: 5/24/23

Responses due by: 6/23/23

The MADE X MTNS Partnership, housed at Mountain BizWorks, is seeking proposals from qualified web developers and firms to evolve its website for future goals, primarily by making it compatible with the visual page builder plugin, Elementor, and adding new functionality.

Background

The MADE X MTNS (Made By Mountains) Partnership is working to expand the outdoor industry and economy across North Carolina's Appalachian region and catalyze rural development by building vibrant outdoor communities, growing outdoor businesses, and amplifying outdoor culture. The Partnership includes the Outdoor Gear Builders of WNC, Mountain BizWorks, and the NC Outdoor Recreation Industry Office, as well as numerous stakeholders including regional universities, rural communities, economic development, and conservation organizations. With support from the Appalachian Regional Commission and Dogwood Health Trust, MADE X MTNS celebrates, supports, and builds a stronger sense of pride around our region, our people, and the extraordinary outdoor recreation industry and culture that these mountains have made. For more information, visit madexmtns.com or @madexmtns on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

To Date

[Madexmtns.com](https://madexmtns.com) is a Wordpress site that is built using a hand-built custom theme. All functionality, including blocks, integrations, backgrounds, css, modules, menus, footer, and stories automatically reordering to the homepage relies on modals and code that are written into the theme. As a marketing tool to present the brand, it presents in a visually compelling way. However, as the needs and goals of the MADE X MTNS Partnership have evolved and grown, it is necessary to evolve the website to serve as a learning space, storytelling hub, and information resource. It is important that the evolved site have a CMS framework that is user-friendly and accessible to editors and developers of various capabilities, such as the Elementor framework noted in the Scope on the following pages.

Scope

- Rebuild website to be fully compatible and integrated with Elementor website builder including existing pages rebuilt using Elementor and all custom blocks built in Elementor. New build should mirror the style and aesthetic of the current site, and retain core functionality of existing pages
- Add an events calendar to the site, with functionality allowing for site users to submit their own events
- Improvement to sitewide styles for desktop and mobile compatibility, including margins, mobile compatibility, video re-sizing, etc.
- Rebuilding existing “Stories” posts in Elementor; Retain ability to auto-populate homepage with these story posts
- Develop updated templates for key page and post types including Stories, descriptive program pages, events, announcements/news releases
- Improved and responsive gallery & carousel functionality
- Make background page "watermark" (page title) design element removable or able to be resized/removed (currently problematic with long page titles)
- Add a footer menu that is editable independently of the header menu
- Main nav: add dropdown option for primary links, include “More” dropdown; fix hamburger menu so that it only appears on mobile or undersized browser windows and is not duplicative on desktop. Ensure that main nav menu links are the same on desktop and mobile
- Improve accessibility, visibility, and functionality of Newsletter CTA
- Interactive county map - pull existing hard-coded map out of theme css so it can be replicated across site as a block that can be edited if possible.
- SEO: Ensure Yoast metadata is properly pulling to Google searches
- Add Monster Insights analytics (or similar suite) embedded into WordPress dashboard

Desired Project Timeline

RFP & Contracting Timeline:

- RFP published on May 24, 2023
- Responses requested by 11:59pm on Thursday, June 15, 2023
- Interviews with potential firms in late June
- Select and contract with firm before June 30, 2023

Project Timeline:

- Early July - Explore and test current website theme, blocks, css, functionality, etc.; Create staging site (1-2 weeks)
- July - Mid August - Evolution of website; Build, Rebuild (4-6 weeks)
- Mid-Late August - Review, Test, Problem Solve; Train MADE X MTNS staff on new framework, editing, functionality. Squish bugs. (1-2 weeks)
- End of August - Launch
- Deliverables fully completed, accepted, and delivered before September 8, 2023
 - *This deadline is critical for us, and not flexible.*

Budget

The MADE X MTNS Partnership has a budget of \$10,000 for this web development project. We are seeking a developer or firm who can approach this project in a clear and efficient manner, and can communicate/train effectively with the MADE X MTNS team to enable us to self-manage all content updates, plugin updates, new page builds, and layout/styling of the new website upon completion.

Desired Outcomes

A visually attractive and easily navigable website that is an information and resource hub for all pillars of the MADE X MTNS partnership, rather than a branding website that is visually appealing but lacks functionality. Website style mirrors current look and feel as much as possible, and works with current MADE X MTNS brand guidelines. Website framework is integrated with Elementor which makes it much more user friendly to edit by multiple users, including main navigation pages and stories. Navigation is more mobile friendly and less redundant. Videos present on both desktop and mobile view in a meaningful way. Event calendar is interactive. Project area map can be edited by staff to expand or add functionality.

Proposal Guidelines

Please include the following information:

- Contact information
- Brief description of your interest in the project
- Examples of relevant work
- Please itemize hours required for each development item and sub-items
- If the RFP's timeline or key components should be adjusted in you or your firm's opinion, based on your experience, please let us know what you might suggest and why. Please also note that with the Outdoor Economy Conference starting on September 18, our project completion deadline is firm.
- The proposed project budget and how you envision this being allocated across the various project activities

How to Submit a Proposal

A PDF copy of your proposal is requested to be delivered to the addresses below. Questions may also be addressed via email to these same contacts.

Please submit responses via email by no later than 11:59pm on Thursday, June 15th, 2023 to the following people, using the subject line "[Your Company Name] MADE X MTNS Website Development and Framework Evolution RFP Response". Thank you!

Amy Allison <amy@madexmtns.com> - MADE X MTNS Director

Joanna Brown <joanna@madexmtns.com> - MADE X MTNS Brand and Communications Manager

Noah Wilson <noah@mountainbizworks.org> - Director of Sector Development, Mountain BizWorks