CITY OF **VANCOUVER**

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date:	March 29, 2007
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TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: City Librarian, Vancouver Public Library ("Library")

SUBJECT: Award of Contract for Public Website Redesign

RECOMMENDATION

A. *THAT, subject to the conditions set out in Recommendations B, C and D, the City Librarian be authorized to enter into a contract with OpenRoad Communications Ltd. ("OpenRoad") for the redevelopment of Vancouver Public Library's public website at a maximum total cost of $201,800 plus GST, with the funding to be provided by the Provincial Government's Technology Grant program for public libraries;*

B. *THAT the City Librarian be authorized to execute and deliver on behalf of the Library all legal documents required to implement Recommendation A;*

C. *THAT all such legal documents be on terms and conditions satisfactory to the City Librarian and the Director of Legal Services; and*

D. *THAT no legal rights or obligations will be created or arise by Vancouver Public Library Board's and Vancouver City Council's adoption of Recommendations A, B and C above unless and until such legal documents are executed and delivered by the City Librarian.*

CITY LIBRARIAN'S COMMENTS

The City Librarian recommends A to D.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager recommends A to D.

COUNCIL POLICY

Consulting contracts over $30,000 require Vancouver Public Library Board (the "Board") and Vancouver City Council approval.

PURPOSE

To award the contract for the redesign of the Library's website.

BACKGROUND

The Library's public website <www.vpl.ca> was originally created and launched in 1996. The foundation of the site has remained unchanged for the past 10 years, despite the advancements in management of online information, increasing user expectations of interactivity and information feeds, and expansion and innovations of the Library's services (e.g. increased online collections, etc.). The website's architecture reflects the administrative organization of the Library rather than the users' perspective. While the website contains approximately 1,400 primarily static HTML pages of content, it lacks a clear, unifying theme and structure. A 2001 website redesign focused on the appearance of the site (i.e. the "look and feel"), rather than issues such as content, content development, navigation, etc..

DISCUSSION

There are three main reasons for replacing the current website.

1.   Obsolete Website

The Board's strategic plan identifies the need to "enhance the Library's website's relevance through a re-design and increasing its public profile."

2.   Respond to Public Demand

The Library's public website is a cornerstone of its public services and is its primary vehicle for marketing and communication with users regarding the Library's services and facilities. In 2005, there were 3.5 million visits to the website (up 15% from the previous year). In 2005, approximately 10,000 users visited the Library's website each day; 88% of whom are from outside the Library. In 2005, one in three visitors to the Library chose electronic means to access the Library's services.

For many users, the Library's website is "the Library" and they and other users visit it for a variety of reasons similar to those for visiting a branch: to receive services (e.g. catalogue, databases, reference help, etc.), to obtain information about the Library (e.g. hours of operation, policies), and to find out about the Library's programs and services. The Library provides access to a wide variety of electronic resources, including subscription databases supplied by third-party vendors, the web-based Library catalogue, etc..

The Library's website also provides access to a variety of databases and services that are not a part of this redesign, including the Library catalogue, micro-sites (e.g. Chinese Genealogy, Info Action, and "Libraries in Communities" websites), commercial databases (e.g. Canadian Newsstand) and locally-produced databases (e.g. BC Index).

3. Improved Management Capacity

As demand for web-based services increases, the Library requires a more efficient website development process that allows for more streamlined content creation and management. This redesign will include the implementation of a Web Content Management System.

The Library issued a Request For Proposal ("RFP") in February 2007, which resulted in seven vendors responding. The RFP specified both the Library's social vision for the website and the Library's technical and functional requirements. There were also background questions which weren't evaluated but provided context for the evaluation.

The RFP was posted to BCBid in early February 2007. A proponents' information session was held in mid-February. Questions were received during this session and by email, and the Library sent the answers to all proponents during the preparation period. Seven vendors – DesignStamp Creative Group, Devlin eBusiness Architects Inc., Donat Group Enterprises Ltd., Ederick Associates Inc., evolutra Inc., Ion Design Inc. and Xplorex International Corporation (consortium), and OpenRoad Communications Ltd. – replied by the February 28, 2007 deadline.

A Library staff committee closely reviewed all submissions and a software evaluation team evaluated the technical components of the submissions. Scores were compiled/weighted by section and category and were then weighted by the importance of each category to the total website redevelopment project. Based on the Library's evaluation, OpenRoad provides the best value to the Library, as they scored the highest and also met budget requirements. Their proposal includes the following cost areas:

Requirements investigation/consultation, content and navigation determination:	$73,400
Graphic Design:	$12,000
Software selection, prototype development, user testing, and revisions:	$34,800
Final site preparation, acceptance testing, implementation, and staff training:	$68,600
Project Management & Control:	$13,000
TOTAL:	$201,800

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As the Library will be implementing a non-proprietary open source software solution, ongoing funding for software maintenance is not required. The Library will be able to maintain and update the selected software by utilising in-house programming expertise. This project is being funded by the Province's three-year Technology Grant program for public libraries, with no request for additional funds from the City.

CONCLUSION

That OpenRoad be awarded the Library's website redesign contract as providing the best value to the Library.

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