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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL AWARD PROFESSIONAL FORESTRY SERVICES

The Transportation and Works Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, June 1, 2006, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The consulting forestry firm of Silv-Econ Limited be retained to provide professional forestry services for the years 2006, 2007, and 2008 at a total upset limit fee of \$288,395.75.
2. The Director of Supplies and Services be authorized to issue the purchase order.

2. PURPOSE

This report recommends the retention of consulting foresters to provide professional forestry services for a period of three years (2006 – 2008). The Regional Purchasing By-law requires Council authorization when a proposal is not recommending award to the lowest bidder.

3. BACKGROUND

The Natural Heritage and Forestry Section of the Transportation and Works Department is responsible for the implementation of a wide variety of programs involving the natural environment including; the management of the York Regional Forest, street tree program as part of streetscaping within Regional road allowances, administration and enforcement of the Regional Forest Conservation By-law, and implementation and development of the Greening Strategy.

3.1 Scope of Assignment

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

- Services of a Registered Professional Forester, Certified Tree Marker, and Certified Arborist.
- The preparation of silvicultural prescriptions and tree marking services for the York Regional Forest.

- Tree health and hazard tree evaluations for trees within Regional road allowances.
- Assistance with administration and enforcement of the Regional Forest Conservation By-law including, permit application review, collection of evidence and expert testimony in a court of law.
- Technical review of impacts to trees and the natural environment as it relates to infrastructure design and construction.
- Forest management and afforestation planning for properties acquired through the Greenlands Property Securement Strategy.
- Forest pest monitoring and management.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

4.1 Outcome of Evaluation of Proposals

In accordance with the Purchasing By-law, a Request for Proposals (RFP) was advertised on March 23, 2006. On April 11, 2006, proposals were received for this assignment in response to the advertisement. In addition, several consulting firms that had expressed interest in the past were directly notified of the RFP.

Proposals were received from the following three firms:

1. Lands and Forests Consulting
2. Williams & Associates Forestry and Environmental Consultants Limited
3. Silv-Econ Limited

The Region used the “two envelope” evaluation process for this RFP, in which technical/management proposals were opened and evaluated prior to the opening and evaluation of the corresponding financial proposals. The total weighting of the technical/management proposal is 80% and the total weighting of the financial proposal is 20%. This allocation of technical/management and financial will ensure that the assignment is awarded to a consultant that is technically competent, as well as cost competitive.

The technical proposals were evaluated based on the following technical criteria:

- Project team qualifications and experience.
- Project management.
- Project deliverables.

In accordance with the terms of the RFP, the financial proposals were opened only after Region staff agreed to the overall technical scores. After compliance of the financial proposals had been established, the overall proposal was evaluated based on a weighting of 80% for the technical/management proposal and 20% for the financial proposal. The best proposal was deemed the one with the highest total score.

The consultant proposal evaluation summary is presented in Table 1 and includes the technical score, the upset limit fee and corresponding financial score and the total score for each proponent.

Table 1
Consultant Proposal Evaluation Summary

Firm	Technical Score (Out of 80)	Upset Limit Fee Excluding GST	Financial Score (Out of 20)	Total Score (Out of 100)
Silv-Econ Limited	59.5	\$288,396.00	18.7	78.2
Williams & Associates Forestry and Environmental Consultants Limited	34.5	\$274,949.77	19.6	54.1
Lands and Forests Consulting	29.0	269,769.00	20.0	49.0

The best overall proposal (combination of technical and financial) was received from Silv-Econ Limited, as their proposal had the highest total score and represents the best value for the Region on this assignment.

The technical proposal submitted by Silv-Econ consistently scored higher over all categories of the evaluation criteria declared in the RFP and thus received the highest technical score by a considerable margin. Silv-Econ's proposal was significantly better than the other two proposals and in particular because of the following:

- The Silv-Econ proposal clearly articulated an excellent understanding of the Region's requirements and offered value added solutions missing from the other proposals.
- Silv-Econ's proposal provided numerous examples of municipal forestry assignments, similar to those identified in the RFP. Their municipal experience was significantly greater and more diverse than that of the other two firms.
- Silv-Econ has provided Forest Conservation By-law support including expert testimony to several municipalities. Their proposal demonstrated considerably more experience working with Forest Conservations By-law's than the others.
- Silv-Econ's proposal demonstrated that they have significantly more experience working with Forest Stewardship Certified forests than the other proposals. In addition to their experience working in certified forests, the firm holds a Forest Stewardship Council/Smartwood Group Managers certificate.

- Silv-Econ's proposal featured a good complement of experienced Registered Professional Foresters and technical staff.

Although the financial proposals from Williams and Associates Limited and Lands and Forests Consulting are slightly lower in cost (5% and 6% respectively), Silv-Econ's fee is supported with a greater understanding of the Region's requirement and significantly more municipal experience.

The Supplies and Services Branch has reviewed the evaluation summary and has issued their internal report confirming that Silv-Econ be recommended as the successful overall proponent for this assignment.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The upset limit fee for the work is \$288,396.00, excluding GST

There are sufficient funds in the approved 2006 forestry operating budget to cover the 2006 expenditures of this assignment. Funding for the remaining two years (2007 and 2008) of this assignment will be allocated through future 2007 and 2008 Forestry Operating Budgets respectively. Proposed expenditures for this project are given in the following table:

Table 2
Proposed Budget Expenditures

Proposed Budget Expenditures	2006	2007	2008
Professional Forestry Services	\$80,400.00	\$92,281.47	\$96,847.27

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

There are no local municipal implications associated with this report.

7. CONCLUSION

Consultants' proposals for this assignment were evaluated in accordance with Regional policy, by-laws, and practices. Supplies and Services were consulted and involved at every stage of the process.

The proposal submitted by Silv-Econ Limited addressed all of the requirements for this assignment, including qualified and knowledgeable personnel, and required experience on similar municipal projects. The proposal represents the best overall value to the Region.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.