

TORONTO STAFF REPORT

August 25, 2003

To: Board of Health

From: Dr. Sheela V. Basrur, Medical Officer of Health
Eric Gam, Commissioner, Community & Neighbourhood Services
Joseph Pennachetti, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer

Subject: Interpretation Services
Request for Proposals No. 9112-03-7340

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to advise on the results of Request for Proposals No. 9112-03-7340, for interpretation services for the period October 1, 2003 to September 30, 2004, and to obtain authorization to award a contract to Access Alliance Multicultural Community Health Centre for a one-year term with the option to renew for two (2) additional one-year terms under the same terms and conditions.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

Funding of interpretation/translation services in the amount of approximately \$800,000 is included in the 2003 approved Operating Budget in various programs but primarily in the Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program, which is 100% funded by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. The required funds have been included in the 2003 Healthy Babies Healthy Children budget submission to the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. Funds required for 2004 and subsequent years will be included in the corresponding budget submissions to the City and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care.

The total value of this contract for three (3) years from October 1, 2003 to September 30, 2006, exercising the two (2) additional one-year terms is estimated at \$2,400,000.00 including all taxes.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) the firm of Access Alliance Multicultural Community Health Centre, the highest overall scoring proponent, be engaged to provide interpreter services as outlined in the Request for Proposal for an estimated cost not to exceed \$800,000.00 annually including all taxes;
- (2) the option to renew for two additional one-year terms in the estimated amount of \$800,000 per year under the same terms and conditions be reviewed by the Medical Officer of Health, in co-operation with the Purchasing Agent, to ensure that; the provision of interpretation services was performed at a satisfactory level, it is feasible to extend the contract, and funds are available in the Public Health Operating Budgets for the two (2) one-year renewals ending September 30, 2006;
- (3) provided that there is a favourable review, in accordance with Recommendation No. 2, the Medical Officer of Health be authorized to exercise the options to renew on the terms and conditions set out above and be authorized to instruct the Purchasing Agent to process the necessary contract; and
- (4) the appropriate City officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care Mandatory Programs and Services Guidelines, Equal Access program standard has as its goal that Health Units will ensure that all Ontarians have access to public health programs. In addition, Toronto Public Health's Access and Equity Policy includes a goal that "Toronto Public Health programs, services and resources will be equitable and accessible for all populations and communities in Toronto". In order to be compliant with this service requirement and to meet this policy goal, interpretation services are essential to the delivery of a number of Toronto Public Health programs. Dental Treatment, Tuberculosis, Healthiest Babies Possible, Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) partnership programs, and the Healthy Babies Healthy Children program all require the support of interpreters to ensure that children, adults and families from Toronto's diverse ethno-racial communities have equal access to services.

The expansion of the Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) program to include a postpartum telephone call and home visit to all new mothers had a significant impact on the need for interpretation services. This component of the HBHC program provides assessment, education, counselling and referral to the 32,000 families who have babies in the City each year. Approximately 12% of the families that receive HBHC home visits require interpretation services.

The City does not have the required number of trained professional staff to carry out this function and therefore must contract for interpretation services. It is therefore necessary to purchase interpretation services to support health care providers such as dentists, dieticians, and public health nurses to deliver services in clinic, home and community settings.

In the 2003 Toronto Public Health Operating Budget, \$897,340 has been approved for interpreter and translation services. The majority of this budget is within the 100% funded Healthy Babies Healthy Children program.

At the present time, interpretation services are provided through a Sole Source Service Agreement that was approved by City Council on May 21, 22, and 23, 2003 (Clause 2 contained in Report No. 3 of the Board of Health headed "Sole Source Contract for Interpretation Services with Access Alliance Multicultural Community Health Centre"). This approval included the requirement that a Request for Proposals be initiated in order to establish a new purchase of service contract for interpretation services.

Comments:

Seven (7) firms from the City's Bidders List for this category were notified and invited to submit proposals. The Request for Proposals was also advertised on the City's internet website. This resulted in a total of four (4) submissions being received from the following firms:

1. Access Alliance Multicultural Community Health Centre
2. Able Translations Ltd.
3. Dominion Translation Inc.
4. Mahmoud Reza Saybani, M Sc.

A formal selection committee comprised of Public Health and Corporate Communications staff evaluated the proposals using the criteria outlined in the Request for Proposals. All submissions were evaluated jointly by members of the selection committee in accordance with a set of pre-established criteria. The score of the proposals received from the four (4) proponents ranged from 5.5 to 91.

Upon completion of the above process, the proposal from Access Alliance Multicultural Community Health Centre was ranked first with the highest overall score.

The selection committee concluded that the proposal submitted by Access Alliance Multicultural Health Centre demonstrated a very good understanding of the scope of work, satisfied the overall requirement of Toronto Public Health for interpretation services, and was able to provide these services at a reasonable cost.

The Fair Wage Office has reported that the recommended firm has indicated that they have reviewed and understand the Fair Wage Policy and Labour Trades requirements and have agreed to comply fully.

Conclusion:

The proposal submitted by Access Alliance Multicultural Community Health Centre, having the highest overall score satisfies the requirements of the City's RFP process and the fee component is fair and reasonable. Therefore, it is recommended that Access Alliance Multicultural Community Health Centre be retained to provide contracted interpreter services for Toronto Public Health at an estimated cost not to exceed \$800,000.00 per year including all taxes for a one-year term with the option to renew for two (2) additional one-year terms.

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