



Request for Proposal

Town of Whitecourt

Professional Audit Services

RFP# 2025-07-18

**Closing Date & Time:
4:00 p.m. Monday, August 15, 2025**

BACKGROUND

The Town of Whitecourt (hereinafter referred to as the Town) invites qualified accounting firms to submit proposals to provide professional auditing services to the Town for fiscal years ending December 31, 2025 to 2027 with the option to extend for two additional fiscal years. The purpose of this request for proposal is to obtain all auditing services required by the Town for its operations at a competitive value for service.

These audits are to be performed in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standards (CAS) as well as the following requirements:

- a. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles for Municipal Governments established by the Public Sector Accounting Board of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada.
- b. Reporting requirements as set out by the Province of Alberta in the Municipal Government Act and its regulations.

The responsibilities of the auditors shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Planning the audit;
2. Reviewing systems and procedures;
3. Compiling audit evidence;
4. Providing expression of an opinion on:
 - a. the external financial statements;
 - b. Alberta Municipal Affairs Financial Information Return;
 - c. the Local Authorities Pension Plan Report to Alberta Pensions Administration with an Accountant's Report filed every three years.
5. Complete an annual review engagement and provide a letter for the Family and Community Support Services Program Report.
6. Annual presentation of Audit Findings and Financial Statements to Council.

PROPOSAL PROCEDURES

A. PROPOSAL RESPONSE

Documents and general information are available on the Alberta Purchasing Connection – www.purchasingconnection.ca and the Town website www.whitecourt.ca.

Proposals must be submitted with the proposal form (Schedule “A, B & C”) completed in accordance with the information and instructions attached.

You are invited to submit on a separate proposal form for any services, other than those requested, that may be of interest to the Town. These extra services should be separately identified with a cost for each provided.

B. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

A bidding firm may contact the Controller, Krista Spivak, by email at kristaspivak@whitecourt.ca or Assistant Controller, Cherie Van Der Meer at cherievandermeer@whitecourt.ca to clarify any matters relating to this request for proposals. Inquiries and responses must be received by August 8, 2025 and may be recorded and distributed to all proponents at the discretion of the Town.

C. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Two copies (including one unbound copy) of the response to this Request for Proposal must be submitted in sealed envelope(s) clearly identified as to the contents and bearing the firm's name. The firm must return the completed proposal signed by a duly authorized representative and complete with all supporting documentation to:

Town of Whitecourt
Attention: Krista Spivak, Controller
Re: Professional Audit Services
5004 – 52 Avenue, Box 509
Whitecourt, AB T7S 1N6

This documentation shall be received no later than **4:00 p.m. local time, Friday, August 15, 2025**. Any proposal received after the stated time and date will not be considered and will be returned unopened.

It is the respondent's responsibility to ensure that it has all the necessary information concerning the intent and requirements of this Request for Proposal.

The Town reserves the right to modify specified target dates and to reject any or all submissions (with the lowest proposal not necessarily being accepted) or to cancel or withdraw the Request for Proposal for any reason without incurring any cost or liability for costs and damages incurred by a respondent, including, without limitation, any expenses incurred in the preparation of the submission. The Town also reserves the right to request additional information from respondents, to waive any formality or informality in the selection, and to accept the proposal deemed most favorable to the interests of the municipality.

D. PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Firms meeting the mandatory requirements (see below) will have their proposal evaluated and scored for both technical qualifications, price, and quality of proposal and miscellaneous factors. Proposals will be evaluated using three (3) sets of criteria. The following represent the principal selection criteria which will be considered during the evaluation process.

Mandatory Requirements

The audit firm adheres to the instructions in this Request for Proposal on delivering, deadlines, and preparation of the proposal. Proposals that do not meet the mandatory requirements will be rejected and disqualified from further review.

Evaluation Criteria	Percentage
1. Technical Quality (15%), Expertise (25%), and Experience (15%)	
a) Expertise and Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Qualified CPA firm licensed to practice in the Province of Alberta.• The audit firm's past experience and performance on comparable government engagements.• The experience of the audit firm's professional personnel to be assigned to the engagement and how they will be utilized in the engagement.	55%
b) Audit Work Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Description of the firm's audit approach with respect to completing its audit program (e.g. reliance on controls, use of substantive testing, confirmation etc.).	10%
2. Price	25%
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost may not be the primary factor in the selection of an audit firm.	
3. Quality of Proposal and Miscellaneous Factors	10%
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This category could include unique benefits a firm may offer.• Understanding requirements, proposal completeness.• Effective communication and presentation.	

The Town will not be limited to the criteria referred to above, and may consider other factors and criteria that the evaluation team identifies relevant during the decision making process. All criteria considered will be applied evenly and fairly to all proposals.

During the evaluation process, the Town may, at its discretion, request any one or all firms to make oral presentations. Such presentations will provide firms with the opportunity to answer any questions the Town may have on the firm's proposal. Not all firms may be asked to make such oral presentations.

GENERAL INFORMATION

A. THE ORGANIZATION

- Annual Operating and Capital expenses of approximately \$52 million.
- The Town operates a regional landfill in conjunction with Woodlands County, and the Town's portion of revenue and expenses is consolidated into the annual financial statements.

- Employs approximately 120 full-time employees, and 111 part-time employees.
- Financial records and other data are processed on Central Square Microsoft Dynamics 2018 (Great Plains) with integration with Avanti and Pearl for payroll processing. Questica Budget Software is used to prepare operating and capital budgets and is also integrated with Microsoft Dynamics.
- Financial Statements and year end working papers are created in Caseware.

For more information regarding the audited Financial Statements, Strategic Plan, and Budget, please visit our website at www.whitecourt.ca.

B. CONTRACT TERMS

Upon approval by Town Council, the successful firm will be required to enter into a formal contract with the Town. The contract shall allow the Town the right to cancel the contract upon fifteen (15) days' notice if the Town feels the terms and conditions of the contract are not being fulfilled.

C. TERM

The initial contract term will be for a period of three (3) years, for auditing services for the fiscal years ending December 31, 2025 to December 31, 2027. The Town may, at its sole discretion, extend the contract for an additional two (2) years for the fiscal years ending December 31, 2028 and December 31, 2029. This extension is subject to the following conditions: (1) the Town providing written notice of its intent to extend the contract at least 60 days prior to the contract expiry date, and (2) the Accounting firm maintaining satisfactory performance throughout the initial term. The basis of payment during the extended period will be in accordance with the provisions outlined in the original contract, unless otherwise agreed upon through a contract amendment.

SUMMARY OF PROFESSIONAL AUDITING SERVICES REQUIREMENTS

A. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENT

The purpose of the technical requirement is to demonstrate the qualifications, competence and capacity of the audit firms seeking to undertake an independent audit of the Town in conformity with the requirements of this Request for Proposal. As such, the substance of proposals will carry more weight than their form or manner of presentation. The technical requirement should demonstrate the qualifications and expertise of particular staff to be assigned to this engagement. It should also specify an audit approach that will meet the Request for Proposal requirements.

The proposal should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the respondent's capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the Request for Proposal. While additional data may be presented, the following subjects represent the criteria against which the proposal will be evaluated.

1. Qualified to Practice in Alberta

An affirmative statement should be included that the firm and all assigned key professional staff are properly qualified to practice in Alberta.

2. Firm Qualifications and Experience

The respondent should state: the size of the firm; the size of the firm's governmental audit staff; the location of the office from which the work on this engagement is to be performed; and, the number and nature of the professional staff to be employed in this engagement on an hourly basis and the number and nature of the staff to be so employed on a part-time basis. Curriculum vitae are required for all assigned personnel to this engagement.

The firm should provide information on the results of any practice review of its audits during the past three (3) years. In addition, the firm shall also provide information on the circumstances and status of any disciplinary action taken or pending against the firm during the past three (3) years with regulatory bodies or professional organizations.

3. Partner, Supervisory and Staff Qualifications and Experience

Identify the principal supervisory and management staff, including engagement partners, managers, other supervisors and specialists, who would be assigned to the engagement. Provide information on the government auditing experience of each person, including information on relevant continuing professional education for the past three (3) years and membership in professional organizations relevant to the performance of this audit.

Indicate how the quality of staff over the term of the agreement will be assured.

Engagement partners, managers, other supervisory staff and specialists may be changed if those personnel leave the firm, are promoted or are assigned to another office. These personnel may also be changed for other reasons. However, in either case, the Town retains the right to approve or reject replacements.

Other audit personnel may be changed at the discretion of the respondent provided that replacements have substantially the same or better qualifications or experience.

4. Similar Engagements with Other Government Entities

For the firm's office that will be assigned responsibility for the audit, list the most significant engagements (minimum 3) performed in the last five years that are similar to the engagement described in this Request for Proposal. References should ideally be municipalities.

These engagements should be ranked on the basis of total staff hours. Indicate the scope of work, date, engagement partners, total hours, and the name, email address, and telephone number of the principal client contact.

5. Specific Audit Work Plan

The proposal should set forth a work plan for each activity, including an explanation of the audit approach/methodology to be followed, to perform the service required.

B. PRICE

Proposals must be submitted with the proposal forms (Schedule “A”, “B” and “C”) completed in accordance with the information and instructions attached that includes the following information.

1. Total All – Inclusive Maximum Price

The bid should contain all pricing information relative to performing the audit engagement as described in this request for proposal. The total all-inclusive maximum price to be bid is to contain all direct and indirect costs including all out-of-pocket expenses.

2. Rates by Partner, Specialist, Supervisory and Staff Level:

For hours anticipated for each.

3. Rates for Additional Professional Services

If it should become necessary for the Town to request the audit firm to render any additional services to either supplement the services requested in this RFP, or to perform additional work as a result of specific recommendations included in any report issued on this engagement, then such additional work shall be performed only if set forth in an addendum to the contract between the Town and the audit firm. Any such additional work agreed to between the Town and the audit firm shall be performed at the same rates set forth in the schedule of fees and expenses included in this cost proposal.

4. GST Consideration

Respondents will not include any amount in the proposal for Goods and Services Tax. The GST will be billed by the successful respondent as a separate item in addition to the contract amount.

5. Manner of Payment

Progress payments will be made on the basis of hours of work completed during the course of the engagement in accordance with the audit firm’s cost proposal.

C. QUALITY OF PROPOSALS AND MISCELLANEOUS FACTORS

1. Proposals will be evaluated on completeness and presentation that demonstrates understanding of the requirements.
2. Proposals will be evaluated for value added benefits that your firm may provide.

D. TIME REQUIREMENTS

1. Annual Schedule

Before October 31st of the first year, the auditors and the Controller and/or Assistant Controller shall determine a schedule of joint activities which will lead to the date of the interim audit, and the assembly, audit and submission of the Annual Financial Statements of the Town for the year concerned by the last day of April of the next year.

The above mentioned schedule shall be finalized by September 30th of the second year and subsequent years and shall set out the following:

- a. The important key dates by which time necessary information is to be assembled by both parties.
- b. A list of all the necessary schedules, working papers, analyses and any other information relevant to statement preparation.
- c. A definition of the responsibilities of both the Town's and auditor's staff with respect to preparation of all required documents.
- d. Dates for meetings between the Town and audit staff to review progress made by both parties.

2. Qualified Statements

The auditors shall immediately upon discovery of information or conditions which would otherwise lead to the inclusion of qualification with respect to the financial statements, inform and fully discuss such matters with the Director of Corporate Services. In addition, the auditors shall as far as possible, allow a reasonable period of time for the Controller to make an investigation, analyze, report and take such corrective action to avoid the inclusion of such qualification.

The auditor shall be required to make an immediate written report of all irregularities and/or illegal acts of which they become aware to the Chief Administrative Officer and the Director of Corporate Services.

Recommendations for improvements by the auditor shall be reported in a separate letter to management.

3. Delivery of Annual Financial Statements

Preferably, in conjunction with delivery of the Annual Financial Statements, the auditor shall communicate (in a letter to the Town) any reportable conditions found during the audit. A reportable condition shall be defined as a significant deficiency in the design or operation of the internal control structure that could adversely affect the organizations

ability to record, process, summarize and report financial data consistent with the assertions of management in the financial statements. In addition, reportable conditions that are also material weaknesses shall be identified as such in the report.

Once the Audited Annual Financial Statements are completed, the auditors will attend a Council meeting to discuss the annual statements and shall provide such information as requested which will enhance the Town Council's understanding of matters pertaining to the statements.

The reporting and auditor requirements of the Town are outlined in Section 276 through 283 of the Municipal Government Act. Each municipality must submit to the Department of Municipal Affairs the Audited Annual Financial Statements and the Financial Information Return for the year ended December 31 by May 1 of the following year.

PROTECTION OF PRIVACY ACT AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT

The respondent acknowledges and agrees that the Protection of Privacy Act and the Access to Information Act apply to all records relating to, obtained, generated, compiled, collected or provided under or pursuant to this Request for Proposals to provide professional auditing services.

A. CONFIDENTIALITY OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

The Protection of Privacy Act and Access to Information Act govern all documents submitted to the Town. While the Access to Information Act allows persons a right of access to records in the Town's custody or control, it also prohibits the Town from disclosing your personal information or confidential business information. This prohibition takes effect if disclosure would be significantly harmful to your business interests or would be an unreasonable invasion of your personal privacy as defined in sections 19 to 34 of the Access to Information Act. Firms are encouraged to identify those portions of their submissions which they are submitting in confidence and which, if revealed, would harm the business interest of the company.

B. RATING AND EVALUATION RECORDS

Assessment criteria and allocation formulas for this Request for Proposals are public information. Individual assessments of bidders are considered confidential and of interest to competitors or other bidders under this Request for Proposals. Individual assessment information will be provided, upon request, to the submitter/bidder to whom it relates, and to others, only in accordance with the Access to Information Act.

C. PERSONAL INFORMATION ABOUT FIRM'S EMPLOYEES OR AGENTS

The purpose of collecting the personal information that must be provided in this Request for Proposals is to enable the Town to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the proposal, to enable the Town to evaluate your response to this Request for Proposals. Questions about the collection of personal information pursuant to this RFP shall be submitted to the agent outlined in Section C.

CLOSING INFORMATION

1. The Town is not liable for any costs or expenses or to reimburse or compensate the proponents in any manner whatsoever or under any circumstances including, without limitation, in the event of rejection of all proposals or cancellation of the project.
2. The Town reserves the right to request that any or all proponents clarify and make revisions to their proposal. The Town may choose to meet with one, several, or all proponents to discuss aspects of their proposal. The Town is not obligated to seek clarification from any proponent with regard to any aspect of its proposal.
3. The Town is not bound to accept any proposal. Further, the Town reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal in whole or in part, waive any irregularities in the proposal process, and to discuss different or additional items to those included in this RFP, at its sole discretion. The Town may invalidate this RFP and may issue a second RFP at its sole discretion.
4. Proposals received from individuals or legal entities engaged in litigation with the Town as a party adverse in interest at the time of this RFP will be rejected.
5. The information contained in this RFP is supplied solely as a guideline for the Consultants. While every reasonable attempt has been made to ensure its accuracy, the Town does not guarantee or warrant its accuracy, nor is it necessarily comprehensive.
6. The Protection of Privacy Act and Access to Information Act govern all documents and information collected by the Town relating to this Request for Proposals.

SCHEDULE 'A' **PROPOSAL FORM** **For Town of Whitecourt**

We hereby offer to provide professional auditing services as listed under "Summary of Professional Auditing Services Requirements" and as described in the proposal request for the following compensation for a term of three (3) years.

Total All-Inclusive Maximum Price

Year 1	\$ _____
Year 2	\$ _____
Year 3	\$ _____

PROFESSIONAL FEES

<u>1. Personnel Rates</u>	<u>Hourly Rates</u>	<u>Anticipated Hours</u>	<u>Total (\$)</u>
Partners	_____	_____	_____
Specialist	_____	_____	_____
Supervisory/Managers	_____	_____	_____
Support Staff	_____	_____	_____
Total Audit Personnel			\$ _____
2. Travel Expenses (if applicable)			\$ _____
3. Disbursement/Office Fees			\$ _____
			\$ _____
4. Other Related Charges/Fees			\$ _____
a). _____			\$ _____
b). _____			\$ _____
c). _____			\$ _____
d). _____			\$ _____
e). _____			\$ _____

DATE

NAME & ADDRESS OF ACCOUNTING FIRM

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE(S)

NAME & TITLE

NAME & TITLE

SCHEDULE 'B'
PROPOSAL FORM
For Local Authority Pension Plan
(Town and Library Board)

We hereby offer to provide professional auditing services as listed under "Summary of Professional Auditing Services Requirements" and as described in the tender proposal for the following compensation for a term of three (3) years.

Total All-Inclusive Maximum Price

Year 1	\$ _____
Year 2	\$ _____
Year 3	\$ _____

PROFESSIONAL FEES

1. <u>Personnel Rates</u>	<u>Hourly Rates</u>	<u>Anticipated Hours</u>	<u>Total (\$)</u>
Partners	_____	_____	_____
Specialist	_____	_____	_____
Supervisory/Managers	_____	_____	_____
Support Staff	_____	_____	_____
Total Audit Personnel		\$ _____	
2. Travel Expenses (if applicable)		\$ _____	
3. Disbursement/Office Fees		\$ _____	
		\$ _____	
		\$ _____	
5. Other Related Charges/Fees			
a). _____		\$ _____	
b). _____		\$ _____	
c). _____		\$ _____	
d). _____		\$ _____	
e). _____		\$ _____	

DATE

NAME & ADDRESS OF ACCOUNTING FIRM

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE(S)

NAME & TITLE

NAME & TITLE

SCHEDULE 'C'
PROPOSAL FORM
For FCSS Review
(Town of Whitecourt)

We hereby offer to provide professional auditing services as listed under "Summary of Professional Auditing Services Requirements" and as described in the tender proposal for the following compensation for a term of three (3) years.

Total All-Inclusive Maximum Price

Year 1	\$ _____
Year 2	\$ _____
Year 3	\$ _____

PROFESSIONAL FEES

1. <u>Personnel Rates</u>	<u>Hourly Rates</u>	<u>Anticipated Hours</u>	<u>Total (\$)</u>
Partners	_____	_____	_____
Specialist	_____	_____	_____
Supervisory/Managers	_____	_____	_____
Support Staff	_____	_____	_____
Total Audit Personnel			\$ _____
2. Travel Expenses (if applicable)			\$ _____
3. Disbursement/Office Fees			\$ _____
			\$ _____
			\$ _____
6. Other Related Charges/Fees			
a). _____			\$ _____
b). _____			\$ _____
c). _____			\$ _____
d). _____			\$ _____
e). _____			\$ _____

DATE

NAME & ADDRESS OF ACCOUNTING FIRM

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE(S)

NAME & TITLE

NAME & TITLE
