



VICTORIA FIRE DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS  
MARKET SOUNDING (#15-008):

Opening the Door to Generate  
Innovative Ideas to Renovate or  
Replace Fire Station No. 1



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## Introduction

The City of Victoria is issuing this market sounding document to seek innovative ideas and potential interest in partnering with the City on the future headquarters for the Victoria Fire Department. The current building is reaching the end of its lifespan and needs to be renovated or replaced to continue to provide high quality fire response and protection services to the City of Victoria.

The City is open to all ideas, the more creative the better, and is using a non-traditional approach to determine what interest may exist within the private, commercial, emergency services, other public entities and non-profit sectors in partnering with the City of Victoria on this initiative.

## Background

The Victoria Fire Department serves the City of Victoria with three major fire stations, strategically located at 1234 Yates Street (Fire Station No. 1), 650 Michigan Street (Fire Station No. 2) and 740 Bay Street (Fire Station No. 3).

The headquarters for the City's Fire Department is located at Fire Station No. 1. In addition to serving as the administrative centre of the department, Fire Station No. 1 presently houses 14 apparatus and provides the following support functions:

- Fuel Station
- Apparatus and Fire Equipment Maintenance Division
- Emergency Communications and Dispatch Centre
- Fire Prevention, Investigation and Community Education Division
- Victoria Emergency Management Agency

The existing Fire Station No. 1 was constructed in 1958 and has undergone numerous renovations. Earlier reports have repeatedly indicated that the current fire station is in need of replacement or significant renovation.

The current lease holders of the City-owned property located at 1240 Yates Street have informed the City they will not renew the lease. This property may provide opportunities for the Fire Department and is being included in the market sounding to explore potential it may also hold.

## The Vision

The City's goal is to provide the Victoria Fire Department with a new or renovated Fire Station No. 1 and to ensure best use of its current properties.

In advance of deciding on what procurement option best serves the City of Victoria and as part of a triple-bottom-line analysis, the City is very interested in understanding what opportunities may exist to achieve its goal in an innovative and cost effective way, providing best value for money. No concrete notions have been set regarding possible collaboration on the project.

Several municipalities across North America provide examples of how they have partnered with non-traditional uses, to develop mixed-used buildings such as a fire hall and a library, community/recreation centre, and school or condominium housing. There is also an opportunity for other emergency response agencies to partner with the City.

The goal of this market sounding is to find opportunities that may exist within the private, commercial, emergency services, other public entities and non-profit sectors.

Possible options could include the City partnering to significantly renovate the current building, or construct a new building or additional buildings:

- at the existing headquarters location at 1234 Yates Street
- at 1234 Yates Street and at 1240 Yates Street (a City-owned property)
- at a different City-owned property
- at a property newly obtained through renting, a purchase, land-swap or partnership



## Site

The current fire station is located at 1234 Yates Street on an irregularly shaped lot of 4,925 square metres (53,000 square feet), facing onto Yates, Johnson, and Camosun Streets. The fire station currently accesses both Camosun and Yates Streets with the active truck bays facing Yates Street with a frontage of 73 metres (240 feet).

1240 Yates Street, located across from the fire station facing Yates and Camosun Streets, is 1,505 square metres (16,200 square feet) with 48 metres (157.5 feet) of street frontage on Yates Street. It currently houses the Boys and Girls Club and will soon be vacated.

The site at 1234 Yates Street is currently zoned R3-2.

The site at 1240 Yates Street is currently zoned PB.

In analysis reports completed to date, the existing site has been identified as a feasible option for the rebuilding of a new fire station. Furthermore, there may be opportunities in combination with the adjacent site on 1240 Yates Street to co-locate additional functions and/or buildings with the fire station, if proven to be financially beneficial.

The current location of Fire Station No. 1, in combination with Fire Stations 2 and 3, serves the fire department very well in providing City-wide fire protection coverage. However, within certain limitations and subject to further study, alternate sites may be equally or better located to maintain or improve protection coverage, subject to operational review of the proposed sites, response guidelines and industry best practice.

Any proposed alternate site will require a minimum street frontage of 40 metres (132 feet) usable for truck bays.

## Location

The City has established preliminary site selection criteria which includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Does the site provide for the required fire protection coverage?
2. Is it large enough to build the facility, parking etc. and accommodate future growth?
3. Is there good highway access to permit the required response times?
4. Site condition (Environmental – Does the site require remediation?)
5. Neighbourhood impact and public acceptance
6. Ownership – can the site be secured in a short time frame?
7. Proximity to other civic facilities, etc.
8. Other issues depending on the specific site proposed.

The map attached outlines boundaries, that based on emergency response needs, indicate the geographic area a fire department headquarters could be located to maintain response times.



### Legend

City of Victoria  
Owned Properties

Alleys/Paths/Sidewalks

Schools

Buildings/Land

Parks/Greenspace

Emergency Services

Firestation #1

New Firestation #1  
Location Boundary

Recommended New  
Firestation #1 Location

Response Zone #1

Response Zone #2

Response Zone #3

### Note:

The neighbourhood boundaries are subject to change without notice. Applicants should contact all associations in the vicinity of the application.



## Building

The current building is reaching the end of its useful life. A needs analysis has been completed that outlines in detail the programming requirements that a full replacement Fire Station No.1 should accommodate, based on the current three-station model of operation.

The City welcomes innovative ideas that might provide the overall building area for Fire Station No. 1 identified below, with an understanding that some functions may be accommodated at alternate fire stations or off-site. Changes to the operational model are not being precluded by the City if shown to be more efficient in building and site area requirements.

Based on current operations, the preferred overall building area is 3,500 square metres (37,700 square feet), of which at least 2,000 square metres (21,500 square feet) are required to be on the ground level with easy fire truck access.

While any detailed requirements will be subject to review at later stages of this process, proponents are advised that at a minimum, the building will be required to be constructed or updated to post-disaster standards under the current BC Building Code and meet very stringent performance and maintenance criteria expected of a public fire station. Constructing or renovating an existing building for use as a fire station in conjunction with or as part of another building or structure cannot reduce the above requirements for post-disaster standards or performance.

## Obligations

This market sounding is not a pre-qualification, tender or request for proposal or the beginning of any procurement process. For this reason, detailed proposal submissions are not required. The City may or may not, at its discretion, proceed to a formal pre-qualification or request for proposal process in the future.

This market sounding is an invitation to seek innovative ideas and potential interest in partnering with the City on the future headquarters for the Victoria Fire Department.

Submission of a response to this invitation does not create any contractual relationship between the City and the respondent. Additionally, the City will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by any respondent.

## Deliverables

This is an informal process, enabling potential partners to learn more and initiate discussions with the City to share ideas.

Ideas can be presented informally and do not need to be submitted as a written proposal.

## Market Sounding Questions

The questions attached in Appendix A may be responded to directly in order to provide feedback to the City, however those participating are not obligated to answer any or all of these questions, and further comments not associated with these questions are welcomed.

## Site Tours

Site tours of the Victoria Fire Department's headquarters and 1240 Yates Street can be made available to interested parties.

## Enquiries

To discuss your potential idea(s), ask questions, or set up a time for a site tour of the Victoria Fire Department headquarters, and/or 1240 Yates Street, please email Susanne Thompson, Director of Finance, at [sthompson@victoria.ca](mailto:sthompson@victoria.ca).

## Media Enquiries

Media enquiries regarding the market sounding should be directed to Katie Hamilton, Director of Citizen Engagement and Strategic Planning at [khamilton@victoria.ca](mailto:khamilton@victoria.ca).

## Timeframe

The market sounding dialogue to renovate or replace the Victoria Fire Department headquarters will be open for 10 weeks, closing on Friday, April 17, 2015 at 4 p.m.

## Victoria Fire Department Headquarters Market Sounding (#15-008):

### Opening the Door to Generate Innovative Ideas to Renovate or Replace Fire Station No. 1

#### Appendix A – Market Sounding Questions

Below are a range of questions that will be considered for this market sounding.

##### Vision

1. Is the vision provided clear, realistic and achievable?
2. Is the project attractive? Could you make a reasonable return from it?
3. Is the business model proposed reasonable for this type of project?
4. Do you have any experience that would be applicable to this project? Would you consider any past experiences positively or negatively?
5. Given your understanding of the City's objectives, are you aware of alternative solutions for procurement or partnerships that may support the City in renovating or replacing Fire Station No. 1? Do you have concrete suggestions or proposals based on your experience with partnering?
6. Do you have in your possession, or are you able to readily assemble, a development site that might suit the City as a location for a new Fire Station No. 1?
7. Would you see circumstances whereby a land swap or similar transaction might provide both you and the City with measurable benefits and helps the City meet its objectives?
8. Would you consider participating in a competitive process to deliver the project through a partnership model? If not, why? Are there circumstances that might make the opportunity seem more worthwhile?

##### General

1. Is an RFQ/RFP process reasonable?
2. What barriers to entry (e.g., prevent your company from participating in the process) do you perceive may exist?
3. What is your firm's experience with partnering or managing a consortium to deliver projects of the type contemplated? Have those partnerships resulted in successful outcomes?
4. Given your understanding of the project, are you aware of any alternative solutions for procurement? Or for achieving the vision that you feel are feasible or worth considering?
5. What challenges would you expect to face if you entered a competitive process?
6. Are there any concerns or issues you would like to raise that we have missed?



## Commercial and Finance

1. With the information provided, do you have the financial capacity to undertake the project?
2. Would you be able to provide capital funding for the project?
3. Given that the City must either initially or ultimately be the owners of the assets, what ownership structure would you prefer and why?
4. What experience do you have with public sector clients? How have you found those experiences?
5. What challenges might you expect to face if you were the successful proponent (or part of a successful proponent consortia)?
6. What significant risks do you perceive with this process? How might you manage those risks?
7. How would you plan to partner with the City regarding the various risks related to the Project? What do you consider to be the major risks in this venture?
8. Are there other efficiencies that could be achieved when developing this Project?
9. Do the proposed project locations present any specific challenges and are the site selection criteria complete and logical?
10. Should the City secure a specific site which all proponents may propose on or would you prefer that the developer should propose a site that it may either control immediately or within a short time frame?
11. What additional supporting material would you request the City provide to assist you in your decision to move forward towards a potential future partnership?
12. Are there any lessons learned you would encourage the City to apply in its future call?



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