

COUNCIL REPORT

M&C No.	2021 - 084
Report Date	March 17, 2021
Meeting Date	March 22 nd 2021
Service Area	Public Safety- Fire Department

His Worship Mayor Don Darling and Members of Common Council

SUBJECT: Fire Service Review Successful Proponent

OPEN OR CLOSED SESSION

This matter is to be discussed in open session of Common Council.

AUTHORIZATION

Primary Author(s)	Commissioner/Dept. Head	City Manager
<i>Josh Hennessy</i>	<i>Kevin Fudge / Ian Fogan / Kevin Clifford</i>	<i>John Collin</i>

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the proposal submitted by Pomax Consulting Inc. for the Fire Service Review and Fifteen-Year Strategic Plan, in the amount of \$95,800.00 plus HST, be accepted. Additionally, it is recommended that the Mayor and Common Clerk be authorized to execute the necessary contract documents.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In June of 2020 Common Council authorized a fire service review per the recommendation of the 2020 Ernst & Young sustainability assessment. The authorized fire service review is to consider the City of Saint John financial position, the risk profile of the community, and applicable NFPA standards. The review will map out a fire service strategy and applicable fire service level for the City of Saint John for the next 15 years that is sustainable and viable.

With this guidance in place a request for proposal (RFP) was issued and Pomax Consulting Inc. was the successful proponent.

PREVIOUS RESOLUTION

M&C No. 2020-154- Sustainability and Fire Service Workforce Adjustment

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This report aligns with Council's Priority for Vibrant Safe City as the fire service review will ensure the future delivery of efficient/sustainable public safety services address the evolving needs of the community.

Furthermore, this report demonstrates fiscal responsibility as the fire service review must take into consideration all adopted financial policies of the City of Saint John.

SERVICE AND FINANCIAL OUTCOMES

The fire service review shall identify an appropriate fire service level for the community that cumulatively takes into consideration the affordability of the service, the risk to the community and applicable standards. As identified in the recent Ernst & Young City of Saint John Operational Review "an independent and objective risk analysis to support current fire service levels has not been completed in many years, including the response capabilities of some of the industrial players." The successful proponent of the RFP is tasked to review the Ernst & Young observations and complete the review per the deliverables of the RFP as presented in Appendix A- RFP Particulars.

The review will include a community hazard risk assessment and a 15-year actionable strategic plan that is based on the hazard risk profile of the City, the financial position of the City and the appropriate best practice standards for service delivery. This process will involve an oversight committee comprised of City staff with finance, human resources, strategic services and fire service subject matter expertise that will work with the proponent to ensure the best outcome possible for the citizens of Saint John.

The fire service review will ensure that fire department resources are optimized to match the current and future financial position of the City of Saint John and ensure the best value for taxpayers in line with the City of Saint John sustainability initiatives.

INPUT FROM OTHER SERVICE AREAS AND STAKEHOLDERS – SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

Supply Chain Management facilitated the Request for Proposal (RFP) process to solicit proposals for the Fire Service Review and Fifteen-Year Strategic Plan.

As such the RFP was issued on October 6, 2020 and closed on Thursday, October 29, 2020 with two (2) proponents responding as follows:

Emergency Management & Training Inc.
Pomax Consulting Inc.

A review committee, consisting of staff from the Saint John Fire Department, Finance, the City Manager's Office, and Supply Chain Management reviewed the submissions for completeness and compliance with the RFP requirements and selection criteria consisting of the following:

1. Ability to Meet Deliverables and Objectives
2. Proponent's Experience
3. Cost

In accordance with the City's standard procedures, the committee members evaluated and ranked each proposal based on the proposals' technical merits. Following this, the financial proposals were opened and evaluated, and corresponding scores were added to the technical scores.

Pomax Consulting Inc.'s proposal was ranked the highest based on an overall rating of the evaluation criteria as well as offering a competitive cost acceptable to staff.

The above processes are in accordance with the City's Procurement Policy and Supply Chain Management support the recommendations being put forth.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A- RFP Particulars

APPENDIX A - RFP PARTICULARS

A. The Deliverables

The proponent shall conduct a fire service review with the objective of creating a fifteen-year fire service strategy for the City of Saint John. The fire service review and fifteen-year fire service strategy will incorporate three main criteria as it works to identify the appropriate service level(s) for the taxpayers of Saint John. The three main criteria are: community risk assessment; benchmarking of NFPA and other applicable standards; and adherence to the City's Financial Policies.

Background Information

Due to the City's sustainability needs and through recommendations in the Ernst & Young 2020 report, Common Council resolved to close Fire Station 8 along with Engine Company 8, effective December 31, 2020. Council also resolved to examine the City's fire service from a response, deployment and risk mitigation perspective, before instituting any additional equipment and personnel reductions as recommended in the EY 2020 report.

SCOPE OF WORK

Council Resolution

The purpose of this Request for Proposal is to identify and engage a consultant with the experience and ability to undertake a fire service review which considers the City of Saint John financial position, the risk profile of the community, and applicable National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and related standards. The review must also map out a fire service strategy and applicable fire service level(s) for the City of Saint John for the next 15 years.

STATEMENT OF NEEDS

Objectives

I. Complete a review of the current state of the service delivery of the Saint John Fire Department, to include but not limited to:

- Organizational design and governance,
- History, formation, and general description of the fire department,
- Service area and general demographics of the population,
- A description of the current service delivery infrastructure; and
- Review any current or draft performance goals, objectives, and measures

II. Complete a community risk assessment focusing on mandatory risk profiles to include but not limited to:

- Geographic Profile,
- Building Stock Profile,
- Critical Infrastructure Profile,
- Demographic Profile,
- Hazard Profile,
- Public Safety Response Profile,
- Community Services Profile,
- Economic Profile; and
- Past Loss and Event History Profile

As part of the community risk assessment the proponent must address the risk level matrix (probability and consequences) pertaining to the City of Saint John, including strategies around prevention, mitigation, response, and recovery/resiliency.

The proponent is to consider stakeholder consultations in the assessment of the community risk profile. The proponent is also welcomed to provide any other assessment tool(s) or best practices to facilitate the assessment.

III. Identification of Services Provided

Identification of all services provided by SJFD, including whether the service provided is identified as a core or optional service or if there are services better suited or economically advantageous to be done outside the fire department. The analysis should outline why this service is being offered by SJFD and the risks, if any, of discontinuing the optional services.

IV. Determine the cost for provision of existing services

Determine the cost of providing each of the services described above. The costs shall include, but not be limited to, staff costs (pay, benefits, etc.), specialized apparatus and or equipment costs that may be required for each of the services. Results shall be presented in a tabular form with explanatory notes. A historical record of fire service cost shall be provided as part of the findings

V. Given the constraint of current departmental budget, complete a review of the Saint John Fire Department deployment which will include, at minimum; optimal apparatus type and placement, optimal station locations and future response options (automatic aid, mutual aid, alternative personnel models, organizational design, volunteers, etc.). This objective is to include but not limited to:

- A review of current service delivery compared to industry benchmarks

- Using the applicable NFPA standards, community risk profile and geographical restrictions of the City of Saint John, the successful proponent shall examine the current apparatus and response profile and make recommendations as to the optimal apparatus types, distribution, station locations and response utilization that will provide an acceptable level of service to the community while sustaining fire service cost in accordance with the financial policies of the City of Saint John.
- General locations of future necessary fire stations and create a 30-year fire station plan
- Analysis of neighbouring departments and resources for mutual and automatic aid or regionalization of services and how those arrangements could integrate into the overall strategy
- Selection and deployment of apparatus by type
- Deployment of special units or resources including department's role as medical first responders
- Distribution - Initial attack (first due) resources for risk-specific intervention
- Concentration - effective response force assembly, or the initial resources necessary to stop the escalation of the emergency for each risk type

VI. Long-Term Planning

Develop a 15-year plan to shape the SJFD to the recommended options as outlined above including the identification of the fire service level that the citizens can expect. As part (options to be explored) of long-term plan and consistent with the above objective, the proponent is required to provide an examination of the following (and not limited to) options:

Internal:

- 1 - Strategy for adjusting to expenditure increases beyond financial policies
- 2 - Identification of cost efficiencies through emerging technologies
- 3 - Other as proposed by consultant

External:

- 1 – Mutual Aid Agreements
- 2 - Automatic Aid Agreements
- 3 - Regional Fire Service
- 4 - Other as proposed by consultant

VII. Contingency Planning

The plan should identify a strategy of flexibility to accommodate expected areas of growth as identified in PlanSJ or other related growth plans or documents (specific projections to be given by staff during consultation). The 15-year plan

should also include a strategy to keep departmental costs aligned to the financial policies for the City of Saint John

VIII. Complete a performance management plan which will position the Saint John Fire Department for success in the implementation and monitoring of the 15 Year Strategic Plan, to include:

- Illustrate the degree of benefit to be gained through its implementation
- Extent to which it achieves established performance targets
- Potential negative consequences
- Assignment of oversight responsibilities
- Schedule of assessments
- Review requirements