

DATE: October 18, 2017

FILE: 5240-01

TO: Chair and Members
Comox Valley Sewage Commission

FROM: Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

Supported by Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

**RE: Contract Award for Capital Projects
Communications Consultant**

R. Dyson

Purpose

To receive approval for the award of a contract to Zinc Strategies Inc. (Zinc) for communication consultant services for wastewater capital projects.

Recommendations from the Chief Administrative Officer

THAT as a result of a competitive process, the contract for the communications consultant for wastewater capital projects for year one be awarded to Zinc Strategies Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$92,325 excluding GST and disbursements;

AND FURTHER THAT subsequent years work be awarded to Zinc Strategies Inc. at the Comox Valley Regional Districts discretion for a total overall cost not to exceed \$350,000 excluding GST and disbursements for wastewater capital projects and not exceeding a five year term;

AND FINALLY THAT the Chair and Corporate Legislative Officer be authorized to execute the contract.

Executive Summary

In June 2017, the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) issued a request for proposal (RFP) for a communications consultant to assist with the communications requirements for water and wastewater capital projects. The role of the communications consultant is as follows:

- Develop communications strategies and work plans for wastewater projects, assist in media relations, develop public engagement programs and collateral material.
- The communications consultant will assist with project communications for the following wastewater projects:
 - Comox Valley Water Pollution Control Center (CVWPCC) phase one upgrades.
 - Comox No.2 Pump Station and forcemain project.
 - Other smaller wastewater capital projects.

Upon closing of the RFP, a total of eight compliant RFP's were received. The highest ranked proposal was from Zinc, with the portion of the contract for wastewater capital projects estimated at \$92,325 excluding GST for year one. The contract will be created such that only communication consulting fees for wastewater capital projects shall be charged to the 335 service, on a time and materials basis.

Due to the long project timelines and complexity of the projects, the communications consultant is expected to assist with project communications for the next five years, with the total contract

amount for the five year term for this service not to exceed \$350,000. The contract will be able to be terminated or the scope modified for each and any subsequent year.

Prepared by:	Concurrence:	Concurrence:	Concurrence:
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Stakeholder Distribution (Upon Agenda Publication)

Zinc Strategies Inc.	✓
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Background/Current Situation

The CVRD is undergoing a period of significant capital spending for water and wastewater capital projects over the next five years. The primary drivers for these projects are to increase system capacity and comply with changing regulations. In June 2017, the CVRD released a RFP for communications consulting services to develop communications strategies and public engagement programs for water and wastewater capital projects.

The role of the communications consultant will be to develop communications strategies, work plans, collateral material and provide media relations support. The consultant will assist the CVRD and develop plans for informing and engaging the public in varying capacities for each of the below listed capital projects:

- Comox Valley water treatment project
- CVWPCC phase one upgrades
- Comox No.2 Pump Station and forcemain project
- Other smaller water and wastewater capital projects

Upon closing of the RFP, eight compliant proposals were received. The proposals were evaluated by a team comprised of three CVRD staff and evaluated against a set of point rated criteria set out in the RFP, which included project understanding, approach and methodology, project delivery, portfolio review, demonstrated knowledge of workings of local governments, reputation, experience and cost. The results of the evaluation are provided in Table No.1 below.

Table No.1: Ranking of Proposals

Name of Firm	Technical Ranking
Zinc Strategies Inc.	1
Taiji Brand Group	2
The C&E Group	3
ISL Engineering	4
Lanarc	5
AhA Creative Strategies	6
Be the Change Group	7
Navigator Ltd.	8

The firm that ranked the highest overall was Zinc. Due to the long project timelines and complexity of the projects, the communications consultant is expected to assist with project communications

for the next five years. However the contract may be terminated or the scope modified for subsequent years. Zinc's price for year one is \$92,325 exclusive of GST and disbursements for the wastewater capital projects portion of the contract. Should the CVRD choose to retain Zinc for the whole five year term the total contract amount is not to exceed \$350,000 excluding GST and disbursements, for wastewater capital projects.

For wastewater capital projects Zinc will be providing communications support for the CVWPCC phase one upgrade project, the Comox No.2 Pump Station and forcemain project and other smaller wastewater capital projects as needed. Communications fees will be charged on a by project basis. For the sewer capital projects, Zinc will provide the following services:

- Prepare communications plans and work plans.
- Create up-to-date, centralized information sources.
- Maintain existing outreach tools.
- Develop communications materials for construction and completion stages.
- Increase public knowledge of Comox Valley Water Treatment Facility.
- Promote improvements undertaken by the CVRD.
- Issues management.

Policy Analysis

Bylaw No. 284, being the “Comox Valley Regional District Delegation of Purchasing Authority Bylaw No. 284, 2013” requires that the CVRD Board approve all contracts in excess of \$100,000.

Options

The Comox Valley Sewage Commission has the following options:

1. To approve the contract award to Zinc Strategies Inc.
2. To not award the contract at this time.

The RFP was issued with the intent to award a contract to the proponent that ranked the highest, offering the best value to the CVRD. Each proposal was evaluated based on the RFP criteria with the highest ranked proponent being Zinc Strategies Inc. The contract will be awarded on a year by year basis allowing the flexibility to terminate the contract or modify the scope yearly. As such, only option No.1 above is recommended.

Financial Factors

Communication fees will be charged to each project specifically and have been included within the project budget for each item.

Legal Factors

Bylaw No. 284 requires that the CVRD Board approve award of all contracts in excess of \$100,000.

Regional Growth Strategy Implications

The Regional Growth Strategy contains a specific objective for encouraging sewer management approaches that maximize existing infrastructure. Each of the upcoming major capital projects looks to maximize the use of existing infrastructure.

Intergovernmental Factors

The Comox Valley Sewage Service is governed by the Comox Valley Sewage Commission whose membership includes representatives from the City of Courtenay, the Town of Comox and CFB Comox.

Interdepartmental Involvement

The Engineering Services Branch is leading this work with support from the Financial Services Department.

Citizen/Public Relations

With the significant capital projects in the coming years, clear and consistent public messaging on complex capital projects is very important. Zinc will work with CVRD staff to develop clear public messaging and reduce public confusion on upcoming projects by utilizing communication tools.