



POLICY

PROCUREMENT	
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Effective Date: 1999-12-12 2004-09-20 Amended 2012-12-17 Amended 2022-10-18 Amended	Approval By Council (Motion Number): 12-12-99, 09-09-04, 04-12-12 32-10-22

1.0 Purpose

To establish a Policy that guides Town staff in the acquisition of goods and services on behalf of the organization in a manner that is (1) consistent with Council’s budget approvals, and (2) complies with the Province of Nova Scotia’s Public Procurement Act.

The Town of Wolfville is committed to:

- Providing for the procurement of goods, services, construction and facilities in a fair, open, consistent, and transparent manner resulting in best value
- Encouraging competition, innovative ideas and solutions, while respecting all Legislative and Trade Agreement obligations
- Promoting sustainable procurement in procurement decisions, including identifying and exploring opportunities to work with and support social enterprises and businesses that are owned by and who employ under-represented populations
- Ensuring that qualified suppliers have equal opportunity to bid on the Town of Wolfville’s procurement activity
- Being accountable for procurement decisions.

2.0 Scope

This Policy is applicable to all Town of Wolfville employees involved in the procurement process.

3.0 References

- 3.1 Nova Scotia Municipal Government Act



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4.0 Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions are provided:

- 4.1 Atlantic Standard Terms & Conditions** - Standard instructions that support public tenders issued by the four Atlantic provinces for goods and services. Supplements may be added if and when required.
- 4.2 Best Value** - Evaluating bids not only on purchase price and life cycle cost considerations, but also taking into account items such as environmental and social considerations, delivery, servicing, and the capacity of the supplier to meet other criteria as stated in the tender documents.
- 4.3 Bid** - A supplier response to a public tender notice to provide goods, services, construction or facilities.
- 4.4 Construction** - The construction, reconstruction, demolition, repair, or renovation of a building, structure, road or other engineering or architectural work, excluding the professional consulting services related to the construction contract unless they are included in the procurement.
- 4.5 Construction Contract Guidelines** - Standard instructions developed in consultation with the Construction Association of Nova Scotia that support construction tenders.
- 4.6 Goods** - Materials, furniture, merchandise, equipment, stationery, and other supplies required by the Town of Wolfville for the transaction of its business and affairs and includes services that are incidental to the provision of such supplies.
- 4.7 Procurement Advisory Group** - The advisory group established by the Public Procurement Act to provide advice and recommendations to advance the outcomes of the Act.
- 4.8 Procurement Activity** - The acquisition of all goods, services, construction, or facilities procured by purchase, contract, lease, or long-term rental.
- 4.9 Procurement Value** - The value of the total contract excluding taxes but including all options whether exercised or not. For Facilities this value is determined by the monthly lease/rent times the term of the contract.
- 4.10 Procurement Web Portal** - The public website maintained by the Province where all public tender notices are posted.
- 4.11 Public Advertisement** - Advertising a public tender notice on the provincial procurement web portal when PPA thresholds are exceeded. Public advertisement could also include



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advertisement on Town's website and local, provincial, and national newspapers, most notably when PPA thresholds are not exceeded.

4.12 Public Procurement Act (PPA) - An Act outlining the rules related to the procurement activity of all public sector entities in the Province of Nova Scotia.

4.13 Public Tender - Procurement for goods, services, construction, or facilities obtained through public advertisement. (See appendix 2 for an outline of the various tools that can be used for public tender.)

4.14 Public Tender Notice - Notice of intended procurement for goods, services, construction, or facilities obtained through public advertisement.

4.15 Services - Services required by the Town of Wolfville for the transaction of its business and affairs, excluding services provided by an employee through a personal services contract.

4.16 Social Enterprise – for purposes of this Policy refers to not for profit businesses that are directly involved in producing or selling Goods and Services for the blended purpose of generating income and achieving social, cultural or environmental aims. The majority of profits or surpluses are reinvested to support that purpose.

4.17 Standing Offer - A standing offer is a contractual arrangement with a supplier to provide certain goods or services on an "as required" basis, during a particular period of time, at a predetermined price or discount, generally within a predefined dollar limit.

4.18 Sustainable Procurement - Sustainable Procurement involves taking a holistic approach to obtain best value. This will be done by integrating the following considerations in the procurement process:

- Environmental considerations: e.g., Green House Gas Reduction, Waste Reduction, Toxic Use Reduction
- Economic considerations: e.g., Life Cycle Cost, Fiscal Responsibility, Support for the Local Economy
- Social considerations: e.g., Employee Health and Safety, Inclusiveness and Fair Wage, Health Promotion.

5.0 Policy

5.1 Application

5.1.1 This policy applies to all procurement activity of the Town of Wolfville effective November 1, 2022.



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5.1.2 The Chief Administrative Officer of the Town of Wolfville is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.

5.1.3 All Town of Wolfville personnel who have authority for the procurement of goods, services, construction, or facilities must adhere to this policy. Failure to adhere may result in a temporary or permanent loss of procurement privileges or in more extreme cases result in disciplinary action and/or dismissal.

5.2 Purchasing Authority

5.2.1 Purchase Authority shall be designated based on the following thresholds:

Up to \$5,000 – A Department Head or designate approved by the CAO and Director of Finance, is authorized to make contracts for the acquisition of goods and services where such expenditure is within budget allocation.

\$5,000 - \$30,000 – A Department Head, is authorized to make contracts for the acquisition of goods and services where such expenditure is within budget allocation.

Greater than \$30,000 – The Chief Administrative Officer, is authorized to make contracts for the acquisition of goods and services where such expenditure does not exceed budget allocation by more than 10%, where a specific budget is established.

- For project budget allocations greater than \$100,000, the CAO is authorized to purchase where such expenditure is within 5% of budget allocation.
- Notwithstanding the variance %'s noted above, in any situation where cost of good/service exceed budget by \$100,000, or more, shall be deemed outside the CAO's purchase authority.
- Purchases not falling within the CAO's authority require Council approval.

5.2.2 All dollar threshold references are to be values excluding tax.

5.2.3 The purchase authority thresholds noted above shall also apply to staff when seeking grant funding to assist in Town projects.

5.3 Directives

5.3.1 Small value procurement of goods and services having a cost of less than \$500.

No Purchase Order is required for this level of procurement. Purchases can be made as needed basis without formal process.

5.3.2 Low value procurement of goods and services having a cost of \$500 up to \$2,500.

- a. If a local regional social enterprise organization exists for product/service being acquired, then purchase can be made on an as needed basis without formal process.



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- b. If a standing offer with the Town exists, the goods or services must be procured under the standing offer.
- c. If a standing offer exists through the Province of Nova Scotia, the good or service may be procured through that standing offer, however the Purchase Authority may give preference to local suppliers.
- d. If no standing offer exists with the Town, the Purchase Authority may authorize acquisition from any supplier, so long as the purchase is consistent with the Purpose of this Policy. Preference may be given to local suppliers as may be applicable in the circumstances.

5.3.3 Mid-range value procurement of goods and services between \$2,500 and \$50,000.

- a. If a local regional social enterprise organization exists for product/service being acquired, then purchase can be made on an as needed basis without formal process
- b. If a standing offer with the Town exists, the goods or services must be procured under the standing offer.
- c. If a standing offer exists through the Province of Nova Scotia, the good or service may be procured through that standing offer, however the Purchase Authority may give preference to local suppliers.
- d. If no standing offer exists, the Purchase Authority will obtain at least three competitive quotes and award the purchase to the supplier providing best value to the Town of Wolfville. In cases where three competitive quotes are not possible, the purchasing authority will document the process followed and why three competitive quotes was not possible.

5.3.4 High Value procurement of goods and services greater than \$50,000.

- a. If a standing offer with the Town exists, the goods or services may be procured under the standing offer.
- b. If no standing offer exists, the procurement must take place by public tender. If the procurement activity exceeds the thresholds stipulated in the PPA, then any public advertisement must include use of the provincial procurement web portal.

5.4 Alternative Procurement Practices

In order to balance the need for open, competitive process with the demands of urgent or specialized circumstances, Alternative Procurement Circumstances have been developed.



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These circumstances must be used only for the purposes intended and not to avoid competition or used to discriminate against specific suppliers. To ensure appropriate use, each circumstance must be documented by Town of Wolfville personnel stating the rationale permitting the Alternative Procurement circumstance and signed by the CAO. All documents must be filed and maintained for audit purposes. See Appendix 1 for a list of the Alternative Procurement circumstances, as well as further requirements on documentation.

5.5 Bid Opening, Evaluation, and Award

5.5.1 Bid Opening

Bids are accepted in accordance with the closing time, date, and place stipulated in the bid request documents. Members of the public may receive the list of bidders electronically after bid opening.

5.5.2 Bid Evaluation

All bids are subject to evaluation after opening and before award of contract. The bid request documents must clearly identify the requirements of the procurement, the evaluation method, evaluation criteria based on the purpose and objectives of this policy, and the weights assigned to each criterion.

5.5.3 Award

The winning bidder and contract award amount for all high value procurement activity must be posted on the Province of Nova Scotia's Procurement Web Portal. After contracts have been awarded, routine access to information at the vendors request shall be provided in the following areas:

- Bidders list
- Name of winning bidder
- Award price excluding taxes of the winning bidder

Access to tender documents or other proprietary information is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

5.5.4 Supplier Debriefing

At the request of a supplier who submitted a bid, Town of Wolfville personnel will conduct a supplier debriefing session to provide feedback on the evaluation of the public tender. Suppliers can find out how their proposal scored against published criteria, obtain comments on their bid, and gather information on how future bids may be improved. Supplier's bids are not compared to other bids, nor will information on other bids be provided.

5.5.5 Supplier Complaint Process (SCP)



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When a supplier is not satisfied with the information provided in a supplier debriefing, the supplier may file a complaint in accordance with the Supplier Complaint Process as defined in the Public Procurement Act. The SCP is not a dispute resolution process, but rather is intended to handle supplier complaints and to improve faulty or misleading procurement processes. The SCP is an integral part of a fair and open procurement policy.

5.6 Fair Treatment for Nova Scotia Suppliers

Based on the principle of best value for the Town of Wolfville and when deemed to be in their best interest, Town of Wolfville personnel may apply a preference for goods valued up to and including \$50,000 that are manufactured or produced in Nova Scotia. The final decision to apply a preference to a Nova Scotia supplier shall be approved by the Chief Administrative Officer.

Town of Wolfville personnel may also choose to apply a Nova Scotia preference or restrict the receipt of quotations at or below the low value procurement thresholds to Nova Scotia Suppliers. Any decision made by Town of Wolfville personnel should be based on budget considerations and shall be approved by the Chief Administrative Officer.

5.7 Other Considerations

5.7.1 Cooperative Procurement

Town of Wolfville personnel are encouraged to look for opportunities to collaborate with government agencies when the arrangement may result in overall cost savings or other substantial advantages. For example, joint procurement may be appropriate to procure commonly used goods, services, fuel oil, telecommunications, etc.

5.7.2 Standing Offers

Town of Wolfville personnel may access all Province of Nova Scotia standing offers, as well as any standing offer established through the Procurement Advisory Group for the Province should Town of Wolfville personnel wish to make use of the savings opportunities.

Standing Offers obtained by Town process shall:

- Be established for a specified length of time not to exceed four years at a time. Only one renewal period can be agreed to without going back out to market for competitive quotes.
- Key Standing Offers identified by Council will have a four year term, and the term will align with the year each new Council adopts its Four Year Strategic Plan.
- Be for specific goods, services, or construction. The CAO shall approve the standing offer scope before any call for competitive quotes.
- Annually, as part of the budget process, a listing of existing and/or planned use of standing offers will be provided to Council. The listing will include a description



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of the nature of items covered by the Standing Offer and the related dollar thresholds involved.

5.7.3 Request for Proposals (RFP)

Annually, as part of the budget process, a listing of projects for which a Request for Proposal process is intended will be provided to Council. The listing will include a description of the project scope of work and the related dollar threshold involved. For projects identified by Council, staff will bring back additional details on selected draft RFP's before call for proposals are formally issued.

In addition to the budget process above, in those instances where a project arises during the fiscal year for which a Request for Proposal process is contemplated, after budget approval, Council will be updated as to the intended scope of work to be covered by the Request for Proposal. For projects identified by Council, staff will bring back additional details on selected draft RFP before call for proposal is formally issued.

5.8 Obligations under the Public Procurement Act

In addition to the areas already covered by this Policy, the following are additional obligations of the Public Procurement Act that the Town of Wolfville personnel are required to adhere to with their Procurement practices.

5.8.1 Terms and Conditions

Every public tender notice must include or have attached the terms and conditions that govern the purchase of goods, services, construction, or facilities. The terms and conditions of every public tender notice must be consistent with the Atlantic Standard Terms and Conditions for the procurement of goods, services, or facilities and the Construction Contract Guidelines developed in collaboration with the Construction Association of Nova Scotia for the procurement of construction.

5.8.2 Posting Tender Notices and Awards

All opportunities subject to a public tender, as required by the PPA guidelines, must be advertised on the Province of Nova Scotia Procurement Web Portal. Town of Wolfville personnel must also post on the Procurement Web Portal the name of the successful bidder for the public tender and the contract amount awarded.

5.8.3 Code of Ethics

Town of Wolfville personnel and board members must ensure their conduct in relation to procurement activity is consistent with the "Duties of public sector entity employees" in the Public Procurement Act. This includes a request for removal from a procurement activity when a personal conflict of interest is perceived.

5.8.4 Other



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Policy Posting

Town of Wolfville personnel will ensure this policy is posted on the Town of Wolfville web site.

Supplier Development Activities

Town of Wolfville personnel will make every attempt where appropriate to participate in vendor outreach activities as requested by the Procurement Governance Secretariat

Regulations

Town of Wolfville personnel will make sure that procurement practices remain consistent with any regulations that are adopted under the Public Procurement Act.

5.9 Amendments

Any amendments of this Policy will be communicated to the public on the Town of Wolfville website.

CAO

2022-10-18

Date

Appendix 1

Alternative Procurement Approval, Consultation, and Reporting Process

Only those holding the appropriate role/position within the Town of Wolfville may delegate signing authority.

Small & Low Value:

The Department Head will be accountable for the proper use of alternative procurement transactions.

Medium & High Value:

Town of Wolfville personnel wishing to make use of a medium and high value alternative procurement practice (with the exception of an emergency) must consult with the Chief Administrative Officer to obtain approval and identify the most appropriate means by which to proceed with the satisfaction of the requirement. If in agreement, the Chief Administrative Officer may direct Town of Wolfville personnel to proceed with the procurement. The Chief Administrative Officer may wish to confer with provincial government procurement officials for discussion, validation, and or alternative options.

The Chief Administrative Officer may delegate signing authority for high value alternative procurement transactions to an Acting Chief Administrative Officer in his or her absence. All appropriate documentation will be maintained on file for audit purposes. The Chief Administrative Officer will ensure persons with delegated signing authority will be held accountable for their actions. The Chief Administrative Officer shall remain accountable for the proper use of alternative procurement transactions.

Alternative Procurement Circumstances

The Province of Nova Scotia is currently reviewing ALTP circumstances and will be issuing regulations that outline best practices in this area. Once issued by the Province, these revisions will be reviewed for incorporation into this Policy.

A. No Threshold Restrictions

Town of Wolfville personnel may use the following Alternative Procurement practices as described below for the procurement of goods, services, construction or facilities, with no threshold restrictions:

1. Where an unforeseeable situation of urgency exists and the goods, services, or construction cannot be obtained in time by means of open procurement procedures. Entities must ensure inadequate planning does not lead to inappropriate use of this exemption.
2. Where goods or consulting services regarding matters of a confidential or privileged nature are to be purchased and the disclosure of those matters through an open tendering process could reasonably be expected to compromise government confidentiality, cause economic disruption, or otherwise be contrary to the public interest.
3. Where compliance with the open tendering provisions set out in this Policy would interfere with a Party's ability to maintain security or order, or to protect human, animal, or plant life or health.
4. In the absence of tenders in response to an open or selective tender, or when the tenders submitted have been collusive, or not in conformity with the essential requirements in the tender.

5. To ensure compatibility with existing products, to recognize exclusive rights, such as exclusive licenses, copyright, and patent rights, or to maintain specialized products that must be maintained by the manufacturer or its representative.
6. Where there is an absence of competition for technical reasons and the goods or services can be supplied only by a particular supplier and no alternative or substitute exists.
7. For the procurement of goods or services the supply of which is controlled by a supplier that is a statutory monopoly.
8. For work to be performed on or about a leased building or portions thereof that may be performed only by the lessor.
9. For work to be performed on property by a contractor according to provisions of a warranty or guarantee held in respect of the property or the original work.
10. For the procurement of a prototype or a first good or service to be developed in the course of and for a particular contract for research, experiment, study or original development, but not for any subsequent purchases.
11. For the purchase of goods under exceptionally advantageous circumstances such as bankruptcy or receivership, but not for routine purchases.
12. For the procurement of original works of art.
13. For the procurement of subscriptions to newspapers, magazines, or other periodicals.
14. For the procurement of real property.
15. For the procurement of goods intended for resale to the public.
16. For the procurement from philanthropic institutions, prison labour, persons with disabilities, sheltered workshop programs, or through employment equity programs.
17. For the procurement from a public body or a non-profit organization.
18. For the procurement of services of expert witnesses, specifically in anticipation of litigation or for the purpose of conducting litigation

B. Threshold Restrictions

Town of Wolfville personnel may use the following Alternative Procurement practices as described below, up to the high value thresholds of this Policy:

1. For the procurement of goods or services for the purpose of evaluating or piloting new or innovative technology with demonstrated environmental, economic, or social benefits when compared to conventional technology, but not for any subsequent purchases.
2. For procurement that fosters the development of minority businesses.

Appendix 2

Below is an outline of some of the various tools available for use when issuing a public tender:

Request for Proposal (RFP)

Used when a supplier is invited to propose a solution to a problem, requirement, or objective. Suppliers are requested to submit detailed proposals (bids) in accordance with predefined evaluation criteria. The selection of the successful proposal is based on the effectiveness, value, and price of the proposed solution. Negotiations with suppliers may be required to finalize any aspect of the requirement.

Request for Construction (RFC)

Used to publicly tender for a construction, reconstruction, demolition, remediation, repair, or renovation of a building, structure, road, bridge, or other engineering or architectural work. When a supplier is invited to bid on a construction project the tender documents usually contain a set of terms and conditions and separate bid form that apply to that specific project. Suppliers are requested to submit a response (bid) in accordance with predefined criteria. The selection of the successful proposal is based on a number of factors as described in the tender documents. A request for construction usually does not include professional consulting services related to the construction contract, unless they are included in the specifications.

Request for Quotation (RFQ)

A request for quotation on goods or products with a minimum specification. Award is usually made based on the lowest price meeting the specification. An RFQ does not normally but may sometimes include evaluation criteria.

Request for Standing Offer (RSO)

A public tender to provide commonly used goods or services. The term of the standing offer can vary in duration but will be clearly defined in the tender documents. RSO's may include evaluation criteria depending on the requirement.

Request for Expression of Interest (REI)

The Request for the Expression of Interest is similar to the Request for Proposal and is sometimes referred to as a Pre-Qualification, where suppliers are invited to propose a solution to a problem. The REI, however, is only the first stage in the procurement process. Bidders responding to the REI will be short listed according to their scoring in the evaluation process. The short listed firms will then be invited to respond to a subsequent Request for Proposal. A REI does not normally include pricing as price is a key evaluation criteria used in the second stage RFP process.