



COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: June 4, 2025
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Meeting Date: July 9, 2025
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TO: Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities
FROM: General Manager of the Vancouver Park Board and Chief Procurement Officer
SUBJECT: Contract Award for Operator (Lease) for VanDusen Botanical Garden Restaurant

Recommendations

- A. THAT Council authorize City staff to negotiate an agreement for Operator for VanDusen Botanical Garden Restaurant with Truffles Fine Foods Ltd. for an initial term of five (5) years, with the City's option to extend for two (2) additional five-year (5-year) terms, for a maximum total term of fifteen (15) years. The City will not provide any financial contribution to the operator during the contract.
- B. THAT Council delegate its authority to execute the Agreement to the City's Director of Legal Services, Chief Procurement Officer, and General Manager of the Vancouver Park Board.

No legal rights or obligations will be created by Council's approval of Recommendations A and B unless and until the City executes and delivers the Agreement.

Purpose and Executive Summary

The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation requires to establish a new Lease Agreement with a qualified restaurant management company for the operation of the VanDusen Botanical Garden Restaurant, currently known as The Shaughnessy Restaurant. The existing lease expires on January 31, 2026. The new lease is expected to generate incremental revenue for the Park Board and secure capital investments from the proponent.

The City issued a Request for Proposal PS20241050-VBPR-RFP on December 11, 2024, for Operator (Lease) for VanDusen Botanical Garden Restaurant. The City advertised the RFP on the City of Vancouver website and BC Bid in accordance with the City's Procurement Policy (ADMIN-008). City staff on the RFP evaluation committee and the Bid Committee have considered the responses received and recommended that the City negotiate an agreement with Truffles Fine Foods Ltd.

Council Authority/Previous Decisions

Pursuant to the City's Procurement Policy (ADMIN-008), Council has authority to approve the contract following review and recommendations by the City's Bid Committee. The Bid Committee has considered the responses to the RFP and recommends Truffles Fine Foods Ltd. as the successful proponent.

There is no applicable Council authority or previous decisions related to this report.

City Manager's Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

Context and Background

The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation requires to establish a new Lease Agreement with a qualified restaurant management company for the operation of the VanDusen Botanical Garden Restaurant, currently known as The Shaughnessy Restaurant. The existing lease expires on January 31, 2026. The current operation is in need of significant capital investment, refreshed branding, and improved facilities to enhance its appeal and attract a broader customer base. The objective is to transform the space into a destination-style restaurant that offers a high-quality full-service restaurant experience with a dynamic special events program, including weddings, corporate functions, and private gatherings.

The initiative supports the City's long-term sustainability and tourism goals, including the Park Board's Think Big Strategy and the overall vision for VanDusen Gardens as described in the [VanDusen and Bloedel Strategic Plan 2021](#), by updating and modernizing the existing facility, enhancing visitor experiences, and promoting green practices.

The purpose of the RFP was to identify a qualified operator with the capability to meet the City's requirements for the operation of the VanDusen Botanical Garden Restaurant, while offering a competitive lease rate structure and satisfactory level of service. The City will enter into a Lease Agreement with the successful proponent, subject to final negotiations, to provide the operator services.

Discussion

The RFP was issued in accordance with the City's Procurement Policy (ADMIN-008). The City received responses from Shaughnessy Restaurant at VanDusen Garden Ltd. and Truffles Fine Foods Ltd. The responses were evaluated, using both quantitative and qualitative factors, by an evaluation team comprised of representatives from Parks & Recreation, including VanDusen Botanical Garden, under the stewardship of Supply Chain Management, to assess each response's overall value.

Some of the criteria considered in the overall evaluation process included:

- Expertise in the restaurant management industry and ability to meet the City's requirements;
- Sustainable & Ethical Procurement requirements, and

- Demonstrated ability to provide a self-sustained operation with no financial contribution from the City.

The evaluation team concluded that the proposal submitted by Truffles Fine Foods Ltd. met the City's requirements as outlined in the RFP and provided the best overall value to the City.

Financial Implications

The new operation is expected to serve as a revenue-generating program for the City for the duration of the Agreement, but the incremental revenue may not be material. The City will not compensate the successful proponent for the capital investment. Truffles Fine Foods Ltd. will be responsible for all capital and operating expenditures.

The recommended proposal demonstrates that Truffles Fine Foods Ltd. can implement a viable restaurant operation at no direct cost to the City.

Legal Implications

The City's Procurement Policy (ADMIN-008) requires the Director of Legal Services to execute all contracts that have been awarded by the Bid Committee and Council.

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