

Request for Proposal
for
NATURAL GAS CONSULTANT SERVICES

Issued: 1999 November 30

Return Date: 1999 December 17

Issued by: The Thames Valley District School Board

RFP: #358-00S

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

NATURAL GAS CONSULTANT SERVICES

#358-00S

Requests for Proposal addressed to the Thames Valley District School Board (hereafter referred to as the Board), P. O. Box 5888, London, Ontario, N6A 5L1 will be received at the Executive Secretary's office, Second Floor, rooms 205-210, Education Centre, 1250 Dundas Street, London, Ontario N5W 5P2 **until 12:00 noon**, Friday, 1999 **December 17** for the professional services of a Natural Gas Consultant.

FOUR COPIES OF YOUR REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL MUST BE SIGNED AND RETURNED FOR YOUR REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL TO BE ACCEPTED. Delivery of the bid is the responsibility of the bidder.

PURPOSE OBJECTIVE: The Board is seeking proposals for the purpose of selecting a Natural Gas Consultant to act on our behalf negotiating the purchase of the natural gas requirements for our sites. The successful bidder will be responsible for the provision of professional services for the supply and management of natural gas to the Board.

The Board requires assistance developing and implementing a natural gas purchasing strategy. The outcome is to maximize savings while minimizing risk in purchasing this commodity. The purpose of hiring a consultant is to procure and manage the natural gas requirements as well as identifying ongoing evaluation and mitigate the impact of rising prices. The consultant should provide the expertise to ensure balanced purchase decisions.

Proposals must clearly outline the responsibilities both of the Board and the bidder related to supplying natural gas. **ALL** costs payable by the Board for these services must be clearly defined on Appendix A.

It is expected that the successful bidder will provide the Board with management tools and market expertise to enable sound purchasing decisions. This would be accomplished with the preparation of a list of prospective suppliers in consultation with the Board's Energy Services Dept. and verification of delivery capabilities and financial stability of the suppliers. It is preferred that bidders will have current supplier relationships that have been proven and established trust regarding risk management expertise. The successful bidder will nominate volumes of gas to gas suppliers, local distribution companies and transportation companies as required and assist to mitigate costs and maximize benefits.

SPECIFICATIONS: The Board consists of approximately 200 sites in an area covering more than 7000 square kilometers. The approximate annual natural gas consumption is 14.2 million cubic metres.

The successful bidder will provide ongoing contract administration and performance monitoring of gas supply and transportation contracts. Review of invoices and provision of monthly statements will also be required.

Particular emphasis on competitive transportation, storage and load balancing services will receive favorable consideration.

The type of delivery mechanism proposed (buy/sell/bundled-T) should be identified accompanied by a supporting explanation for the recommendation.

Security of supply is critical to the Board and will be a consideration in the evaluation process. Detailed information regarding the source of natural gas supply for this proposal including transportation arrangements and back up supplies must be provided in your submission.

In addition to the usual indemnification requirements, the successful bidder will be required to indemnify the Board from any additional costs of purchasing gas from other sources as a result of failure by the natural gas supplier to provide the quality or quantity of natural gas outlined in the supply contract.

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QUESTIONS: All questions pertaining to this proposal **must be submitted in writing**. Questions are to be received NO LATER than 4:00 p.m. on Friday, December 10. The Board reserves the right to distribute, in writing, a notice of the contents of any inquiry, concern or question from any bidder and the Board's response therefore, to all other bidders, if bidders have registered. Should questions raised by a bidder necessitate an Addendum to this proposal, each *registered* bidder will receive this by fax or e-mail. Only communications in writing will be binding upon the Board. Communications concerning the terms and conditions of this proposal to any individual other than indicated will automatically cancel your submission. Direct questions **in written form only** to:

Ruth Sims, Buyer, Supply Management Department
Thames Valley District School Board
fax 519-452-2399
e-mail r.sims@tvdsb.on.ca

ADDENDUM : A bidder who has already submitted a proposal may submit an addendum at any time up to the official closing time. The last submission will supersede and invalidate all previous submissions by that bidder as it applies to this proposal. In order for a bidder to receive any addendum issued, the bidder has to be registered.

A bidder may withdraw the proposal at any time up to the official closing time by letter bearing his/her signature and seal as it is in his/her submission. Withdrawal of requests received *after* the closing time will not be permitted.

The Board will not issue further addenda after Tuesday, 1999 December 14 at 4:00 PM.

CONTRACT TERM: This will be a two-year contract commencing on **2000 February 1** and terminating **2002 January 31**.

ADDITIONAL THREE YEAR OPTION:

Would your company agree to extending this contract for an additional **three** years ending **2005** January 31?

YES [] NO []

Please state terms under which an additional three-year option would be acceptable to you:

This is a two-year contract and will be awarded to **one** supplier. Therefore, bidders who cannot provide a complete range of services cannot be considered.

SUBMISSIONS: Bidders are required to submit **four** copies of the following information:

- 1) Size of firm. Please provide specific details of education, experience and present involvement of any employee that would be engaged in servicing this contract.
- 2) Details of any processes or systems your firm will use to ensure compliance with schedules and budgets for the proposed projects. All software must be Year 2000 compliant.
- 3) All-inclusive Fee Schedule.
- 4) Description of a proposed work plan
- 5) A bidder who is able to identify their distinctive competencies that will allow them to create a dynamic planning program to optimize the Board's ability to operate under changing regulatory

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**SUBMISSIONS:
continued ...**

and market conditions in electricity supply would be considered to have enhanced value to the Board.

- 6) Describe your company's experience with efficiency/productivity (demand side management services). Detail your processes for evaluating and providing demand related services as well as describing your experience in providing efficiency services to school boards.
- 7) Provide any other services that may be considered as added value to the Board.
- 8) Current experience (with last three years)
 - a) References for three similar projects to what you are bidding on c/w the name and phone number of the individual that the Board can contact
 - b) A minimum of three reference checks with customers who have similar direct purchase arrangements and with similar volumes in the last three years.

The evaluation criteria will determine which reference checks will be done, based on a shortened list of potentially successful bids.

PROJECT

NAME OF BOARD OR INSTITUTION	CONTACT	PHONE NUMBER	SIZE/DOLLAR VALUE	DESCRIPTION

The bid submission must include complete information describing the proponents, corporate organization with particular emphasis on its activities in the area of direct purchase of natural gas. The bidder must demonstrate its independence and objectivity to act in the best interests of the Board and without bias to any particular supplier. Include a description of the procedures to be followed to protect the integrity of the administration of the contract. The bidder shall reveal throughout the course of the contract any conflict of interest, or possible perceived conflict of interest arising from recommendations the bidder is making which may favour producers of gas which are in partnership with/or are part/or full owners of the firm.

The bidder will put forward the names and personnel resumes of the individuals who will be permanently assigned to the group as a consultant. These individuals will remain as the primary contacts throughout the duration of the contract; unless mutually agreed upon, alternatives can be found. The Board reserves the right to terminate the contract should a suitable alternative not be available.

**EVALUATION
PROCESS
& CRITERIA:**

The Evaluation Committee will decide what is acceptable. The best value for the Board's requirements with an emphasis on service will be the primary factors in consultant selection. All proposals will be evaluated by a Committee, based on the following evaluation criteria:

- a) Experience & in-house Resources
- b) Proposed Work plan and Time line
- c) Fees
- d) Security of Supply
- e) Control of costs
- f) Reference Check

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**EVALUATION
PROCESS
& CRITERIA:
continued ...**

- g) Additional Energy Services Available
- h) Interview/Presentation (if required)

The evaluation will be completed by a committee consisting of representatives from the Board. Other persons deemed necessary for proper evaluation by the Manager of Planning & Energy Services may be consulted.

The evaluation team will consist of:

- Manager of Planning & Energy Services
- a Supply Management Representative
- Superintendent of Business
- Manager of Finance

The successful bidders will be able to demonstrate experience from:

- 1) the information obtained from references provided
- 2) proven ability to operate within the parameters of the capital budget
- 3) their ability to satisfy functional requirements of the facility and minimize future maintenance/operational costs

When the merits of the proposal are being evaluated, *if* the committee feels clarification or verification of any portion of the proposal is required, the consultant will be notified of a date and time for an interview/presentation to the Committee. The interview/presentation will be at the bidder's expense.

TAXES: Goods and Services Tax extra. Provincial Sales Tax may be extra. Applicable taxes will be shown as a separate line item on all invoices.

BONDING: The successful bidder shall secure a recognized financial institution or bonding company who is willing to be bound to the Board in the amount of \$2000. for due performance and fulfilment of this contract. The bonding shall be for 90 days commencing February 1 2000. The bonding agent must be authorized to operate in the Province of Ontario. The Letter of Guarantee from a recognized financial institution or the Letter of Agreement to Bond from a Guarantee Company must be in a form satisfactory to the Board.

All costs for this bonding will be the responsibility of the bidder.

STAFFING: The Successful Bidder will supply all staff necessary to complete the duties of this contract. The Successful Bidder and its employees will not be considered the Board's employees and, will not be eligible for any of the benefits provided by the Board for its employees during the performance of the contract duties.

The Board reserves the right to demand the removal of any employees engaged in this contract if, in the Board's sole opinion, his or her conduct has been of an unacceptable nature.

Please indicate which office your company would use to service our contract, should you be the successful consultant: _____

All Board policies, procedures and regulations, are to be adhered to by the successful bidder and its employees. Smoking is prohibited in all Board buildings and on all Board property.

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CANCELLATION: The Board reserves the right to terminate this contract with 30 days written notice, if, in our opinion, the successful bidder fails to perform in accordance with the specified service requirements stipulated in this proposal.

It is understood that any contract between the bidder and the Board will provide that either party may terminate the contract for any reason upon giving the other ninety (90) days written notice of termination.

STATISTICAL USAGE DATA: Would your company be capable of supplying the Thames Valley Board with statistical data, including consumption by site and/or by time period?

COMMENT: _____

AWARD OF CONTRACT: The successful bidder will be notified by letter in mid-January.

BILLING: Invoicing is to be once per month, based on a percentage of the monthly consumption, using this proposal number 358-00S as the purchase order number.

ACCOUNT RECONCILIATION: The Board reserves the right to employ a Certified Accountant to audit the firm's records and accounts as it relates to the normal business of purchasing energy on behalf of the Board. The bidder agrees to provide all necessary books and records required to fully account for the transactions made on behalf of the Board to purchase energy, pay all fees, transport energy to all facilities and consultant services.

ENVELOPE: Proposal returns should be sealed and labelled with "RFP #358-00S - Request for Proposal - Natural Gas Consultant Services and returned to Executive Secretary's Office as indicated in the opening paragraph.

GENERAL CONDITIONS: This bid is IRREVOCABLE for 90 days. The lowest or any proposal may not necessarily be accepted.

The issuance of a call for proposals will not be considered as an indication that the Board is obligated in any way to any bidder or individual who submits a proposal as a result of this call. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary or otherwise in this Request for Proposal, the Board reserves the right to decline any or all proposals, in whole or in part, at any time prior to making an award, for any reason or no reason, without any liability to any bidder.

All costs associated with the preparation of the bidder's proposal will be solely the responsibility of the bidder.

The bidder agrees that all documentation and information contained in any proposal that becomes the property of the Board may be copied for internal use and be subject to disclosure under the terms of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Although the Board can in no way be responsible for any interpretation of the provisions of this Act, if any bidder believes any part of its proposal reveals any trade secret of the bidder, any intellectual property right of the bidder, scientific, technical, commercial, financial or labour relations information, or any other similar secret, right or information belonging to the bidder, and if the bidder wishes the Board to attempt to preserve confidentiality of the trade secret, intellectual property right or information it should be clearly designated as confidential.

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**GENERAL
CONDITIONS
continued ...**

While the Board has used considerable efforts to ensure an accurate representation of information of this Request for Proposal, the information contained herein is supplied solely as a guideline for bidders. The information is not guaranteed or warranted to be accurate by the Board, nor is it necessarily comprehensive or exhaustive. Nothing in this Request for Proposal is intended to relieve bidders from forming their own opinions and conclusions in respect of the matters addressed in this RFP.

The Board reserves the right to **WITHDRAW**, at its discretion, this request for proposal at any time and will not be liable for any expense, cost, loss, or damage incurred or suffered by any bidder as a result of such withdrawal.

All Board policies, procedures and regulations, are to be adhered to by the Successful Bidders and their employees & subcontractor.

The award of this contract is subject to approval of The Board. The Successful Bidder results will be available from Ruth Sims, Buyer, for up to 60 days after proposal opening.

RETURN DATE: Friday, 1999 December 17 - 12:00 Noon

THIS DOCUMENT MUST BE COMPLETED, SIGNED AND RETURNED FOR YOUR BID TO BE ACCEPTED.

Ruth Sims, Buyer
Supply Management Department

Pat Smith
Chairperson

1999 November 30

I hereby acknowledge that I have read, understand and agree to the forgoing seven (7) pages of Contract Terms and Conditions.

NAME: _____ SIGNATURE: _____
(Please print)

FIRM NAME: _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

ADDRESS: _____ INTERNET ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE NO.: _____

FAX NO.: _____

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Appendix A - Bid Information

Percentage Charge (monthly) based on consumption/volume: _____ %

+

GST

(GST **MUST** be shown as a separate line item on invoices)

This percentage charge **MUST** include transportation arrangements, nominations and all related items.

Proposed Delivery Mechanism: _____
(Buy/Sell/Bundled-T etc)

SIGNATURE: _____

FIRM NAME: _____