



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP 2024 – 05

June 24, 2024

External Audit Services

City of Duncan, Finance Department
Attention: Bernice Crossman, Director of Finance
City of Duncan, 200 Craig Street,
Duncan, BC, V9L 1W3

Submission Deadline: Wednesday, July 31, 2024 at 10:00 am PST

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL AUDIT SERVICES

DEFINITIONS

“**CONTRACTOR or CONSULTANT**” means the Proponent whose Proposal has been accepted by the City of Duncan and is awarded a contract by the City of Duncan to carry out the Work.

“**CoD**” means the City of Duncan.

“**JUB**” means the Duncan – North Cowichan Joint Utilities Board

“**PROPONENT**” means the responder to this RFP.

“**PROPOSAL**” means a proposal to carry out the Work submitted by a Proponent in response to this RFP.

“**RFP**” means this Request for Proposal.

“**WORK**” means and includes anything and everything required to be done for fulfillment and completion of the project in accordance with this RFP and proposal.

1.0 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

CoD is seeking proposals for the provision of external audit services for our organization for five years. We invite your firm to complete and submit a formal proposal for the City’s external audit engagements.

1.2 BACKGROUND

CoD is requesting proposals from qualified accounting firms to perform the annual financial audit of the City’s consolidated financial statements for the next five fiscal years – 2024 to 2028 - in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards for the purpose of rendering an opinion as to the fairness of presentation of these statements. The CoD year end is December 31st.

The JUB is a government partnership that operates and maintains joint sewer lagoons on behalf of the CoD and the District of North Cowichan. The CoD financial statements are consolidated with the JUB financial statements. The JUB financial statements are prepared by a different accounting firm contracted by the District of North Cowichan, and then consolidated with the CoD financial statements. The most recent audited financial statements for both CoD and JUB are included as Appendix “B” and “C” to this RFP.

2.0 - INSTRUCTIONS TO PROPONENTS

2.1 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

The Proposal and their envelopes should be clearly marked with the name and address of the Proponent and the RFP program title. The sealed envelope should be addressed to the following project contact:

Bernice Crossman
Director of Finance
Finance Department, City Hall
200 Craig Street
Duncan, BC V9L 1W3
Office No. 250-746-6126
Email: bernice@duncan.ca

Proposals may be submitted by email to: bernice@duncan.ca

Proposals must be received on or before the **Closing Time** of:

TIME: 10:00 am PST
DATE: Wednesday, July 31, 2024

Proposals, 3 hard copies or email, will be accepted until the Closing Time specified. It is the Proponent's sole responsibility to ensure its Proposal is received at the physical address or email address set out above by the Closing Time. Proposals can be submitted in person, courier, mail, or email. Please note if submitted by mail the proposal must be received by the City prior to the closing time/date and that **post marks on mailed submissions will not be considered as date/time of receipt.**

Proponents wishing to make changes to their Proposals after submission but prior to the Closing Time may do so by submitting the revisions by email or hard copy. It is the Proponent's sole responsibility to ensure the revisions are received by the CoD prior to the Closing Time.

Proposals received after the Closing Time will not be accepted or considered.

2.2 INQUIRIES

Proponents shall carefully examine the RFP documents and shall fully inform themselves as to the intent, existing conditions and limitations which may affect their Proposal submission. No consideration will be given after submission of a Proposal to any claim that there was any misunderstanding with respect to the conditions imposed.

Proponents finding discrepancies or omissions in the Contract or RFP, or having doubts as to the meaning or intent of any provision, should immediately notify the above listed project contact. If there are any changes, additions, or deletions to the Proposal scope, conditions, or closing date, Proponents will be advised by means of an addendum issued by CoD. All addenda are to become part of the Proposal documents and receipt of addenda should be acknowledged by the Proponent in the submission.

Proponents and their representatives are not permitted to contact any employees, officers, agents, elected or appointed officials or other representatives of the CoD, other than the RFP project contact, concerning matters regarding this RFP. Failure to adhere to this rule may result in the disqualification of the Proponent and the rejection of the Proponent's Proposal.

3.0 - GENERAL TERMS OF PROPOSAL PROCESS

3.1 PROPOSAL PREPARATION COSTS

All expenses incurred by the Proponent in preparation and submission of this Proposal are to be borne by the Proponent, with the express understanding that no claims for reimbursements against CoD will be accepted. CoD shall not be responsible for any costs involved in or associated with any meetings, discussion or negotiation following submission that could lead to acceptance of the Proposal and award of a contract.

3.2 PROPOSAL EVALUATION

CoD recognizes that “Best Value” is the essential part of purchasing a product and/or service and therefore CoD may prefer a Proposal with a higher price, if it offers greater value and better serves CoD’s interests, as determined by CoD, over a Proposal with a lower price. Appendix A contains the information regarding how Proposals will be evaluated. The evaluation team will not be limited to the criteria listed in Appendix A, and the evaluation team may consider other criteria that the team identifies as relevant during the evaluation process. However, any criteria considered will be applied evenly and fairly to all Proposals.

CoD, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all Proposals whether complete or not;
- Reject any Proposal it considers not in its best interests;
- Waive any minor irregularity or insufficiency in the Proposal submitted;
- Not be liable for misunderstandings or errors in the RFP;
- Issue addenda to the RFP;
- Contact references provided by the Proponents;
- Retain independent persons or contractors for assistance in evaluating Proposals;
- Request points of clarification to assist CoD in evaluating Proposals;
- Negotiate changes with the successful Proponent; and
- Withdraw the RFP.

3.3 PROPOSAL PRESENTATION

CoD reserves the right to request one or more of the Proponents whose submissions are of particular interest to CoD, to make oral presentations to CoD.

3.4 PROPOSAL CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

All submissions become the property of CoD and will not be returned to the Proponent. CoD will consider all Proposals submitted as confidential but reserves the right to make copies of all Proposals received for its internal review and for review by its financial, accounting, legal, and technical consultants.

Proponents should be aware that CoD is a “public body” as defined in and subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

If the Proponent believes any of the information requested in this RFP and provided by them is confidential, then they should identify it as such and provide a rationale as to why it should not be released under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

The rationale for keeping information confidential under this legislation includes:

- a) Trade secrets of the Proponent;
- b) Financial, commercial, scientific, or technical information, the disclosure of which could reasonably be expected to result in material financial loss or gain or could reasonably be expected to prejudice the competitive position of the Proponent; or
- c) Information the disclosure of which could be reasonably expected to interfere with contractual or other negotiations of the Proponent.

3.5 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A Proponent shall disclose in its Proposal any actual or potential conflicts of interest and existing business relationships it may have with CoD, its elected or appointed officials or employees, and any property ownership direct or indirect in the jurisdiction. CoD may rely on such disclosure.

3.6 NO COLLUSION

Except as otherwise specified or as arising by reason of the provision of the contract documents, no person whether natural, or body corporate, other than the Proponent has or will have any interest or share in this Proposal or in the proposed contract which may be completed in respect thereof. There is no collusion or arrangement between the Proponent and any other actual or prospective Proponents in connection with Proposals submitted for this project and the Proponent has no knowledge of the contents of other Proposals and has made no comparison of figures or agreement or arrangement, express or implied, with any other party in connection with the making of the Proposal.

3.7 LITIGATION

Proponents who, either directly or indirectly through another corporation or entity, have been or are in litigation, or who have served notice with intent to proceed with court action against CoD in connection with any contract for works or services, may be considered ineligible Proponents. Receipt of Proposals from such Proponents may be disqualified from the evaluation process.

3.8 NO CONTRACT

This RFP is not a tender and does not commit CoD in any way to select a preferred Proponent. By submitting a Proposal and participating in the process as outlined in this RFP, Proponents expressly agree that no contractual, tort or other legal obligation of any kind is formed under or imposed on CoD by this RFP or submissions prior to the completed execution of a formal written Contract.

3.9 ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSAL

The acceptance of a Proposal will be made in writing from CoD and will be addressed to the successful Proponent at the address given in the submitted Proposal. Following acceptance and approval to proceed with the Proposal, the Proponent is expected to enter into a contract with CoD to perform the works or services set out and agreed upon in the Proposal.

3.10 PROPOSAL CONTENT

Content to be included in the Proposal, but not limited to:

- Firm Profile: Provide the full name, address, and telephone number of the firm. Indicate whether the firm is local, regional, national, or international in the scope of its practice. Describe the range of activities performed by the firm. Identify the number of staff that are located locally, if applicable.
- Experience: Identify the accounting firm's experience with municipal engagements. List current governmental audit clients and indicate the number of years your firm has been the auditors.
- Project Team: Identify the partners, managers, and other key staff who would be assigned to the CoD audit. Provide a description of their qualifications and experience in the accounting field, including municipal audits.
- Audit Plan: Provide a detailed audit plan, which should include the following:
 - Identify each component of the audit engagement, the related time schedule, and the hours to be dedicated to each component;
 - Describe the approach your firm would take in order to gain an understanding of the City's structure, operations, accounting processes, and computer systems;
 - Describe the degree to which CoD staff would be used to assist you during the audit, indicating the approximate time requirements; and
 - Describe your firm's ability to provide constructive suggestions for improving the City's internal accounting controls and administrative procedures.
- Audit Fee: Indicate your firm's audit fee to be charged. The fee should be stated for each of the five fiscal years of the engagement, beginning with the year ending December 31, 2024. Include the proposed schedule of billing dates.
- Additional: Provide any additional comments about your firm's audit approach, which you feel would be informative.

4.0 - SCOPE OF WORK AND SCHEDULE

4.1 SERVICES REQUIRED

The responsibility of the external auditors is to examine the financial statements of the CoD prepared by City staff and to express audit opinions thereon. The audit report for the CoD will be addressed to the Mayor and Council of the CoD. It must disclose the scope of the examination and state that the audit was performed in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. The report will also include an opinion as to whether the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the CoD and the results of its operations in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

4.2 SCHEDULING

The selected firm must be available to attend a council meeting to present the audited financial statements to Council.

Pre-Audit Meeting	October/November
Interim Audit	December
Year-end Audit	March
Completed Audit Report	April

The audited financial statements must be approved by Council by May 15th of each year.

4.3 CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO EXTERNAL AUDITOR

Finance Department staff will be available to assist the auditors by providing information, working papers, and schedules. Finance staff is responsible for the year-end close and financial statement preparation. Supporting documentation will be provided to the auditors on a timely basis. The preparation and processing of all confirmations will be the responsibility of the external auditors.