



Agenda Item # _____

Staff Report

City of Manhattan Beach

TO: Honorable Mayor Tell and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Geoff Dolan, City Manager

FROM: Bruce Moe, Finance Director
Leilani Flores Emnace, Information Systems Manager

DATE: December 19, 2006

SUBJECT: Consideration of City Website Redesign Options

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council accept a presentation on the website redesign options and provide direction.

FISCAL IMPLICATION:

There are no fiscal implications associated with the recommended action.

BACKGROUND:

On March 7th, Council approved the selection of Vision Internet (VI), Teleworks and Bureau Veritas as our partners for the website design project. Vision Internet was selected as a full-service vendor offering website consulting, design, development, hosting, and maintenance services. VI is a consultant who takes a strategic approach by first understanding the needs of the customer, then developing and implementing Internet strategies that will complement and extend the customer's overall goals. To accomplish this, there are several phases in the website redesign project which include:

- Vision Phase: development of strategic vision
- Concept Phase: conceptualized site map, homepage layout
- Design Phase: graphical design for the future site, **homepage samples (of which Council will select one)**, and complete navigation design
- Development Phase: implement content management tool, component development
- Q/A and Testing Phase: completed website, training and documentation
- Soft/Final Launch: website goes live

This staff report will address the progress of the website design project and the homepage samples submitted by Vision Internet for Council consideration.

DISCUSSION:

Vision Internet's Vision Phase began with the Website Redesign Kickoff Meeting in July. Representatives from each department attended; a Website Committee was formed. Vision Internet tasked the committee to complete the Website Planning Survey for the City of Manhattan Beach (Attachment A). Each committee member compiled the feedback of their department head and staff in their survey response. Council input was requested as well. The results of the survey were discussed during a series of meeting that took place over the course of three days in September. Vision Internet created options for the homepage layout and a site map for each of the city's departments based on existing website content. At the conclusion of these meetings, consensus was reached on the new homepage layout and site map and the Concept Phase was completed.

The Design Phase began with the distribution of the Design Layout Survey (Attachment B) which each department was tasked to complete. Survey results determined the look and feel of the new website. Note that when Council approved Vision Internet for the redesign of the website, the vendor informed us that there would be design comprehensives (samples) for the city to select from (Attachment C). These comprehensives are the result of the Design Layout Survey and feedback from the Department Heads and Committee during the preview of the design comprehensives. These comprehensives are being presented this evening for Council consideration and selection. With Council's selection, department homepages and cascading site pages will be developed and the project will progress to the Development Phase. Vision Internet will implement website content submitted by the committee into the new site.

Note that during the Development Phase, integration with the Teleworks and Bureau Veritas solutions will take place. The Teleworks solution is an extensive Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) database of commonly asked questions with answers in a multitude of service areas, which will be available by phone (using text to voice technology) or web. This will extend operating hours virtually, and increase general information access 24/7. The Bureau Veritas Citizen Request Management (CRM) solution will provide citizens with automated requests and tracking, and will tie into the database of FAQ's that will help address common requests. In the event the question cannot be answered by the FAQ database, the CRM application can be utilized to assist the requestor.

It is projected that Vision Internet's Development Phase will take eight weeks to complete. At the completion of the Development Phase, the Q/A and Testing Phase will begin. This includes documentation, training, and an internal launch of all components. This phase will take eight to ten weeks to complete. Because implementation and development timelines of Vision Internet, Teleworks and Bureau Veritas may differ, these components may be independently launched to the public or launched simultaneously in one final launch. During the Development Phase, the launch date or dates will be determined.

CONCLUSION:

The Design Phase of the project will progress with Council's selection of the design comprehensive. Staff is requesting that Council accept presentation of the designs, discuss and provide direction for the future website.

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- Attachments:
- A. Website Planning Survey for the City of Manhattan Beach
 - B. Manhattan Beach Graphic Design Survey
 - C. Website Design Comprehensives

ATTACHMENT A



**Website Planning Survey for City of
Manhattan Beach**

Your Name: _____

Email: _____

Thank you for taking the time to answer the following questions. Your responses will provide crucial information in the development of your website. This survey should also help us decide how to prioritize the presentation of information for your website.

Keep in mind that, while it is important to build your website according to your parameters, it is equally important to keep your users' needs in mind and not your departmental structure, thus enhancing the experience for them while providing you with a powerful communications tool.

Please fill out your responses using MS Word, and email your survey responses to William Iek at william@visioninternet.com.

We would appreciate it if you can return your survey responses to us by September 1, 2006

1. Please rank the following in order of importance (1 being the highest, 5 the lowest):

Rank Creating an information portal for targeted visitors
Rank Quality of execution (graphics, writing, navigation, etc.)
Rank Project timeline
Rank Ease in maintaining content
Rank Being better than other websites

2. What do you like about your current website?

3. What do you dislike about your current website?

4. What content will be most frequently updated (i.e. Meeting Minutes, News, Special Events, etc.) ? How often will each component (Minutes, News, Events, Jobs, etc.) of content be updated (daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, etc.)?

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5. Website Navigation

We recommend two sets of navigation as the most efficient and user-friendly approach to organizing information on your website:

1. The main navigation includes major topics/sections of a website (e.g. Vistor Info, City Council & Treasurer, Boards & Commisions, Departments), with corresponding sub-pages under these sections (e.g. Departments > City Attorney).
2. Shortcut links connect users to the most frequently visited pages of a website. Shortcut links have the advantage of a) being unobtrusive, and b) always available to the user.

To increase ease-of-use navigation will be positioned in the top portion of the webpage and will remain visible on all pages throughout your website (Please see example in Appendix in a separate document).

We wish to take this opportunity to reorganize your navigation structure. In order to do so, we ask that you complete the following as thoroughly as possible.

I. Main Navigation:

Please select the topics/sections and user groups that best fit your city from the list below. Depending on the length of the section names, a website generally fits five (5) to seven (7) main sections running horizontally across a page (on a 800x600px resolution screen). We recommend you select no more than seven topics/sections from the lists below (note: the Home link is considered a mandatory part of the Main Navigation and would be added to the total sections; therefore, the maximum number of sections is eight).

Topics/Sections:

- About Us (including Municipal Codes, Directory, City Council & Treasurer and Boards & Commissions unless these are selected as their own top-level Topics/Sections below)
- City Council & Treasurer (if not a sub-section of About Us)
- Boards & Commissions (if not a sub-section of About Us)
- What's New (contains frequently updated content such as Events, Commission Meetings, News & Press Releases, etc.)
- Departments
- I want to... (action-based tasks such as Find, Get, Pay, Report, Register, View, etc., that often relate to services, events or directories, etc. which may or may not be associated with a particular department or topic)

Others: _____

User Groups:

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II. Shortcuts:

Please select the Shortcuts (usually text-based links) you want to include along with the Main Navigation. Since there is limited screen real estate in the Main Navigation area, we recommend you select five (5) to seven (7) selections from the list below:

- News (Newsroom)
 - Calendar (City Calendar)
 - e-Notices (e-Notification/Newsletter)
 - Contact Us
 - Directory
 - Municipal Codes
 - Job Openings
 - FAQs
 - Boards & Commissions (if not selected as a main topic/section in I)
 - Site Map
 - Online Surveys
- Others: _____

6. There are three effective homepage layout approaches which we find best fits with the demands of the Web; each one has its pros and cons. Please review the summary of each layout approach in the **in Appendix in a separate document** and select one that best applies to your project. This exercise is to help us define the initial layout of your website. We will come up with a fresh, unique design to represent your project.

After reviewing the RFP and your current website, we think Approach 2 fits better to your needs. Your preference: _____

7. Please add any other comments/suggestions you think will be helpful to us.

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8. Next Steps

We appreciate your taking the time to complete this survey. We indicated at the beginning of this document a preferred return date for submitting your responses.

However, there are a few more items we wish to request from you at this time.

They do not have to be submitted right away, but in our experience, it is best to begin as soon as possible collecting the following items:

1. Recent web traffic reports (if available).
2. Graphics (please submit as many items as possible in **original digital format**)
 - a. Photos (.tif, .psd or high-resolution .jpg)
 - b. Logos (.ai, .eps or .psd)
 - c. Maps (.ai, .eps or .psd)
 - d. Charts (.vsd, .eps or .psd)
 - e. Signatures (.eps, .tif or .jpg)
 - f. other graphic materials that you want to incorporate into the new website

Thank you.

Vision Internet

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Website Planning Survey for City of Manhattan Beach - Appendix

Please use the following information and reference links to answer questions 5 and 6 of the attached Website Planning Survey.

5. Website Navigation

We recommend two sets of navigation as the most efficient and user-friendly approach to organizing information on your website:

1. The main navigation includes major topics/sections of a website (e.g. Visitor Info, City Council & Treasurer, Boards & Commissions, Departments), with corresponding sub-pages under these sections (e.g. Departments > City Attorney).
2. Shortcut links connect users to the most frequently visited pages of a website. Shortcut links have the advantage of a) being unobtrusive, and b) always available to the user.

To increase ease-of-use navigation will be positioned in the top portion of the webpage and will remain visible on all pages throughout your website (see example below).



Sample Website: <http://beta.netvip.com/lancaster> (CTRL + click URL)





We wish to take this opportunity to reorganize your navigation structure. In order to do so, we ask that you complete the following as thoroughly as possible.

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6. There are three effective homepage layout approaches which we find best fits with the demands of the Web; each one has its pros and cons. Please select one that best applies to your project. This exercise is to help us define the initial layout of your website. We will come up with a fresh, unique design to represent your project.

To access the sample websites below, press CTRL + click URL

 <p>http://www.visioninternet.com/home/index.asp?page=55&recordid=92 http://www.visioninternet.com/home/index.asp?page=55&recordid=43</p>		<p>Approach 1: Graphics Oriented Uses majority of homepage real estate to display impressive picture/collage.</p> <p>Pros: strong impression for first time visitors; works well for cities with strong visual attractions; fits with organizations that do not have resources for producing frequently-updated content</p> <p>Cons: no information is present in the homepage; requires more clicks to find information; not convenient for repeating visitors; photos require professional quality</p>
 <p>http://www.dcccd.edu/ http://www.town.telluride.co.us/</p>		<p>Approach 2: Balance Between Graphics & Information Uses less than half of homepage for image/collage; allocates the rest of homepage for frequently-updated content</p> <p>Pros: strong impression for first-time users and effectively presents frequently-updated content for repeat users (i.e. residents); balanced amount of information for most users</p> <p>Cons: some organizations may have difficulty maintaining fresh content in homepage</p>
		<p>Approach 3: Content Oriented Minimizes global navigation and allocates the rest of homepage to frequently-updated content</p> <p>Pros: most content appears in 800x600 screen; works well for users who are used to portal websites (such as Yahoo!); useful for organizations with lots of new (ie daily) content</p>



Cons: some users find it too confusing to locate their content; difficult to maintain large amounts of fresh content; first-time user unfamiliar with layout has to dig to find info

<http://santa-monica.org/>
and feel as above - no
url available

look

ATTACHMENT B



Manhattan Beach Graphic Design Survey

1. What is the primary message you want to convey with the site?

2. Please list adjectives or specific nouns that you would use to characterize the identity of your project (i.e. family-oriented, evergreen trees, environmental, hospitable, etc.).

3. For each of the adjectives below, please indicate how accurately it describes your vision of the future website's look and feel. Feel free to list your own words in the spaces provided.

	Very	Somewhat	Not at All
Subtle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bold	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conservative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expressive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bright	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Simple	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Natural	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Metallic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Soft	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ATTACHMENT B con't



4. Please list three or more websites that you feel are high quality in regards to image selection, use of color and overall impression. Feel free to cite specific design elements (header, navigation bar, text effects, etc.)

5. Please list mandatory elements that must appear on the site (slogan, logos, specific photos or colors, etc.)

6. Please indicate any colors and/or imagery we need to AVOID applying to your website design.

The following questions are optional.

Our talented design team will rely on the information above to create a look and feel that captures the essence of your website's message. Nevertheless, if you have already decided on certain design elements, please indicate that below to ensure your vision is realized.

7. Please list any colors or color schemes you would like in your website. *(optional)*

8. What kind of imagery do you think would be most appropriate to convey the purpose of your website? *(optional)*

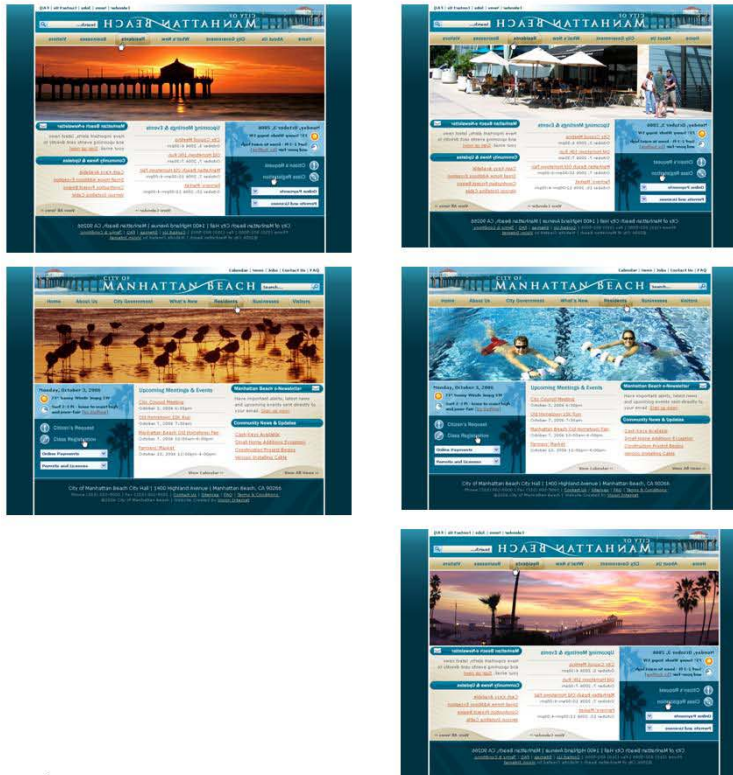
9. Open Suggestions: *(optional)*

ATTACHMENT C



Website Design Comprehensives

Design 1



Design 2

