



January 2, 2020

Allen Crume
PO BOX 3186
Valdez, AK 99686

Re: Lower River Flood Control Design Proposal

Dear Mr. Crume:

The Mayor's Flood Task Force recently discussed the selection of Dowl Engineering to perform a study on flood control related to the Lowe River. Members of the task force, including yourself, expressed concern about the City only receiving one proposal for engineering design related to a multi-million dollar flood control project. City policy is to solicit multiple proposals for projects of the size and scope of the Lowe River Flood Control engineering design.

I requested that Assistant City Manager/Capitol Facilities Director Nathan Duval reach out to other engineers and attempt to determine why they did not make proposals on the project. The following responses were received by firms who elected not to make a proposal on the Lowe River Flood Control design.

R&M Consultants-Anchorage, Alaska - A staff engineer who worked previously with another firm involved with the Lowe River flood control, informed his employer that a technical solution to the flood issue was not the primary goal of the Valdez community. The firm's engineer felt the project emphasis related more to public input and resident project management. R&M felt this approach to project engineering was not their specialty.

AWR ENGINEERING - Firm was aware of RFQ. Firm was not clear on Scope of Services (never called to inquire for more specifics). Firm does cost/benefit analysis on each proposal and was not sure that the overall time spent on project would justify their fee on the project.

P-N-D-Anchorage, Alaska - Engineering Firm was aware of RFQ, however; they misunderstood the scope of the solicitation, and an internal miscommunication resulted in a lack of response. PND is aware of the City web site and the City's periodic posting of RFQ's on web site.

AECOM ENGINEERING - Did not review RFQ. Not sure their firm would submit because firm is aware of local politics related to Alpine Woods subdivision. AECOM does not have hydraulic engineer in Anchorage office. AECOM would be forced to sub out the engineering design to a firm in the lower 48.



HDR Engineering – Saw the solicitation and decided not to respond based on their belief that there isn't a viable long term engineering solution.

The responses appear to indicate that firms reasoning for not submitting RFQ range from not checking City web site on regular basis to not understanding scope of project to, more importantly, the notion that the difficulty of the project outweighs the risk and level of effort required by the firm. Additionally, a belief is prevalent amongst Alaskan engineering firms that public input and political aspects of the project create an environment whereby professional engineering advice is not valued by the community on the topic of flood control.

My conclusion is that the primary issues relates to this project not appearing desirable to Alaskan engineering firms in terms of community support and overall complications of the design of the project. Staff will continue to assess our solicitation process for professional services, but in this instance it appears the project specific scope limited responses to the City of Valdez's RFQ.

Please call me at 835-3466 if you would like to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,



Mark Detter | City Manager
City of Valdez

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