

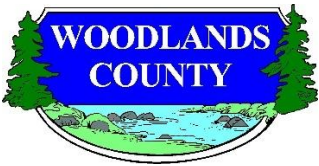
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

WOODLANDS COUNTY FIRE SERVICE REVIEW

2025-01-FIRE

RFP CLOSING DATE: August 1, 2025

Requested by:



WOODLANDS COUNTY

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (“RFP”) WITH RESPECT TO THE:

Woodlands County Fire Service Review

INSTRUCTIONS TO PROPONENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of RFP

1.1.1 Woodlands County (the “County”) seeks proposals from interested parties (“Proposals”) for the following:

Woodland County Fire Service Review

1.2 Woodlands County is seeking qualified contractors to submit their qualifications to conduct a comprehensive Fire Service Review of the Woodlands County Fire Departments. The review should reflect a high-level strategic and operational analysis suitable for a municipal fire service with four fire stations and a Paid-On-Call (POC) firefighter model consisting of over 60 personnel.

1.3 Submission of RFP

Proponents shall submit (1) one electronic copy of their Proposal in an email attachment marked “Fire Service Review” **on or before 2:00:00 p.m.** (Mountain Standard Time as determined conclusively by the clock located in the submission location) **on August 1, 2025** (the “RFP Closing Time”) to:

Woodlands County

Attention: Sheldon Schoepp

Manager, Protective Services

Email: Sheldon.schoepp@woodlands.ab.ca

The submitted proposal in its entirety shall be no more than 20 pages. Title or cover page, cover letter, table of contents, resumes, and any addenda are not included in the specified page limit. Resumes shall be concise, only include information relevant to this RFP, and shall not exceed 2 pages per personnel. The proposal, including content outside of the 20-page limit, shall be formatted in 8.5”x11” letter page format, and may contain 11”x17” ANSI B size page format for any expansive tables or figures.

1.3.1 Proponents may amend their Proposals prior to the RFP Closing Time by either:

1.3.1.1 Submitting the amendment in a sealed package email prominently marked with the RFP title and the full legal name and return address of the Proponent to the location set out above.

1.3.1.2 Any amendment should clearly indicate which part of the Proposal is being amended or replaced.

- 1.3.2** Proposals will be opened following the RFP Closing Time. No Proposal(s) or amendments thereto submitted after the RFP Closing Time will be accepted.
- 1.3.3** No Proponent may submit more than one proposal.
- 1.3.4** Any inquiries respecting this RFP should be directed to:

Sheldon Schoepp
 Manager, Protective Services
 Email: Sheldon.schoepp@woodlands.ab.ca
 (the “RFP Contact”)

- 1.3.5** Each Proponent shall designate a person to whom any additional information may be obtained. The name and contact information are to be communicated to the County’s designated contact person indicated in paragraph 1.2.4 above noted.
- 1.3.6** The County is under no obligation to respond to any inquiry submitted to it in respect of this RFP.
- 1.3.7** If the County, in its sole and unfettered discretion, determines that a written response to an inquiry is warranted, a written response will be prepared and distributed to all Proponents by posting the response on Alberta Purchasing Connection. Such written response(s) will be issued in the form of an addendum to this RFP and will be deemed to be part of this RFP.

1.4 General Conditions Applicable to this RFP

1.4.1 Appendices and Addenda

The appendices to this RFP and any subsequent addenda are incorporated into and form part of this RFP. The information and data contained in any appendices and any subsequent addenda may form the basis upon which a contract engagement will be entered into with the County. A contract will be drafted by the County and presented to the successful proponent.

1.4.2 Disclaimer of Liability and Indemnity

By submitting a Proposal, a Proponent agrees:

- 1.4.2.1** to be responsible for conducting its own due diligence on data and information upon which its Proposal is based;
- 1.4.2.2** that it has fully satisfied itself as to its rights and the nature extended to the risks it will be assuming;
- 1.4.2.3** that it has gathered all information necessary to perform all of its obligations under its Proposal;
- 1.4.2.4** that it is solely responsible for ensuring that it has all information necessary to prepare its Proposal and for independently verifying and informing itself with respect to any terms or conditions that may affect its Proposal;

- 1.4.2.5** to hold harmless the County, its elected officials, officers, employees, agents, advisors or partnering entities in this undertaking, and all of their respective successors and assigns, from all claims, liability and costs related to all aspects of the RFP process;
- 1.4.2.6** that it shall not be entitled to claim against the County, its elected officials, officers, employees, insurers, agents, advisors, and partnering entities in this undertaking on grounds that any information, whether obtained from the County or otherwise (including information made available by its elected officials, officers, employees, agents or advisors), regardless of the manner or form in which the information is provided is incorrect or insufficient;
- 1.4.2.7** that the County will not be responsible for any costs, expenses, losses, damages or liability incurred by the Proponent as a result of, or arising out of, preparing, submitting, or disseminating a Proposal, or for any presentations or interviews related to the Proposal, or due to the County's acceptance or non-acceptance of a Proposal; and
- 1.4.2.8** to waive any right to contest in any proceeding, case, action or application, the right of the County to negotiate with any Proponent for the Contract whom the County deems, in its sole and unfettered discretion, to have submitted the Proposal most beneficial to the County and acknowledges that the County may negotiate and contract with any Proponent it desires.

1.4.3 No Tender and no Contractual Relationship

The Proponent acknowledges and agrees that this procurement process is a Request for Proposal and is not a tendering process. It is part of an overall procurement process intended to enable the County to identify a potential successful Proponent. The submission of a Proposal does not constitute a legally binding agreement between the County and any Proponent. For greater certainty, by submission of its Proposal, the Proponent acknowledges and agrees that there will be no initiation of contractual obligations or the creation of contractual obligations as between the County and the Proponent arising from this RFP or the submission of a Proposal.

Further, the Proponent acknowledges that a Proposal may be rescinded by a Proponent at any time prior to the execution of the Contract. To withdraw a Proposal, a notice of withdrawal must be sent to the RFP Contact and must be signed by an authorized representative of the Proponent. The County is under no obligation to return withdrawn Proposals.

1.5 Discretion of the County

Notwithstanding any other provision of this RFP to the contrary, the provisions in this Section 1.4 prevail, govern and override all other parts of this RFP. The County is not bound to accept any Proposal. At any time prior to execution of the Contract, the County may, in its sole and unfettered discretion, or for its own convenience, terminate the procurement process. All of this may be done with no compensation to the Proponents or any other party.

The County reserves the right, in its sole and unfettered discretion, to:

- 1.5.1** utilize any ideas or information contained in any of the Proposals for its sole use and benefit without making payment or otherwise providing consideration or compensation to any Proponent or any other party;
- 1.5.2** negotiate the specific contractual terms and conditions, including but not limited to the fee; or
- 1.5.3** waive any formality, informality or technicality in any Proposal, whether of a minor and inconsequential nature, or whether of a substantial or material nature; and
- 1.5.4** determine whether any Proposal meets the submission requirements of this RFP.

1.6 Selection

Selection of the successful Proponent, if any, is at the sole and unfettered discretion of the County.

1.7 Disqualification

The failure to comply with any aspect of this RFP (either in a material way or otherwise), shall render the Proponent subject to such actions as may be determined by the County, including disqualification from the RFP process, suspension from the RFP process and/or imposition of conditions which must be complied with before the Proponent will have its privilege of submitting a Proposal reinstated.

1.8 Representations and Warranties

- 1.8.1** The County makes no representations or warranties other than those expressly contained herein as to the accuracy and/or completeness of the information provided in this RFP.
- 1.8.2** Proponents are hereby required to satisfy themselves as to the accuracy and/or completeness of the information provided in this RFP.
- 1.8.3** No implied obligation of any kind by, or on behalf of, the County shall arise from anything contained in this RFP, and the express representations and warranties contained in this RFP, and made by the County, are and shall be the only representations and warranties that apply.
- 1.8.4** Information referenced in this RFP, or otherwise made available by the County or any of its elected officials, officers, employees, agents or advisors as part of the

procurement process, is provided for the convenience of the Proponent only and none of the County, its elected officials, officers, employees, agents and advisors warrant the accuracy or completeness of this information. The Proponent is required to immediately bring forth to the County any conflict or error that it may find in the RFP. All other data is provided for informational purposes only.

2.0 Description of Work

The County reserves the right, but is not required, to reject any Proposal that does not include the requirements.

2.1 Description of the Proposal

- 2.1.1** Proposal shall include the legal name, address and telephone numbers of the individual, the principals of partnerships and/or corporations comprising the Proponent, and in the case of partnerships or corporations, the individual who will be the representative of the partnership or corporation.
- 2.1.2** Proposal shall include a description of any subconsultants, subcontractors, agents or employees that the Proponent expects to involve in the performance of the Work. Woodlands County reserves the discretion to approve or reject the proposed use, by the selected Proponent of any proposed subconsultant, of which discretion shall be exercised reasonably.
- 2.1.3** Proposal shall include a description of the subconsultant(s) who will be performing the Work including their previous experience and qualifications.

2.2 Execution of the Proposal

Proposals shall be properly executed in full compliance with the following:

- 2.2.1** Proposal must be signed by the representative for the Proponent;
- 2.2.2** if the Proposal is made by a corporation, the full name of the corporation shall be accurately printed immediately above the signatures of its duly authorized officers;
- 2.2.3** if the Proposal is made by a partnership, the firm name or business name shall be accurately printed above the signature of the firm and the Proposal shall be signed by a partner or partners who have authority to sign for the partnership;
- 2.2.4** if the Proposal is made by an individual carrying on business under a name other than his own, his business name together with the individual's name shall be printed immediately above its signature; and
- 2.2.5** if the Proposal is made by a sole proprietor who carries on business in his own name, the proprietor shall print his name immediately below his signature.

3.0 Documents to be submitted with the Proposal

At the time of the submission of its Proposal, the Proponent shall provide the following:

3.1 Corporate Profile and Organizational Chart

- 3.1.1** Provide general information about the Proponent, which needs to be specific to this RFP. Summarize why your corporate profile gives you an advantage over other proponents.
- 3.1.2** Provide an organizational chart including the names of staff that would be assigned to the project and concise details of their involvement (roles and responsibilities) showing formal and informal lines of reporting and communication. Subconsultants and their staff should be identified.
- 3.1.3** Describe the project management strategies and skills that will be employed to ensure that the County expectations around project scope, time, cost, quality and performance will be met.

3.2 Scope of Work

1. This review must **exclude** all response activity and infrastructure within the Town of Whitecourt boundaries.
2. The scope of work shall encompass the following focus areas:

Governance & Administration

- Structure and oversight of the Fire Departments
- Roles and responsibilities of Council, administration, and Fire Chiefs
- Inter-municipal relationships and mutual aid agreements
- Bylaws, policies, and administrative procedures related to fire governance
- Alignment with municipal strategic goals and emergency management plans
- Fire Service reporting and performance monitoring mechanisms
- Risk management, liability, and insurance considerations

Level of Service

- Analysis of current service delivery standards
- Response time performance and call volume analysis
- Provision of 3–5 level of service options with financial implication
- Community risk assessment and service expectations
- Evaluation of service delivery by call type (fire, medical, rescue, hazardous materials, etc.)
- Benchmarking against NFPA standards and comparable jurisdictions
- Geographic coverage and service area mapping
- Service continuity and business interruption planning

Training

- Current training programs, qualifications, and compliance with NFPA and CSA standards
- Training gaps and capacity development
- Training schedules, frequency, and delivery methods (in-person, online, joint training)
- Certification tracking and maintenance (e.g., First Aid, Wildland Fire, SCBA, ICS)

- Evaluation of training facilities and equipment

Staffing

- Recruitment and retention of Paid-On-Call (POC) firefighters
- Administrative and command structure
- Succession planning and leadership development
- Volunteer engagement strategies and recognition programs
- Staffing models, availability, and response reliability
- Workload analysis and role clarity
- Occupational health and safety compliance
- Psychological wellness, critical incident support, and work-life balance programs

Apparatus & Hall Locations

- Inventory and age of apparatus and equipment
- Apparatus suitability, standardization, and compliance with NFPA standards
- Assessment of fire hall locations and geographic coverage areas
- Evaluation of hall facilities (layout, functionality, maintenance, health & safety compliance)
- Deployment efficiency and travel time modelling
- High-level capital needs and asset renewal priorities
- Apparatus replacement schedule and long-term capital planning
- Shared or regionalized asset opportunities

911 Call Volume and Analysis

- Call volume and analysis on the past ten (10) years of 911 call volume (per year) and types of 911 calls (per year) within all county fire districts.
 - District 1: Town of Whitecourt FD response area
 - District 2: Station 2 – Fort Assiniboine response area
 - District 3: Station 3 – Blue Ridge response area
 - District 4: Station 4 – Anselmo response area
 - District 5: Station 5 – Goose Lake response area

Documents, Regulations & Compliance

- Review of internal Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs)
- Compliance with provincial and national fire regulations, including Alberta OH&S and Fire Code
- Document version control, accessibility, and staff awareness
- Alignment of operational procedures with training and deployment
- Integration of Emergency Management, Safety Codes, and Environmental policies
- Review of inspection, maintenance, and incident documentation practices
- Risk management policies and liability mitigation
- Legislative updates and regulatory monitoring processes

Fire Prevention & Public Education

- Public education and fire prevention initiatives (schools, seniors, industry, public events)

- Fire inspections and Safety Codes enforcement practices
- Compliance with Safety Codes Council and Fire Commissioner guidelines
- Fire investigation processes and trend analysis
- Community risk reduction programs and seasonal campaigns
- Partnerships with schools, community organizations, and regional agencies
- Utilization of social media and digital tools for outreach
- Tracking, evaluation, and reporting of fire prevention activities

Finance & Key Performance Indicators: Overview of budget structure/process

- Operational and capital budgeting practices
- Cost recovery models (e.g., fire permits, billable responses, service fees)
- Funding sources and intergovernmental grants
- Long-term financial planning and forecasting
- Budget alignment with service level objectives and capital needs
- Budgeting transparency and stakeholder communication
- Comparison to similar-sized municipalities or departments

Finance & Key Performance Indicators: Capital reserves

- Current reserve allocations and future funding strategies
- Apparatus and facility lifecycle funding strategies
- Reserve adequacy and sustainability analysis
- Integration of reserve planning with asset management and capital forecasting

Additional Observations & Value of Service

- Morale and organizational culture
- Leadership dynamics and internal communication
- Evaluation of efficiencies, community engagement, and best practices
- Community engagement, visibility, and trust in fire services
- Public perception and satisfaction
- Identification and adoption of industry best practices
- Alignment with Council's strategic goals and community values

Conclusion & Next Steps

- Summary of key findings and identified gaps
- Strategic recommendations prioritized by impact and feasibility
- Implementation roadmap with short, medium, and long-term actions
- Identification of quick wins and foundational steps
- Alignment of recommendations with municipal objectives and budget cycles
- Performance indicators and milestones for progress tracking
- Recommendations for periodic review and continuous improvement

3.3 PROJECT TEAM

- 3.3.1** Demonstrate that the Proponent has the capacity to manage and perform all consulting services and produce all deliverables required within the required project schedule. Capacity includes sufficient qualified staff, resources including Subconsultants, and expertise.
- 3.3.1.1** Identify for each proposed key Consultant team member, including Subconsultants:
 - 3.3.1.2** Name and title.
 - 3.3.1.3** Their role for the project (e.g. project manager, technical expert, etc.)
 - 3.3.1.4** Their proposed extent of participation, their duties and responsibilities, including the percentage of their overall work time at various phases of the project.
 - 3.3.1.5** Alternate team members must be identified, if intended to be utilized.

3.4 RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

- 3.4.1** The Consultant shall provide 3 examples of past projects relevant to this RFP, serving in a similar capacity and completing works per outlined in Section 2
- 3.4.2** The proposal should include a good general description of services and experience of the firm and team, as it relates to rural and small hamlet geotechnical projects.

3.5 Insurance to be carried by Successful Proponent

At the time of the submission of its Proposal, the Proponent shall provide evidence of insurance coverage as follows:

- 3.5.1** standard automobile, bodily injury and property damage insurance providing coverage of at least **TWO MILLION (\$2,000,000.00) DOLLARS** inclusive and in respect of any one claim for the injury to or death of one or more persons or damage to or destruction of property;
- 3.5.2** a comprehensive general liability insurance policy providing coverage of at least **FIVE MILLION (\$5,000,000.00) DOLLARS** inclusive and in respect of any one claim for injury to or death of any one or more persons or damage to or destruction of property. Coverage to include:
 - 3.5.2.1** non-owned automobiles;
 - 3.5.2.2** independent subcontractors;
 - 3.5.2.3** contractual liability including this Agreement.
- 3.5.3** Proponent's Compensation coverage for all employees, if any, engaged by the Work in accordance with the laws of the Province of Alberta;
- 3.5.4** Employer's liability insurance respecting employees, if any, of the Proponent with limits of liability of not less than **FIVE MILLION (\$5,000,000.00) DOLLARS** per

employee for each accident, accidental injury or death of an employee or any subcontractor engaged by the Proponent;

3.5.5 Error and omission coverage for professional services with limits of liability of not less than **TWO MILLION (\$2,000,000) DOLLARS** per occurrence; and

3.5.6 such other insurance as the County may from time to time reasonably require.

The Proponent shall cause all insurance coverage maintained by the Proponent in accordance with this RFP to name the County and any other party designated by the County as an additional insured and to contain a severability of interests or cross liability clause. The Proponent shall cause all insurance coverage to provide that no such insurance policy may be cancelled without the insurer providing no less than thirty (30) days' written notice of such cancellation to the County. The Proponent shall, upon the request of the County, furnish written documentation, satisfactory to the County, evidencing the required insurance coverage. The cost of all the insurance required to be held by the Proponent as set forth herein shall be borne by the Proponent.

4.0 EVALUATION

After the RFP Closing Time, the County will review and evaluate all the Proposals received based upon the information supplied by the Proponents in accordance with the submission requirements of this RFP.

4.1 In evaluating the Proposals received, the County will consider all of the criteria listed below in Section 5.2, and the County will have the sole and unfettered discretion to award up to the maximum number of points for each criteria as listed below. By submitting a Proposal, the Proponent acknowledges and agrees that the County has, and is hereby entitled to exercise, the sole and unfettered discretion to award the points for the evaluation of the noted criteria.

4.2 By submitting a Proposal, each Proponent acknowledges and agrees that it waives any right to contest in any legal proceedings the decision of the County to award points in respect of the criteria noted below (the "Evaluation Criteria").

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION EVALUATION CRITERIA. FOR INFORMATION ONLY. Do not submit this form with the Proposal Submission

Criteria	Weighting
Project Understanding / Demonstrated Capability	20%
Relevant Experience with County/Municipal Fire Departments	40%
Proposed Work Plan and Methodology	15%
Project Management and Timeline	10%
Fee Proposal	15%

5.3 The County also reserves the right to accept conditions to be offered by and/or negotiated with the successful Proponent which are not specifically contained in this RFP. Such options and/or alternatives shall be included in the Proposal review process as part of the evaluation. These conditions may be considered as deleteable item(s).

5.4 At all times, the County reserves the right to seek written clarification regarding a Proposal from a Proponent. Such clarification shall be deemed an amendment to such Proponent's Proposal.

6.0 OTHER

6.1 Period Open for Consideration

The Proposals received shall remain irrevocable for a period of sixty (60) days following the RFP Closing Time to allow for the County to undertake the evaluation of the Proposals received and to undertake the negotiations as provided for herein.

6.2 Information Disclosure and Confidentiality

All documents submitted to the County will be subject to the protection and disclosure provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* ("FOIP"). FOIP allows persons a right of access to records in the County's custody or control. It also prohibits the County from disclosing the Proponent's personal or business information where disclosure would be harmful to the Proponent's business interests or would be an unreasonable invasion of personal privacy as defined in sections 16 and 17 of FOIP. Proponents are encouraged to identify what portions of their Proposals are confidential and what harm could reasonably be

expected from its disclosure. However, the County cannot assure Proponents that any portion of the Proposals can be kept confidential under FOIP.

6.3 Independent Determination

A Proposal will not be considered by the County if it was not arrived at independently without collusion, consultation, communication or agreement as to any matter, such as prices, with any other Proponent.

6.4 Documents

All documents submitted by a Proponent shall become the property of the County upon being presented, submitted, or forwarded to the County. The content and the media of any documents submitted electronically shall also become the property of the County upon their being presented, submitted or forwarded to the County.

6.5 Canada Free Trade Agreement and New West Partnership Trade Agreement

The provisions of the Canada Free Trade Agreement, (“CFTA”) and the New West Partnership Trade Agreement (“NWPTA”) apply to this Proposal.

6.6 Other Conditions

The Proponent is fully responsible for obtaining all information required for the preparation of its Proposal. The County is not responsible for undertaking any investigations to assist the Proponent.

6.7 Law and Forum of Proposal

The law to be applied in respect of this RFP shall be the law of the Province of Alberta and all civil actions commenced in relation to this RFP shall be adjudicated by the Courts of the Province of Alberta. By submitting a Proposal, the Proponent is deemed to have agreed to attorney to the jurisdiction of the Courts of the Province of Alberta.