



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL EVALUATION REPORT MODB2306

### Description of RFP

This RFP was issued to invite proposals to perform work to complete the construction of the Barrington Recreation Centre.

### Details of Invitation

RFP invitation method: Open call posted on the Nova Scotia Procurement website.

RFP invitation date: September 14, 2023

RFP closing date: November 1, 2023

The proposals were opened on November 1, 2023, at 2:30 p.m.

In attendance: Chris Frotten (Chief Administrative Officer) and Stephanie Nowe-Morris (Architect).

### Proposals Received

Number of Proposals Received: 2

Proponents	Total Fees excluding HST (lowest first)
Rikjak Construction Limited	\$8,966,457
Avondale Construction Limited	\$10,100,000

### Compliance with Tender Specifications

Proponent	Compliance with RFP specifications	Details of any non-compliance
Rikjak Construction Limited	Yes	N/A
Avondale Construction Limited	No.	Start and completion dates were not indicated but were subsequently provided.

## Recommendation

The proposals were evaluated by the architectural and engineering teams of SNMArchitect Ltd. to determine the degree to which they responded to the requirements as set out in the RFP.

The evaluation process outlined in the RFP's Instructions to Bidders (s.1.19) was divided into 4 stages.

Stage 1 consisted of a review to determine the completeness of the submissions. If any submission failed to satisfy any requirement, we would issue a rectification notice identifying the deficiencies and provide the bidder an opportunity to rectify the deficiencies. If the bidder failed to satisfy the request within the period given, the bid would be excluded from further consideration. In this case, Avondale Construction Limited did not indicate a start and completion dates but were subsequently provided it to us within the period given in the rectification notice.

Stage 2 consisted of a review to determine whether bid submissions complied with the Pricing Form requirements and were complete. The bids were ranked based on completeness and bid price. The top-ranked bid submission received an invitation to enter into direct contract negotiations.

In the evaluation of the submissions, the following factors, among others, were considered:

1. Bid price submitted.
2. Compliance with Bid Documents.
3. Completion date.

Upon evaluation, it was determined that **Rikjak Construction Limited** was the top-ranked bid submission.

We then moved onto Stage 3, which consisted of negotiations to request for supplementary information from the bidder to verify, clarify or supplement what was submitted, and request for any improved pricing, value engineering or performance terms.

The following is a summary of the negotiation stage:

1. Rikjak confirmed that they understand and appreciate the scope of work and the Municipality's priorities.
2. They believe their proposed start date of April 15, 2024, and completion date of April 30, 2025, would benefit the Municipality and minimize site impacts.
3. They are prepared to provide the pre-award documents when requested prior to award of the contract.
4. Their project management processes aligned with project requirements and utilizes site safety plans, project schedules and digital tools including MS Project for schedules and Procore management software for document distribution and communication.
5. Rikjak provided suggestions to improve pricing. The value engineering items noted are:
  - a. Standardizing pilasters and footing dimensions to create efficiencies, increase speed and cost.
  - b. Review ceiling tile, bulkheads to find efficiencies.

- c. Type of fill, and extent of infill required for additional paved parking.

Based on our negotiations, SNMArchitect Ltd. recommended that negotiations be concluded, and that Council approval be sought to award the project.

They propose 2 options for Council to consider:

1. Award the project to Rikjak Construction Limited for the Base Bid of \$8,966,457.
2. Award the project to Rikjak Construction Limited for the Base Bid less the separate price for the removal of the expanded paved parking lot, for a value of \$500,000, for a Bid Price of \$8,466,457.

Stage 4 consists of awarding the project. **It is our opinion that option 2 of Rikjak Construction Limited's submission is the best value for the Municipality at this time and would therefore recommend option 2 to Council.**

Upon award, SNMArchitect Ltd. and Rikjak Construction Limited would further review the value engineering items noted above and negotiate a change order to reduce the total price of the project.

## **Budget Implications**

\$6,000,000 was allocated for the project earlier this year in our capital budget. This was based on a comprehensive assessment of the anticipated costs at that time. However, we all know the the dynamic nature of the construction industry, with costs subject to fluctuations influenced by various factors such as market demand, supply chain disruptions, and inflationary pressures. Recognizing these realities, it is crucial to address the disparity between the allocated budget and the current escalated project cost.

It goes without saying that this project is necessary for the continued development and well-being of our community but given the increased construction costs, we must explore avenues to supplement the existing budget. The aim is to secure the necessary resources to bridge the funding gap and ensure the project's successful realization without compromising on quality or scope.

We are very fortunate to have received a provincial grant of \$6,000,000 to help with the cost of constructing the Centre. That said, there is now a variance of roughly \$2,460,000 and \$3,000,000 between the grant received from the provincial government and the total project cost. As mentioned, it is imperative to explore viable options to bridge this financial gap and ensure the successful completion of the project.

### *Options for Funding the Project Difference*

1. **Reserve Funds:** One option is to allocate funds from existing municipal reserves to cover the shortfall. This approach minimizes the need for external borrowing and mitigates potential interest costs. However, careful consideration should be given to the impact on other projects and the long-term financial health of the municipality.

2. **Debt Financing:** We can explore the option of securing a loan from the NS Finance and Treasury Board. This approach provides immediate access to the required funds but comes with associated interest costs. A detailed cost-benefit analysis would assess the long-term financial implications of debt financing.
3. **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** Engaging in PPPs can be a strategic option to share the financial burden with private entities. This approach may involve private investment, operational partnerships, or revenue-sharing agreements. It is essential to evaluate the feasibility and terms of potential partnerships to ensure alignment with the municipality's goals.
4. **Additional Grant Applications:** Exploring additional grant opportunities from federal or private sources could help secure additional funds for the project. This requires proactive engagement with relevant funding bodies and compliance with their application processes and criteria.
5. **Revenue Generation Strategies:** Evaluate the potential for revenue generation within the municipality, such as increased user fees, special levies, or other revenue-generating initiatives. However, it is essential to assess the community's willingness to accept such measures and the potential impact on socio-economic factors.

Considering the above options, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Reserve Funds:** Allocate \$1,000,000 from our Canada Community-Building Fund (Gas Tax) reserve to cover a portion of the funding gap, ensuring a balanced distribution to minimize the impact on other municipal initiatives. This fund cannot be used towards the Community Health Centre project, and it is expected that the balance of the reserve fund after fiscal 2023/2024 will be the following:

Current Balance	810,944.76
23/24 to Capital	(145,000.00)
23/24 Funding	335,000.00*
23/24 Balance	1,000,944.76
24/25 Funding	335,000.00*
24/25 Capital	-
	1,335,944.76

\* We receive approximately \$335,000 per year from this fund; therefore the reserve fund would be replenished in roughly 3 years if not other funds were used.

2. **Debt Financing:** Borrow \$1,460,000 - \$2,000,000 to cover the remaining portion of the funding gap. We currently have \$1,400,000 in the capital reserve and \$2,200,000 in the operating reserve but we would likely use these reserve funds towards the Community Health Centre project – especially as we are unsure of any potential funding at this time. This also takes into account the municipality's debt capacity and long-term financial sustainability.

As we know, interest rates are currently high but are predicted to decrease by the second quarter of fiscal 2024/2025, which would be prior to the completion of the project. The debenture would only be required in the spring of 2025.

Estimated debenture payments using the NS Finance and Treasury Board's October borrowing rates are:

- \$1,400,000
  - 15 Years | 5.34% | **\$133,205**
  - 20 Years | 5.42% | **\$106,992**
- \$2,000,000
  - 15 Years | 5.34% | **\$190,293**
  - 20 Years | 5.42% | **\$152,845**

*Note: the payment amounts are averages. They will be higher in the beginning and lower at the end of the loan period. We pay the same principal payment amount each year and the associated interest.*

Once the debenture is required, we expect the payments will be lower, but this provides an idea of what the maximum payment amount could be.

Regardless of the funding structure, we will continue to explore additional grant opportunities from federal or private sources that could help reduce the municipal funds required for the project. That said, it will be challenging to attract more funding given the substantial provincial grant we have already received.

Finally, this section highlights the various options available for addressing the variance in the grant received at the project cost. It emphasizes the importance of a strategic, well-balanced approach that aligns with our long-term financial goals and community interests. The final decision should consider the unique circumstances of the municipality and its commitment to responsible fiscal management.