1. Executive Summary

The Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians is the largest Native American Tribe in the state of Michigan. Ushering in the 21st century, having and maintaining a clean and clear website to communicate and correspond with tribal members would help alleviate logistical bottlenecks, increase engagement between members and the tribe, and grow outreach efforts and tribal programs. The new website would be designed for mobile devices (smart phones and tablets) as well as computers (desktops and laptops) and integrate digital bookkeeping on top of a visual redesign that draws inspiration from the existing website. I would require assistance with backend design and management for the additional features not under solutions and approach.

2. Project Background

At the start of my time with the internship program, I was tasked with trying to think about potential issues and inefficiencies around me where I could come up with solution ideas. On top of the program itself, this would provide me with meaningful experience; the general outcome is being able to produce results and influence future coursework.

3. My Qualifications

I have been practicing website design since my sophomore year of high school. I have constructed two separate websites for high school competition, both of which advanced to state-wide level of achievement. I also have a few websites that I have started in my free time, making use of newer techniques and industry standards (such as accessibility). Unfortunately, none of these websites are currently available online. Designing and developing websites has been a passion of mine ever since I coded my first webpage in high school – it is something I find incredibly fun and rewarding as well as overall beneficial. I believe every successful entity can attribute some of that success to managing a pleasing website (pleasing to both the Tribe and tribal members).

4. Current State

The current website is functional and serves its purpose. However, there are a myriad of components that should be upgraded for a better user experience:

- Current website has no responsiveness (i.e. it looks the same on your phone as it does on your computer)
- It makes use of too many sidebars that clutter and distract from the main content of a page
- There is nowhere for tribal member-only content (such as recorded BOD meetings)
- It has a window-within a window design which could be revamped for visual clarity
- Much of the content is buried under multiple unnecessary layers that make it cumbersome to navigate and find desired content (just doing a quick search for "internship" pulls up unrelated and outdated content before finding the latest posting)
- Main content on pages is hard to distinguish from other content and can be highlighted more effectively
- There are no electronic forms (users must download hard copies of forms then email them back, instead of applying and attaching documents within the website)
- Color usage is nice but could be enhanced (notably the text above the navigation bar)
- Accessibility needs to be fine-tuned and cleaned up (not every element that should be cataloged is currently cataloged and there are a variety of items on the website that are positioned in ways that make it difficult to discern the difference)

All of these facets can be upgraded and improved through the outline provided in the next section.

5. Solutions and Approach

The plan is to create a simple and effective website that builds off of the existing Sault Tribe brand. It will be designed with mobile devices in mind to allow for responsive, dynamic website low that is both incredibly user-friendly and practical. The website will be made of the following pieces:

- A **Home page** that presents the most up-to-date and important news and events
- An **About Us page** that details the tribe itself
- A **History & Culture page** that describes the story of the tribe and culture it strives to maintain (one idea is to share founding documents)
- A **Membership Services page** that houses all important information and actions regarding membership in the tribe
- A **Members-Only page** where tribal members would sign in and be able to view member-specific information as well as opt in to email and text notifications [this is an additional feature]
- A **Government page** that keeps information about the governmental side of the tribe (akin to the current government dropdown menu)
- An **Enterprises page** that holds all pertinent information about tribal business ventures and associates
- A **Newsroom page** that tracks all of the latest press releases and important public announcements
- A **Community Calendar page** where the public can view all upcoming events and programs [this is an additional feature]

All of these pages will be updateable at any time with new information or changes to existing information. The website will be designed with ease of updating in mind so minimal training for existing personnel is required to properly update it. I will gladly provide support on how to use the new website during my time working for the tribe and technical assistance thereafter. Additional features are pieces that are not intended for the main project and require more resources to complete – they can be added in the future if unimplemented during this project.

6. Finances

While I require no extra payment for this initial project, there are several costs innately in the website that should be documented:

- Server hosting
- Domain registration
- Subscription or license to any existing software that would be migrated over

I will also be available for technical support at $30/hour rounded to nearest half-hour. Any new software required for additional features will also factor into cost.

7. Time Projection

This project will take a minimum of four weeks and could take up to three months. Most of the time will be spent on designing the new website (colors, images, and layout) and transferring content over from the existing site. Additional features (such as e-forms, member-only page, email/text signups, etc.) will add to the minimum timeframe.

8. Collaboration

To complete the project, collaboration between the following departments will be required:

- MIS
- Telecommunications
- Security Administration
- Communications
- Other departments as deemed necessary

9. Other Documentation

Accompanying this document you can find my resume (including my current position with the Executive Office and this project).

10.   Conclusion

By the end of this project, I plan to have created a brand new website that will represent the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians. The website will be able to support a variety of devices and can be easily updated with new information as necessary. I anticipate this website will drastically improve readability and engagement with the community.

Proposed by:

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Jared Azevedo

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Date