

## REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF QUALIFICATIONS (RFSQ) No. 25-001

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**DATE:** December 9, 2024

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**Project Title:** **COMPENSATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE POLICY OF PAID ON CALL FIRE DEPARTMENTS OPERATED BY THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO**

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The Regional District of Nanaimo invites qualified and experienced firms to submit Statements of Qualifications to Complete a compensation and organizational structure policy of two (2) paid on call fire departments operated by the Regional District of Nanaimo. This will include total compensation such as extended benefits, on and off duty insurance, additional benefits and financial remuneration. This project will require firms to engage with different levels of fire services administration and operations and with a deliverable of developing a policy for implementing the study's findings.

### **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 Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) provides regional governance and services throughout Vancouver Island's beautiful central east coast. Communities within the regional federation include the municipalities of Nanaimo, Lantzville, Parksville, and Qualicum Beach, as well as seven unincorporated Electoral Areas. Established in 1967, the RDN is British Columbia's fifth-most populous Regional District of the 27 throughout the province, and home to 170,367 people according to the 2021 Census. The RDN is governed by a 19-member Regional Board, comprised

of twelve directors from locally elected municipal councils, and seven directors elected by Electoral Area residents. Board members also sit on a variety of regional select and standing committees for key services, as well as the RDN Committee of the Whole.

Sixteen fire departments operate 24 fire halls throughout the RDN, providing fire protection for all four municipalities and most unincorporated areas. Nine of these fire departments are administered and financed by municipalities and improvement districts and operate independently of the RDN. Two fire departments are administered by the RDN, and four fire departments are volunteer fire department societies with one federal fire department. The four societies provide fire protection and emergency response services in portions of Electoral Areas C, F, G and H. The RDN collects property taxes for these fire departments and provides financing for their operations and capital expenses. The volunteer fire department societies are responsible for the day-to-day management and operation of their fire departments and operational guidance to their members.

The Regional District of Nanaimo recently has taken over operation of the Nanoose Bay Volunteer Fire Department and the Coombs-Hilliars Volunteer Fire Department from previous society operation. Each department has a full-time fire chief with a primarily paid on call complement and a couple of part time and/or fulltime career staff. Currently there is a compensation disparity between the two RDN operated fire departments which should be addressed in the study and subsequent recommendations and deliverables. Regionally there are a variety of different compensation structures, strategies and scales, the project will review and identify differences and make recommendations on the most appropriate policy that can be utilized into the future without frequent changes.

Firefighter recruitment and retention is a primary concern for the sustainability of feasible fire protection in rural service areas. The purpose of this project is to provide a study of the best practices for total compensation regarding rural and paid on call fire services to attract and retain the dedicated members to provide the services to the community. The project should work with each fire department to identify specific needs, current offerings and additional benefits that could support strong recruitment and retention.

**C. Contemplated Scope of Work and Timeline**

**The following scope is anticipated for this project:**

- 1) Propose a fair market PayScale for the job specific roles in fire services at each Paid-on Call fire department, for the Paid-on Call members including training pay, duty officer compensation, duty days, and related compensated work.
- 2) Determine the appropriate amendments to the job descriptions which may inform the appropriate pay scale for the Paid-on call positions and related to the British Columbia Minimum Training Standards.

- 3) The project work is likely to include research, interviews, and related activities the consultant will be expected to share in general terms any recommendations for current gaps or best practices that could be adopted to optimize the delivery of fire services within the RDN fire departments.
- 4) Determine what complete compensation benefits may be of best practice to continue or add.
- 5) Identify any gaps in current total compensation and where there may be shortfalls to current structures.
- 6) Propose recommended organization structure and requirements for staffing to meet the needs of the growing service areas and changing communities. Should provide related job roles and recommended compensation for the updated structure recommendations.
- 7) Document processes and analysis leading to recommendations and conclusions.
- 8) Provide deliverable of recommended “Total Compensation and Structure Policy” to support the growing fire services and communities to ensure adequate service level delivery can be sustained.
- 9) Provide documentation and presentation to decision making body.

**Expected Timeline** – All deliverables and project work completed by **June 30, 2025**, at the latest.

**D. Statement of Qualifications and Evaluation**

The statement of qualifications should be no longer than five (5) single sided pages in length (not including cover page, cover letter and appendices). Please include the following

- Qualifications and areas 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. Describe your Firm’s approach to work.
- 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.
- A statement of your firm’s ability to complete the work within the timeframe described.
- A statement of your firm’s approach to advancing equity and sustainability in corporate operations and service provisions, including any certifications in this regard.

Statements of Qualifications (the “SOQ”) will be evaluated by the Regional District of Nanaimo on a consensus basis and assigned a score out of 100 based on the above evaluation criteria. Any or all SOQs 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 fifteenth (15) day of January 2025. The RDN at its sole discretion, reserves the right to accept late submissions.

**F. Questions and Submissions**

Questions and submissions should be directed to:

**Steve Windsor**

Fire Services Manager

Fire & Rescue Services

Regional District of Nanaimo

C: 250-390-6565 | Email: [swindsor@rdn.bc.ca](mailto:swindsor@rdn.bc.ca)

6300 Hammond Bay Road, Nanaimo, BC V9T 6N2

**G. Additional Information**

If the RDN determines that additional information is required, the RDN will post an Addendum on the RDN ([www.rdn.bc.ca/current-bid-opportunities](http://www.rdn.bc.ca/current-bid-opportunities)) and the new BC Bid ([www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca/](http://www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca/)) websites. It is the sole responsibility of interested vendors to check for additional information prior to submitting their response.