

Clause No. 33 in Report No. 12 of Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on June 26, 2014.

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CONSULTANT SELECTION FOR PROFESSIONAL FORESTRY SERVICES

Committee of the Whole recommends adoption of the following recommendation contained in the report dated June 4, 2014 from the Commissioner of Environmental Services:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. Council approve the award of contract for professional forestry services to Silv-Econ Limited, pursuant to Request for Proposal P-14-63 at a total cost of \$411,004, excluding taxes, and authorize the execution of the contract on behalf of the Region.

2. PURPOSE

Council authorization is requested to retain professional forestry services for projects within the Natural Heritage and Forestry Section.

York Region's Purchasing By-law requires Council authorization to award Request for Proposals over \$2,000,000 or when the recommended proponent is not the lowest cost. In this case, the recommended proponent has not submitted the lowest cost.

3. BACKGROUND

Professional forestry services are required to assist with the delivery of key forestry programs

The Natural Heritage and Forestry section of Environmental Services is responsible for the implementation of a wide variety of programs involving the natural environment including: management of the York Regional Forest, urban forestry (street tree) program, administration and enforcement of the Regional Forest Conservation By-law, invasive species management, and implementation and development of the Greening Strategy.

To facilitate implementation of these programs, the assistance of a professional forestry services consultant is required. Professional forestry services include:

- Services of a Registered Professional Forester, Certified Tree Marker and Certified Arborist
- Preparation of silvicultural prescriptions and tree marking services for the York Regional Forest
- Assistance with independent evidence collection, data analysis and expert advice and testimony
- Technical review of impacts to trees and the natural environment as it relates to infrastructure design and construction
- Street tree health assessments and monitoring
- Forest management and afforestation (new forests) planning for properties acquired through the Environmental Land Protection and Preservation program
- Invasive species and forest pest monitoring and management

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Request for Proposal P-14-63 was advertised in April 2014 to obtain professional forestry services

In April 2014, Request for Proposal P-14-63 for Professional Forestry Services was advertised in the *Daily Commercial News* and electronically on Biddingo.com and the Regional website. Consulting firms were invited to submit, for evaluation, their team experience and past project experience applicable to the project's scope of work.

Request for Proposal P-14-63 detailed the scope of work required which included the following services for a period of three years:

- Development of forest management plans, silvicultural prescriptions and tree marking services
- Inspection and audit of forest harvest operations
- Invasive species and forest pest monitoring and management
- Data collection, report preparation and expert witness testimony for Forest Conservation By-law matters
- Development and implementation of street tree inventories
- Street tree health assessments

Two bids were received in response to Request for Proposal P-14-63.

Proposals evaluated using two-envelope system

Proposals were evaluated using the two-envelope system with technical and financial information submitted in separate envelopes. The overall proposal score was evaluated based on a weighting of 80 points for the technical proposal and 20 points for the financial proposal. Technical proposals were evaluated prior to any knowledge of financial information.

The Region's proposal evaluation team reviewed technical proposals based on the following criteria as listed in Request for Proposal P-14-63:

- Corporate experience and credentials
- Key and technical staff/sub-consultant experience and credentials
- Familiarity of the business processes for municipal program delivery
- Demonstrated full understanding of the project objectives and the services requested
- Ability to provide and deliver services efficiently and effectively
- Project approach and methodology
- Project schedule, work plan and deliverables
- References provided for projects of a similar nature
- Value added/innovative concepts

Technical components of the proposal must achieve a minimum technical score of 60 per cent (48 points out of the potential 80 points) to have the financial portion of the proposal considered. If a proponent does not achieve this minimum technical score, their financial proposal is returned unopened. Technical and financial results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
Consultant Proposal Evaluation Summary

Consultant	Technical Score (out of 80)	Total Fee (\$) (excluding taxes)	Financial Score (Out of 20)	Total Score (Out of 100)
Silv-Econ Limited	65.30	411,004.00	19.20	84.32
B.A. Blackwell & Associates Ltd.	48.45	391,477.20	20.00	68.45

Evaluation of proposals revealed Silv-Econ Limited achieved the highest total score and represents good value for the Region

Evaluation of the proposals revealed that Silv-Econ Limited achieved the highest overall score and is therefore recommended for this assignment. The strong technical score and competitive financial score represents the best value for the Region.

Silv-Econ Limited's proposal demonstrated comprehensive experience on projects with similar specialized knowledge and experience

The technical proposal submitted by Silv-Econ Limited provided a strong team with proven hands-on experience in similar forest management projects. Key strengths of the proposal submitted by Silv-Econ Limited include:

- extensive experience completing street tree inventories and health assessments
- only bidder to have Forest Stewardship Council audit experience
- extensive experience in the silvicultural management of southern Ontario forests
- only bidder to have been accepted as an expert witness in Forest Conservation By-law court proceedings
- extensive experience with invasive species management, including emerald ash borer

Through their technical proposal, Silv-Econ Limited clearly demonstrated their thorough understanding of the requirements of this project based on their previous involvement in Regional projects. Silv-Econ Limited has extensive experience working for the Region through various request for proposals and request for tenders. They have consistently provided professional, high quality services to the satisfaction of the Region.

The B.A. Blackwell & Associates Ltd. proposal did not demonstrate this extensive level of experience and expertise in the management of urban and rural forests, management of invasive species, and administration of forest conservation by-laws in southern Ontario.

Supplies and Services Branch reviewed the evaluation summary and issued their report confirming that Silv-Econ be recommended as the successful overall proponent to provide professional forestry services to the Region.

Link to Key Council-approved Plans

Professional forestry services provide the resources required to implement a number of key programs, including management of the York Regional Forest, urban forestry (street tree) program, invasive species management, administration of the Forest Conservation By-law, and implementation of the Greening Strategy. Delivery of these key programs supports the York Regional Official Plan policies in the areas of: Sustainable Natural Environment, Healthy Communities, and Building Cities and Complete Communities.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The upset limit fee for the work is \$ 411,004, excluding applicable taxes. The contract is for a three-year period.

Sufficient funding was approved in the 2014 budget to proceed with this project. Funding for the remaining two years (2015 and 2016) will be considered in the 2015 budget process.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The programs delivered with the assistance of a professional forestry services consultant positively impact residents. Management of the York Regional Forest and the urban forests provide recreation opportunities, aesthetic, health and environmental benefits to residents. Administration of the Forest Conservation By-law assists in protecting the forested area and canopy cover in woodlots and woodlands within the local municipalities.

7. CONCLUSION

Two proposals from consulting firms were received and evaluated for Request for Proposal P-14-63 in accordance with the Region's Purchasing By-law. The proposal from Silv-Econ Limited represents good value for money to the Region.

It is recommended that Silv-Econ Limited be engaged to provide professional forestry services over a period of three years, at a fee of \$411,004 excluding taxes.

For more information on this report, please contact Laura McDowell, Director, Environmental Promotion and Protection at 905-830-4444 Ext. 75077.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.