



Website Redesign Proposal: A Strategic Vision for the Friends of the Public Garden

I. Executive Summary:

A Strategic Vision for Boston's Iconic Parks

The Friends of the Public Garden is an organization of profound historical significance, serving as a vital partner to the City of Boston for more than 50 years in its mission to renew, care for, and advocate for the Boston Common, Public Garden, and Commonwealth Avenue Mall. As one of the nation's oldest parks advocacy groups, the Friends' role has evolved from a small, local effort to a professionally staffed organization with an expanding city-wide reach and a network of over 8,000 supporters.

The current website, which serves as the "definitive source of information" for park visitors and supporters, is embarking on a significant redesign project. The goal is to create a digital platform that accurately highlights the full scope of the organization's commitment to these iconic downtown parks. This redesign is a unique opportunity to enhance the site's aesthetic appeal, significantly improve the user experience, and create a dynamic online presence that reflects the organization's brand, mission, and values. The new website must serve as an "open invitation to these world-class parks," providing a cohesive, intuitive, and accessible online experience for all constituents.

Our proposed digital strategy is centered on a deep understanding of this mission. We will create a digital platform that is not merely a collection of pages but a dynamic, visually rich, and emotionally resonant extension of the parks themselves. The redesign will prioritize seamless user experience, intuitive navigation, and high-functioning engagement tools to better serve the diverse audience of park visitors, supporters, and donors alike. Our approach is holistic and collaborative, ensuring that the new website is a powerful tool for stewardship, advocacy, and community engagement.

The project will be executed through a detailed, five-phase plan, culminating in a complete website launch by June 2026. This plan is designed to be comprehensive and collaborative, with clear milestones and deliverables at each stage. The total proposed investment for this project is a meticulously allocated \$44,850, which falls within the specified budget range of \$40,000 to \$45,000. This investment is structured to prioritize core functionality and strategic goals, delivering a solution that provides maximum impact and value for the Friends of the Public Garden.



II. Our Partnership Approach:

A Commitment to Collaborative Excellence

Our agency has conducted a detailed analysis of your Request for Proposals (RFP) to ensure a complete understanding of your organization's goals, challenges, and desired outcomes. We recognize that the success of this project hinges on a true partnership, not a simple vendor-client relationship, and our process is built to foster this level of collaboration. The RFP's emphasis on a collaborative, iterative workflow and the requirement for signatory approval on all updates and deliverables before moving to the next phase are central to our standard operating procedure.

Our methodology is a testament to this commitment. The process begins with initial discovery and strategy sessions, where we engage in in-depth meetings with your staff and review existing analytics to align on a shared strategic vision. This initial phase is crucial for defining functional requirements and ensuring that the project management plan is built on a solid foundation of shared understanding. We believe that a well-defined project plan, with clear roles and responsibilities, is the cornerstone of a successful and on-budget delivery.

Throughout the project, we will maintain a continuous feedback loop. Key deliverables, such as the sitemap alpha and beta, and the UI wireframes and mockups, will be presented for your review and feedback at every stage. We will work directly with your organizational working group to ensure that the strategic direction is maintained and that all decision-making is collaborative and in line with your organization's vision. This approach ensures that the final product is not only technically sound and visually appealing but is also a true reflection of your values and mission.

III. Foundational Strategy:

Building a Digital Home for Boston's Front Doorstep

A. Audience & Messaging: The Parks' Story as the Hero

A key directive within the RFP is the suggestion to use the StoryBrand framework to make marketing messages more engaging and user-focused. This is a powerful strategic tool for nonprofits, as it shifts the narrative from focusing on the organization itself to focusing on the audience. Instead of telling the story of the Friends of the Public Garden, we will tell the story of how the organization helps the community and the parks thrive. This approach positions the visitor, the supporter, and the donor as the hero of the story, with the Friends of the Public Garden serving as the expert guide.

This strategy will be applied to craft website copy that is concise, emotionally resonant, and free of jargon. For park visitors, the copy will guide them to information on tours, events, and park history, establishing the website as an indispensable resource for their park experience.



For donors and supporters, the copy will highlight the organization's tangible impact, showcasing how their support directly contributes to preserving the parks and fostering a sense of community stewardship. The messaging will use action-oriented language and compelling visuals to drive engagement. For volunteers, the messaging will serve as a clear call to action, outlining the ways they can get involved and the specific impact of their time and effort. This approach to messaging ensures that every piece of content is user-focused and serves to drive engagement and action.

B. User Experience (UX) & Information Architecture (IA)

The RFP identifies improving user experience and navigation as a primary challenge. A successful redesign will go beyond surface-level aesthetics to fundamentally reorganize content, making it intuitive, dynamic, and accessible to the public beyond the core audience. To achieve this, our process will begin with a thorough review of existing website analytics to understand user behavior, identify popular pages, and pinpoint navigational bottlenecks. This data-driven approach will be the foundation for developing a new, logical information architecture.

The new sitemap will be designed with clear, jargon-free navigation labels (e.g., "About," "Programs," "Contact") that are consistently visible on every page. We will use dropdown menus judiciously to keep the main navigation clean and organized. Furthermore, we will prioritize key calls-to-action (CTAs) like "Donate," "Volunteer," and "Events" by placing them prominently in the header and navigation, ensuring they are visible without scrolling. This strategic placement will create clear and frictionless pathways for visitors to engage with the organization. This careful planning of the site's structure will result in a user experience that is seamless, efficient, and welcoming to all.

C. Donor & Engagement Interface: Streamlining the Path to Support

A high-functioning donor transaction interface, including support for tickets, reservations, campaigns, and direct donations, is a core requirement of the project. Best practices for nonprofit websites show that a frictionless, secure, and intuitive giving experience directly correlates with increased donations and supporter engagement. Our agency will design and develop a donor interface that simplifies the entire process.

The donation forms will be easy to find, with minimal required fields and pre-set gift amounts that correlate to a specific impact, such as "\$50 provides tools for a volunteer day". To build trust, we will implement best practices for website security, including HTTPS and secure payment processing, and we will display security badges near payment fields. A crucial technical requirement is the seamless integration with your existing Bloomerang CRM and fundraising software, which we have extensive experience with. This will ensure all donor data is captured and managed effectively.



The event calendar and ticketing functionality will be equally robust. We will develop a system that features customizable, branded registration forms, multi-attendee registration, and a variety of payment options, including PayPal, Apple Pay, and Venmo. The system will also be equipped with advanced event management tools, such as QR code check-ins for guests and reporting features to measure event ROI and track supporter engagement levels.

D. SEO & Accessibility: Reaching a Wider Audience

To fulfill the mission of serving the "full diversity of park users" and to increase website traffic, the new website must be easily discoverable and accessible to everyone. The RFP explicitly requests best practices for SEO, integration with Google Analytics, and an accessibility audit. Our strategy will incorporate these elements from the very beginning of the design and development process.

We will conduct thorough keyword research to identify terms relevant to park activities, history, and community engagement. This research will inform our content strategy, with keywords naturally incorporated into headers, titles, and meta descriptions to improve search rankings. The content itself will be valuable and original to attract organic traffic and establish the site as an authority on the three historic parks.

Accessibility is a non-negotiable aspect of modern web design and is central to your organization's mission of inclusivity. We will perform a comprehensive accessibility audit in Phase 3. Our design will adhere to industry standards by focusing on high-contrast colors, readable fonts, and descriptive link text (e.g., "Explore our programs" instead of "click here"). We will ensure that all images have alt text and videos include captions, and that the website is fully navigable via keyboard, with text that can be resized without breaking the layout.

E. Mobile-First Design & Performance

The RFP notes the need for a website that is "mobile-friendly and responsive across all devices and web browsers". We believe that a mobile-first approach is not merely a requirement but a foundational element of a positive user experience. We will design and build the website with mobile users as the primary consideration, given that a significant portion of park visitors will likely access the site on their phones while in or near the parks.

Our mobile-first strategy will include simplified, single-column layouts and ample white space to prevent clutter on small screens. We will also focus on optimizing performance by resizing and compressing all images to under 100KB, eliminating render-blocking JavaScript, and minimizing the use of unnecessary scripts and plugins. This meticulous attention to detail will ensure fast page load times, which is critical for user retention and overall engagement. Furthermore, we will design interactive elements and buttons with a minimum size of 48x48 pixels to ensure they are easily usable on mobile devices with touch screens.



IV. Detailed Project Plan: Phase-by-Phase Development

This plan outlines our methodology for delivering a project that is on time, on budget, and exceeds your expectations. The structure is designed to be highly collaborative, with clear milestones and checkpoints to ensure continuous alignment with your strategic vision.

Project Timeline & Milestones

Phase	Duration	Key Milestones	Deliverables
Phase 1: Discovery & Site Architecture	4 weeks	Project kickoff, analytics review, stakeholder interviews	Detailed Project Management Plan, Sitemap Alpha, Sitemap Beta
Phase 2: Visual Interface & Content	4 weeks	Moodboard & style guide creation, wireframing	Three UI wireframes and mockups, Final UI wireframe and mockup, Content Strategy Document
Phase 3: Build & Integration	12 weeks	CMS implementation, third-party integrations, and content loading	Website Beta, Website Alpha, Testing/QA log, Interactive park map development, Bloomerang & payment processor integration
Phase 4: Testing & Launch	4 weeks	Cross-device & browser testing, QA log review	Final Website Launch, Post-launch support plan
Phase 5: Support & Long-Term Partnership	Ongoing	Staff training, maintenance plan development	All website design files, Website Maintenance and Improvement Plan, and 8 hours of staff training

Phase 1: Discovery & Site Architecture (Weeks 1-4)

This phase is the critical foundation for the entire project. We will begin with a series of initial discovery meetings with your staff to gain a comprehensive understanding of your operations and objectives. This will be followed by an in-depth review of your existing website analytics, which will provide data-driven insights into how visitors currently use your site. We will also establish project management roles and responsibilities to ensure a clear line of communication and accountability. We will analyze your current sitemap and use a strategic, user-centric approach to propose a new, more intuitive information architecture.

This phase will yield two key deliverables: a detailed Project Management Plan that outlines functional requirements, roles, and a timeline, and a Sitemap Alpha and Beta, which will be our first concrete proposal for the new website's structure. These deliverables will require your signatory approval before we can proceed.



Phase 2: Visual Interface & Content Strategy (Weeks 5-8)

With a solid strategic foundation in place, this phase focuses on bringing the vision to life visually. The tasks include user interface (UI) design and development, as well as the creation of new graphic assets and a focused effort on copyediting and content distillation. We will develop a comprehensive style guide that includes fonts, colors, and image styles to ensure brand consistency across all pages. The goal is to create a design that is not only visually appealing but also reflects the brand identity and engages your audience.

The deliverables for this phase are three UI wireframes and mockups of the redesign, including templates for both main and subpages. This allows you to visualize the potential design directions and provide feedback. Following your feedback and approval, we will deliver the final UI wireframe and mockup of the redesign, which will serve as the blueprint for the build phase.

Phase 3: Build & Integration (Weeks 9-20)

This is the core development phase where the design is translated into a functional website. We will implement a Content Management System (CMS) that is intuitive and easy to use, providing your team with the freedom to update the site as needed. We will then migrate existing content and load new, edited content onto the platform.

Crucially, we will integrate all required third-party applications, including Bloomerang CRM, payment processors (PayPal, Apple Pay, Venmo), and your social media platforms. We will also develop the dynamic and interactive park maps with points of interest, and the full event calendar and management functionality as requested in the RFP. This phase will also include the implementation of foundational Search Engine Optimization (SEO) practices and a comprehensive accessibility audit to ensure the site is ready for launch. The deliverables for this phase will be a Website Beta, Website Alpha, and a detailed testing/QA log that covers functionality, usability, security, and performance.

Phase 4: Testing & Launch (Weeks 21-24)

Before launch, we will conduct rigorous quality assurance and testing across all devices and web browsers to ensure a flawless user experience. This includes checking all links, forms, and donation flows to ensure they are working perfectly. Once all testing is complete and approved by your team, we will proceed with the final step: migrating the website from the current server to the new one and launching the new platform.

The deliverables for this phase are a comprehensive testing/QA log and, most importantly, the successful launch of the new website.



Phase 5: Support & Long-Term Partnership (Post-Launch)

Our commitment extends beyond the launch date. We believe in a long-term partnership and will provide comprehensive support to ensure your long-term success. This phase includes providing best practices for updating and backing up the platform, as well as two complete staff trainings. The training will cover how to update content within the CMS and how to generate and view analytics to measure the website's performance.

The deliverables for this phase are all website design files, a detailed website maintenance and improvement plan, and the 8 hours of staff training required by the RFP. Our post-launch support is designed to empower your team to confidently manage and grow the new website, ensuring it remains a dynamic and effective tool for years to come.

V. Investment Proposal: A Transparent Breakdown for Your Success

The specified budget of \$40,000 to \$45,000 presents a challenging yet achievable opportunity for a project of this scope. Our agency has carefully priced each phase to meet your requirements while delivering maximum value. The following table provides a detailed, phase-by-phase breakdown of all costs, demonstrating our commitment to fiscal responsibility and transparency.

Our proposed total investment is \$44,850, which falls squarely within your specified budget range and is allocated to prioritize the most critical functional and design elements.

Detailed Cost Breakdown by Phase

Phase	Total Cost	What is Covered
Phase 1: Discovery & Site Architecture	\$8,000	Initial discovery, consultation, and project planning; analytics review; sitemap review and recommendations; development of a detailed project management plan, functional requirements, and sitemap alpha/beta.
Phase 2: Visual Interface & Content	\$10,000	UI/UX design and development; new graphic content design; wireframes and mockups for main and subpages; final visual designs and content strategy.
Phase 3: Build & Integration	\$20,000	CMS implementation; copyediting; content migration; third-party integrations (Bloomerang, payment options, social media); SEO implementation; accessibility audit; development of interactive park maps and event management functionality.



Phase 4: Testing & Launch	\$4,000	Rigorous cross-device, browser, and mobile responsiveness testing; quality assurance; final review and approval; website migration to a new server and launch.
Phase 5: Support & Long-Term Partnership	\$2,850	Development of a website maintenance and improvement plan; creation of best practices documentation; 8 hours of comprehensive staff training on content updates, CMS management, and analytics.
Total Project Cost	\$44,850	

This investment proposal ensures that the core functionality and strategic goals of the redesign are met. We have allocated the majority of the budget to the build and integration phase, as this is where the most complex technical work will be done, particularly with the required third-party integrations and custom functionality. While this budget does not allow for more advanced features like live metrics dashboards or gamified engagement tools, it provides a robust foundation for future growth.

VI. The Houseink Studio Advantage: A Partnership Built on Creativity and Impact

Our unique position as a design and branding studio with a strong background in visual communication provides a distinct advantage for this project. The Friends of the Public Garden is a mission-driven organization whose identity is deeply intertwined with the physical beauty and history of Boston's three iconic parks. Generic web solutions built on templates will fail to capture the unique essence of this mission. Your RFP states that it is "vital that our chosen partner can effectively capture the work we do to preserve, enhance, and advocate" for the parks and "breathe new life into [your] digital platform".

This is where our strength lies. Houseink Studio is not a mass-market web agency. Our foundation is in creating unique, original art and design. This creative vision is what will "breathe new life" into your digital platform, delivering a website that stands out and truly reflects the singular identity of the parks. The visual strategy for your site will be handled with an expert eye, leveraging the foundational experience of our team in graphic design, illustration, and digital media. We understand that a nonprofit's website relies on "emotional resonance" and "real imagery" to create personal connections and drive action. We will use high-resolution photography and video to make the parks the hero of your digital story, ensuring that every visual element communicates the beauty and importance of your work.

Furthermore, we are deeply passionate about working with community-focused, purpose-driven organizations. We recognize the critical role that nonprofits play in a city's well-being. Your organization's mission to serve 8,000 supporters and advocate for Boston's historic parks resonates with our understanding of the importance of such work.



Our commitment is to leverage our creative skills to help you communicate your mission as effectively as possible, drawing from our experience in visual communication for purpose-driven projects.

Finally, while our unique expertise is in creative design, we are a full-service strategic partner. We will collaborate with trusted technical specialists to ensure that the complex functionality—such as the interactive map, Bloomerang integration, and robust back-end development—is executed flawlessly. This hybrid model allows you to benefit from our singular design perspective without compromising on any of the technical requirements. We are confident that our unique blend of artistic vision and strategic execution will deliver a website that engages, inspires, and stands the test of time.

VII. Examples for Inspiration

Here are a few examples we love of assets that not only inspire but also create exciting visuals and storytelling of brands. The descriptions highlight a user's experience while engaging, functional and visually compelling digital platforms, a direction we will take with FPG.

Client	Project Description	Link
Evergreen Nexus University	Elegant, smooth user experience and wise content arrangement.	https://www.egn.university/
Fireside DC	Engaging and light-feeling design for Fireside's website, showcasing the company's product, attitude to work, and ensuring ease of connection with users.	https://www.firesidedc.com/
IVYWISE	Clean lines and a structured layout, enhanced by a sleek typographic system, give the website a polished, professional look.	https://www.ivywise.com/
Global Fund for Children	A beautiful and visually engaging site helps to motivate people to stay on longer, take action, and join their mission.	https://globalfundforchildren.org/
Solterra Canada	Clean navigation and lead-generation tools ensure the site connects with environmental consultants and contractors.	https://www.solterra.ca/en