

Report to Council



Date: April 12, 2021
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: Unsolicited Proposal Program
Department: Partnership Office

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives for information the report from the Partnership Office dated April 12, 2021 regarding the Unsolicited Proposal Program

Purpose:

To introduce the Unsolicited Proposal Program as a process to receive and evaluate proposals from the community which assist the City in addressing key priorities.

Background:

City staff frequently receive offers and ideas from external sources outside of formal procurement processes. This information may be useful as part of normal operations without extensive review. However, some ideas, particularly those that call for City investment or access to City assets, require more thorough evaluation through application of criteria and a consistent process which reflects alignment with City priorities and public benefit.

Staff propose to establish a process to receive and evaluate unsolicited proposals which can deliver public benefit and value and assist the City in addressing key priorities.

Discussion:

Unsolicited proposals are independently generated by a proponent who is at arms' length from the City and are provided to the City without an invitation of opportunity being made. Proposals may include new or unique ideas or products that have not been tested in the market.

Unsolicited Proposal Programs have been established by municipal, state and national governments throughout North America and other parts of the world. These programs are positioned as innovation initiatives, recognizing that solutions to pressing needs can come from anywhere and not exclusively through traditional procurement methods. The programs create a structure and process within which a proposal that meets a high public value and uniqueness standard may move through direct negotiation

to an agreement without testing the market through public procurement. Decision-making is guided by clear criteria, and supported by principles of probity, fairness and protection of the public interest.

Interest in establishing a program at the City of Kelowna is driven by a number of factors, including:

- acknowledgement that new solutions may come through new technologies and approaches outside the City's current scope;
- experience with numerous infrastructure-related proposals from community organizations;
- resource implications for departments receiving a high volume of proposals needing further investigation; and
- improved service through a fair, consistent and efficient process to handle qualified proposals and provide a timely response.

Staff conducted internal and external research to identify user needs and gain knowledge about unsolicited proposal programs in other jurisdictions.

The City of Kelowna program design reflects this research through the following features:

- a) an online intake form, to be available on the City's website, is a user-friendly method to gather the information needed to evaluate an idea in the first stage. Users are encouraged to check into the City's current initiatives and needs before identifying alignment with Council priorities and 'challenge statements' based on current trend reporting;
- b) a two-stage process enables qualified ideas to move to a more detailed Stage 2 proposal which allows for further articulation of complex, technical aspects of the proponent's idea and additional evaluation by subject-matter experts;
- c) a plain language Program Guide and set of Q&As provides information about program objectives, how proposals will be processed and evaluated, and what to expect. Tips for submitting a high-quality proposal are included;
- d) clear evaluation criteria reflect the City's interest in proposals which are unique and innovative, aligned with City priorities, and provide value for money and feasible solutions. Stage 1 proposals must meet a high standard with a score of at least 65% to continue to Stage 2;
- e) a commitment to acknowledge receipt of Stage 1 proposals within three business days, and a goal to notify proponents of Stage 1 evaluation results within 45 days;
- f) for ideas which are not a fit with the Unsolicited Proposal Program, alternative options are listed in Part 5 of the Program Guide.

As administrator of the program, the Partnership Office:

- coordinates the intake and evaluation of proposals;
- functions as a support resource for both City staff and the public who are involved in a proposal process; and
- convenes evaluation teams comprised of individuals from the Partnerships & Investments Division, and other departments with relevant expertise. The Purchasing Department and the Office of the City Clerk will be regularly engaged in proposal review to ensure that the process is consistent with good practice and legal requirements.

The Partnership Office will utilize a set of metrics to analyze the performance of the program and to inform necessary adjustments over time.

Conclusion:

Opening a door to new ideas through a portal such as the Unsolicited Proposal Program is a manifestation of the [Imagine Kelowna](#) vision to learn continuously, encourage creativity and find innovative ways to meet challenges and opportunities. It recognizes that the well-being of our community is a shared responsibility, and unleashes our community's hidden talents to solve tough problems. As a process improvement, the Program seeks to give confidence to the community that the proposals they submit will be considered in a consistent, efficient, transparent and accountable manner to achieve a high standard of public value.

Internal Circulation:

Purchasing
Partnerships & Investments
Active Living & Culture
Intelligent Cities
Office of the City Clerk
Communications
Policy & Planning

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Authority
Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements
Existing Policy
Financial/Budgetary Considerations
External Agency/Public Comments
Communications Comments

Submitted by: S. Kochan, Partnership Manager

Approved for inclusion: D. Edstrom, Director, Partnerships & Investments

Attachments:

- Unsolicited Proposal Program Guide
- Q&As
- Intake Form

cc:

D. Tompkins, Purchasing Manager
L. Bentley, Deputy City Clerk
S. Effray, Innovation Consultant