

Item No. 9.1.3
Audit & Finance Standing Committee
November 20, 2013

TO: Chair and Members of Audit & Finance Standing Committee
Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY: Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: November 14, 2013

SUBJECT: HRM Rebranding Project award

ORIGIN

Motion of the Executive Standing Committee, April 22, 2013
Motion of Halifax Regional Council, May 14, 2013

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Council approved, Dec 11, 2012, that all budget increases are to be presented to the Audit and Finance Standing Committee, prior to submission to Council.

Halifax Charter, section 93(1) - The Council shall make estimates of the sums that are required by the Municipality for the fiscal year; Halifax Charter, section 79(1) - Specifies areas that the Council may expend money required by the Municipality; Halifax Charter, section 35(2)(d)(i) - The CAO can only authorize budgeted expenditures or within the amount determined by Council by policy; Halifax Charter, section 120(6) - The Municipality may maintain other reserve funds for such purposes as the Council may determine; Halifax Regional Municipality policy on Changes to Cost Sharing for Capital Projects - Changes requiring Council approval; and the Halifax Regional Municipality Reserve Policy - No reserve funds will be expended without the CAO's recommendation and Council approval.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that

1. The Audit & Finance Standing Committee forward a recommendation to Halifax Regional Council to award RFP #P13-083, HRM Rebranding Project to the successful proponent identified in the Private and Confidential Information Report dated November 14, 2013 for the cost indicated in the report's Financial Implications section, and to

request Council to direct that uncommitted surplus from 2012/13 fund the 2013/14 cost of the Rebranding Project.

2. The Private and Confidential Information report dated November 14, 2013 be released following the award.

BACKGROUND

For nearly two decades, the municipality has publicly been known by its legal name - Halifax Regional Municipality (or "HRM") - following the amalgamation of distinct municipalities within the region. The collective identity of the city has evolved since then, but neither in a cohesive nor consistent manner.

Regional Council recently directed HRM staff to explore and develop options for a new 'place brand' that will better reflect our best attributes and project the image of the municipality in a more relevant, memorable and compelling manner. Recent feedback from citizens' focus groups and surveys indicate that residents have a weak and fragmented association with the name Halifax Regional Municipality or HRM, and are looking for something not yet defined - an expressive, shared sense of identity to which they can rally and support.

The Greater Halifax Partnership (GHP) has also verified the need, based on consultations with the business, academic, non-profit and public sectors, for a more robust and modern brand to attract more investment, visitors and high quality talent. This was identified in the development of AGREATERHalifax – Halifax's Economic Strategy for 2011-2016, of which one of the five goal areas is the development of an international brand.

A key phase of the rebranding project will be both comprehensive public-facing and online engagement, to be held in public venues as well as 24/7 on a new public engagement portal. The brand engagement will encompass a demographically representative cross-section of the municipality. Other stakeholders to be consulted would include but not be limited to representatives of cultural and ethnic communities, as well as organizations such as Destination Halifax, the universities, Waterfront Development, Halifax Stanfield International Airport, Halifax Water, Halifax Port Authority, Halifax Chamber of Commerce and the Business Improvement Districts.

The consultant will help design the portal experience based on HRM's online engagement tool (Shape Your City) and use innovative ways to solicit feedback from the public on the values and attributes to be reflected in the brand development. The successful proponent will work with HRM staff and GHP to help design the engagement to ensure the approach and content are innovative, comprehensive and consistent. All feedback will be documented, analyzed, summarized and consolidated into progress reports and a final presentation to Regional Council.

Phases in the creation of a new brand will encompass:

1. Scope definition, project charter and creative brief, including engagement options
2. Development of engagement tools, content and processes

3. Engagement of citizens and stakeholders
4. Interim and summary reports of findings and proposed brand approach
5. Creation of final recommended brand option and presentation to Regional Council
6. Development of brand guidelines, templates and policies protecting the new HRM brand's integrity and value
7. Assistance with an incremental and prioritized implementation plan

These components will form the basis for the development of a new brand for HRM and recommendations to Regional Council for their adoption and implementation.

DISCUSSION

RFP # P13-083, HRM Rebranding Project was publicly advertised on the Nova Scotia Public Tenders portal on July 23, 2013. An information session was held on July 26, 2013 and the RFP closed on August 13, 2013. Eleven (11) proposals were received as noted in the Private and Confidential Information Report dated November 14, 2013. Proposals were reviewed and evaluated by HRM Corporate Communications staff and the Board Chair and staff of the Greater Halifax Partnership. HRM Procurement facilitated the evaluation process, per the evaluation criteria as stated in the Private and Confidential Information Report dated November 14, 2013.

As a result of the evaluation, four (4) proponents were shortlisted and asked to present to the committee. Subsequent to the presentations, the proponent scores were further refined with the final results noted in the Private and Confidential Information Report dated November 14, 2013.

The highest scoring proposal and presentation indicated an innovative and broad approach to community engagement and stakeholder consultation, and a superior overall understanding of the requirements of the project.

In accordance with HRM's Procurement Policy, should Council authorize the funds required for the initiative, the award would be within the authority of the Chief Administrative Office and details would be made public following an award.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications are outlined in the evaluation criteria included in the Private and Confidential Information Report dated November 14, 2013. The costs associated with this RFP can be accommodated within the projected 2013/2014 operating surplus.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The highest scoring proponent suggests an extensive and innovative approach to community engagement that includes 'push' strategies for face-to-face and web-based consultation, which represents the majority of the proposed project's scope of work and associated budget.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Implications not identified

ALTERNATIVES

Halifax Regional Council may choose not to approve this recommendation, but this is not recommended by staff.

ATTACHMENTS

Private and Confidential Information Report dated November 14, 2013:

- List of all RFP respondents
- Respondents short listed for presentations
- Evaluation criteria and scoring for short listed respondents

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/SCfinance/index.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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