REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF QUALIFICATIONS (RFSQ) No. 22-023

DATE:	February 22, 2022
Project Title:	**DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WATER SUPPLY PLANNING AND COMMUNICATION APPROACHES IN THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO**

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) invites qualified and experienced firms to submit Statements of Qualifications to document the current state of water supply planning in the region. This includes developing a set of best practices for water supply planning in the context of climate change and documenting the current state of water supply planning in the Regional District of Nanaimo against those best practices. This includes reviewing supply planning practices by the Regional District of Nanaimo and other area purveyors who choose to participate. This project also requires the supplier to develop public-oriented communication materials to share study results and improve resident understanding of the process and state of water supply planning across the region.

A. Intent

This Request for Statements of Qualifications (RFSQ) is issued to determine the most qualified and experienced service provider that can meet the Regional District of Nanaimo's requirements, expectations, and timeline.

The Regional District of Nanaimo will review submissions received in response to this RFSQ and enter discussions with the top-ranked Respondent to negotiate the terms, scope, timeline, and cost based on the actual scope of work required (the Work). Should these negotiations fail to result in a contract for the Work, the Regional District of Nanaimo may then elect to negotiate with the next highest ranked service provider and so on until an agreement is reached or the process cancelled.

In any event, the Regional District of Nanaimo shall not be bound to enter a contract with any Respondent to this RFSQ and, at its sole discretion, may elect to collapse this process.

B. Background

The RDN includes the municipalities of Nanaimo, Lantzville, Parksville and Qualicum Beach, who provide community water supply via municipal systems; seven electoral areas, where drinking water is provided by small RDN water systems, Improvement Districts, private water utilities and

domestic wells. The RDN is within the traditional territory of Coast Salish First Nations. The Snuneymuxw, Snaw-Naw-As and Qualicum First Nation communities are located within the region (see Figure 1 – RDN Map 2020). Snuneymuxw community water is supplied through a City of Nanaimo service agreement, Snaw-naw-as operate their own community wells, and Qualicum First Nation is supplied through the Qualicum Bay Horne Lake Improvement District service agreement.

The impact of climate change on future water security is a key concern for both elected officials and residents. Projections indicate there will likely be much less water available in the summer, and a lot more available in the winter, and that impacts will be uneven across the region. Water demand will increase in the summer for key economic activities (e.g., agriculture), ecological processes (e.g., evapotranspiration, maintenance of stream levels) and residential uses (e.g., irrigation, fire protection). In general residents understand that climate change may impact water availability but have less understanding of how supply planning considers potential climate impacts.

Communication of water supply planning varies across purveyors (community water suppliers, including municipal governments, local improvement districts, and private utilities), leaving residents and elected officials of some areas unsure if future water resources will sustain proposed growth under expected climate change. Water purveyors are responsible for service supply planning but rely on provincial licensing decisions around allocation of ground and surface water. The extent of water supply planning varies by purveyor and, based on observed public and elected official uncertainty, there is generally inadequate communication of how climate change projections are brought into water supply planning at both the purveyor and provincial level. Overall, residents and elected officials question if future water resources will be able to sustain regional populations, ecosystems, and economic activity at an acceptable cost.

This is reflected in the RDN Climate Action Technical Advisory Committee (CATAC)'s highest priority recommendation for climate action:

> "Ensuring water services in which the RDN is involved (both current and any proposed for the future) and areas within the RDN not served by community water systems, have water supply resilience, including emergency back-up, under expected future climate scenarios (an approximate 40–50-year time horizon). Renewable energy generation should be included where feasible. The RDN should also encourage all water purveyors within the RDN to adopt high quality, public-facing, climate-informed water supply planning (if not already in place)."

C. Contemplated Scope of Work and Timeline

The following scope is anticipated for this project:

1) propose set of best practices for reliable, climate-informed water supply planning and refine these with area stakeholders (primarily water purveyors, other experts, and province), best practices should be technical (e.g., what parameters to include in supply planning models)
2) document, through interviews and plan review,
    a. the state of existing, climate-informed water supply planning across water purveyors in the region (focus on RDN services and other major community water purveyors who choose to participate), including contingency/emergency supplies and current methods of communicating supply planning approaches to the public
    b. the state of existing, climate-informed water supply planning for un-serviced areas that rely on private wells (focus on Provincial aquifer characterization and groundwater allocation, as well as regional water studies and development requirements in rural areas.
3) identify where additional supply planning work may be needed to properly address climate change risks and meet best practices for supply planning
4) create resources for the public that clearly explain the study results for RDN-owned water systems, areas on private wells, and community water purveyors wishing to participate in this activity. This should include statements on adequacy of current supply planning for these systems and measures in place to build resilience to future conditions. Resources should be flexible/easily editable so that they can be used by other RDN purveyors who wish to communicate results for their systems.

Expected Timeline – all deliverables submitted by 31 August 2022.

Maximum Project Budget *–$50,000 & GST*

Desired Outcomes

Project deliverables should together provide the following outcomes:

- The RDN and area water purveyors have a set of technical best practices to support and communicate water supply planning in the context of climate change.
- The RDN and participating water purveyors will have a very good understanding of where water supply planning in the RDN is complete enough to estimate with confidence whether water supplies will be adequate for meeting ecological, economic, and human uses in 40-50 years (or other time horizons depending on best practices), given the projected effects of climate change.
- The RDN and participating water purveyors will understand where supply planning needs to be improved and can refer to best practices to understand what additional analyses/data are required to make those improvements.

- Residents and elected officials will be able to easily find information on the state of water supply planning for RDN water services, areas on private wells, and for major community water purveyors (municipalities, improvement districts & private utilities). Using these resources, residents will be able to understand where supply planning is adequate and where it needs additional work to meet best practices. The RDN can easily update this data on its own and at minimal or no cost.
- Area purveyors will have access to communication templates that they can adjust as needed and use to communicate results for their own systems should they so choose.

D. Statement of Qualifications and Evaluation

The statement of qualifications should be no longer than six (6) single sided pages in length (not including cover page, cover letter and appendices). Please include the following:

- Qualifications and areas of expertise of the Firm and nominated Project Manager. Please include CV/Resume of the Project Manager and explain how this individual will provide value for the RDN on this project.
- Experience of Firm and nominated Project Manager in previous relevant work. Provide short descriptions of similar projects and assignments completed by both the Firm and nominated Project Manager. For each project, clearly specify why the experience is relevant to this project, including the communications aspects of this project.
- A statement of your firm's ability to complete the work within the timeframe and budget described.
- A statement of the general methodology that would be employed by your firm for a project like this.
- A statement of your firm's approach to advancing equity and sustainability in corporate operations and service provision, including mention of official policies, achievements or standards met.

Request for Statements of Qualifications (the "RFSQ") will be evaluated by the Regional District of Nanaimo based on the above. Any or all RFSQs will not necessarily be accepted.

E. Submission Date & Time

Statements of Qualifications should be received on or before 3:00:00 p.m. local time on the 8th day of March 2022. The RDN reserves the right to accept late submissions.

F. Questions and Submissions

Questions and submissions should be directed to:

Jessica Beaubier
Climate Change and Resilience Coordinator
6300 Hammond Bay Road, Nanaimo, BC V9T 6N2
jbeaubier@rdn.bc.ca 250-390-6568

Submissions must be by email. Faxed and hard copy submissions will not be accepted.