

THE PARTNERSHIP OF:

**The Township of Val Rita-Harty,
The Township of Opatika,
The Val Rita-Harty Economic Community Development Corporation
and
The Opatika Regional Economic Development Team**

*Henceforth referred to as 'the Partnership'
Presents a Request For Proposal for the development of:*

THE FOREIGN INVESTOR'S INFORMATION PACKAGE PROJECT

RFP ISSUED DATE: APRIL 8TH, 2011

RFP CLOSING DATE: APRIL 29TH, 2011

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The communities of Val Rita-Harty and Opasatika and their respective Economic Development Corporation joined forces to solve a common problem. It became apparent in the last few years that both communities suffered from a lack of preparedness when dealing with request for information and site visits by foreign and domestic investors.

Like much of North Eastern Ontario, both communities owe their existence to the forest industry. Softwood lumber and newsprint pulp has been the economic engine for the region from early on at the beginning of the 20th century up until the end of the '90s, when the decline became sharper and much more visible. After multiple mill closures, the region struggled to find a replacement income.

The project is a response to a combination of key factors which, combined together, provided the necessary incentive to find a solution.

The first and most obvious factor is the socio-economic impact of the long and deep decline of the forest industry. This was especially true for Opasatika which lost its main employer, Excel. The Excel mill closed in 2004 which resulted in the loss of 80 jobs and left Opasatika with an unused industrial building. This is not to say that Val Rita and Harty have not been affected. After the failure of the agricultural industry in North East Ontario, Val Rita and Harty had no other employers than the Spruce Falls mill in Kapuskasing. By the time we entered the 21st century the mill went from 4,000 employees to 800. Now the mill has around 500 employees and suffers from sporadic shut downs. Needless to say, the money is sparse, and the mood is grim.

The second factor is the incentive created by the provincial green energy programs. The Government of Ontario made a call to rapidly switch the energy production to renewable sources. Also, with the announced plan to increase the capacity of the main North-South transmission line, investors and builders realize that it will open up the North East Corridor to important green energy opportunities. Northern Communities need to be ready for such interest.

The third factor is the apparent lack of preparedness due to inexperience with Green Energy Initiatives. Up until 2008, the municipalities has never seen, let alone participated in photovoltaic ventures. When the engineers from Refergy made site visits in Val Rita-Harty and requested additional information, the municipality could not provide it. This resulted in a missed opportunity, because Refergy ultimately went elsewhere. At the time of this request two more companies have demonstrated interest in the communities and the municipalities still can't provide the information.

The Partnership is therefore seeking proposals from qualified professional Consultants to assist in the composition and production of its Foreign Investor's Information Package. To this end, the Partnership has requested approximately \$50,000 in funding from government agencies where half is approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Invest Canada Community Initiatives program, 40% is requested from the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines and Forestry and the remainder is to be divided between the two Townships as approved by both Municipal Councils.

2.0 SCOPE OF WORK

To satisfy the demands for information by investors and site selectors, to improve the chances that investors and site selectors be satisfied with what our communities have to offer, and to increase the amount of visits by investors and site selectors, the townships of Val Rita-Harty and Opatatika need a battery of information packages which will help the communities generate more investment leads, increase the effectiveness of site visits, improve pre- and post-selection care, and provide superior business set-up assistance.

The selected consultant shall have the qualifications to produce or commission and oversee the production all components of the Foreign Investor's Information Package. These components are to be produced, reviewed, and delivered separately, as per Section 3.0 of this request, but must be congruent and reference each other. It is recommended and expected that the selected consultant work with the assistance of industry experts and/or other consultants to fill experience gaps where needed.

The components are:

2.1 Regional Profiles

2.2 Business Case

2.3 Market Study

2.4 Implementation Plan

2.5 Marketing

The preparation of these documents will occur under the supervision of the Economic Development Agent, who will keep all Partnership members apprised of developments. The Agent will also serve as primary resource for the successful candidate and provide access to previously acquired economic information through selected contacts from both economic development teams.

2.1 REGIONAL PROFILES

The intent of the regional profiles is to provide the other project components and investors with a description and features of all spheres of influence with a focus on information crucial to green energy initiatives. Starting with broad provincial aspects such as logistics, key regulations, and political climate, to less broad regional aspects such demographics, supporting organizations, and utilities, to concise municipal aspects such as labour force, economic incentives, and most important of all, an asset inventory.

The asset inventory must be the main focus of the component. It must have a detailed description of usable land and industrial and commercial buildings. It must also build on any existing inventory provided by the Municipalities.

Here, the successful candidate will research and compile information important to the Business Case. The goal is to be able to identify any assets the municipalities have under their jurisdiction which would be valuable to potential investors. This information will also be used for the online inventory profile, and so the information gathering process should be able to provide all the necessary details.

The Regional Profile must also include a reasonably detailed description of the following fields as it applies to the municipalities:

Economics	Strategies, Plans, & Services	
	Investment Opportunities	
Demographics	Population	Age
		Education
	Labour Force & Markets	Wage Rates and Benefits by Occupation
		Major Employers
		Private Sector
		Public Sector
	Sector Profiles in terms of employment numbers in the region, and overall organization of the sector (Analysis of Comparative Advantage)	Forestry
		Manufacturing
		Utilities
		Construction
	Key Supplier links and distance to market	
Real Estate	Housing Prices	
	Industrial & Commercial	
	Industrial Parks	
	Realty Costs	
	Incentives for Redevelopment	
Utilities	Water Rates & Sewage	
	Gas Prices	
	Electricity Prices	
Transportations and Logistics	Communication Infrastructure	
	Media	
	Airports	
	Railways & Inter-modal	
	Highways & Ports	
	Distance To Markets	
Community Assets	Culture	
	Tourism	
	Recreation	
Government Policy programs and capital funding regimes		

2.2 BUSINESS CASE

The intent of the business case is to attract and secure investment leads. It is the first document communities will present to investment leads in order to produce a site visit. The document must make the case for investing in our communities. By using information from the regional profiles and especially the asset inventory, the business case must be broad enough to cover all types of applicable industries and investment, while still present a convincing argument.

The business case should not be designed for a specific target, but instead for a specific Municipality. The successful candidate will design the Business Case in a way that the Municipal

employees can use it for every investment lead they generate to promote unique selling points specific to the municipalities.

2.3 MARKET STUDY

The intent of the market study is to build a list of potential investment leads. The successful candidate will, by the method of his or her choosing, find domestic and foreign investors and compile them into a list. The list should include contact information, key individual, basic business profiles, investment strength, and potential for interest.

2.4 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The intent of the Implementation Plan is to produce a series of documents that will provide the Townships with the tools and the knowledge to deal with the entire investment process from generating leads to aftercare.

The successful candidate will present a format for these documents that is in keeping with the expectation that the documents will be used by municipal officials, economic development agents, and local consultants. The expectation is that none of these individuals will have experience in the investment activities described in the Implementation Plan. This expectation is the main reason why these documents are requested; to assure the successful implementation of the marketing strategy in spite of the said barrier.

Therefore, these documents need to be sufficiently comprehensive as to cover all possible scenarios, yet remain sufficiently clear as to be accessible to individuals who do not possess prior knowledge or experience.

The plan is divided in seven documents, each document representing a step in the investment process. These steps are:

- Domestic Networking: How to expand international reach by networking with important domestic business and government partners.
- International Investment Call: The process of identifying potential investment leads and cold-calling techniques for producing solid leads.
- Lead Targeting: The process of transforming potential investment leads into solid investment interests.
- Site Visit: How to prepare sites for investment visits and how to sell important assets during a site visit.
- Problem-Solving Network: How local and regional business partners can become an asset in retaining investment leads by solving common and uncommon problems raised during the site visit.
- New Business Set-up Assistance: The process of turning investment partner into business partners by offering services which help the investment partner save time and money on setting up shop in the communities.
- Aftercare: The process of helping new local business partners as a means to generate further international and domestic leads and investments.

A closely related but separate component is the marketing plan. The intent of the marketing plan is to establish a framework for the municipalities to market themselves. Whereas the documents listed above are to improve individual workers' performance, the marketing plan is to improve the whole municipalities' performance.

The selected consultant will produce a marketing plan that will describe the direction the municipalities should take to transform their marketing material, marketing strategy, and communication methods to present a strong visual façade that is conducive to improved relations with investors. The marketing plan must also consider the municipalities' limited funding options and present appropriate and cost-effective solutions as well as describe the expected effect.

2.5 MARKETING

The intent of the marketing component is to apply the marketing plan and produce the tools and material necessary to its application. The exact materials to be produced are to be determined by the plan and by the allowed budget. However, two aspects are definitely expected; an inventory website and a media kit.

The inventory website is to be the main platform to host and present information gathered in the regional profiles and the asset inventory. It must represent the municipalities as a region, as opposed to individually. It must have its own domain address and site structure; however it can be hosted by the Val Rita-Harty web server. It must be sufficiently user-friendly as to allow municipal employees with only basic internet knowledge to add or modify information.

The media kit is a set of marketing templates for use in the process of applying the marketing plan. They include: brochures, flyer inserts, advertising for use in magazines and newspapers, business cards, and radio scripts. These templates should be modifiable and easy to update to reflect the needs of the municipalities at the time of use and be reusable for future marketing opportunities.

3.0 DELIVERABLES STRUCTURE & BUDGET

Since the project is partially funded by the federal and provincial government, a specific funding budget has been established for each component and must be respected. Here the components' budget allowances are described as their representative portion of the overall budget. When preparing a work plan and pricing, the candidates must respect the following deliverable structure and budget allowances.

3.1 Regional Profiles & Asset Inventory – 18%

- 3.1.1 Basic Collection of data
- 3.1.2 Inventory of Buildings and lands to be audited
- 3.1.3 Areas of research for the profile
- 3.1.4 Preliminary audit report
- 3.1.5 Final profile Assembly

3.2 Business Case – 9%

- 3.2.1 Outline
- 3.2.2 First Review
- 3.2.3 Final Review
- 3.2.4 Presentation

3.3 Market Study - 9%

- 3.3.1 Research Methodology Report
- 3.3.2 First Review and Filtering
- 3.3.3 Presentation of top candidates

- 3.3.4 Final Assembly
- 3.4 Implementation Plan – 46%
 - 3.4.1 Strategic Planning Documents– 37% (Domestic Networking, International Investment Call, Lead Targeting, Site Visit, Problem-solving network, New Business Set-up Assistance, Aftercare)
 - 3.4.1.1 First Draft
 - 3.4.1.2 Final Report
 - 3.4.1.3 Presentation and Training Session
 - 3.4.2 Marketing Plan – 9%
 - 3.4.2.1 First Draft & Review
 - 3.4.2.2 Second Review
 - 3.4.2.3 Presentation & Final Report
- 3.5 Marketing – 18%
 - 3.5.1 Website 9%
 - 3.5.1.1 Structure
 - 3.5.1.2 Master Page
 - 3.5.1.3 Test run
 - 3.5.1.4 Launch
 - 3.5.2 Media Kit & Other Deliverables: 9%
 - 3.5.2.1 To be determined by Marketing Plan

4.0 INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED IN THE PROPOSAL

To be considered responsive to this Request For Proposals and to facilitate evaluation, proposals should be organized in the order of the outline below and include the following information.

- 4.1 Cover letter describing a brief history of the consultant, the reason for the interest in the project, and the ability to perform the required tasks.
- 4.2 The consultant's identification, main office location, contacts information for the contract manager, account manager, and general manager.
- 4.3 Consultant's and sub-consultants' qualifications. Note: Special considerations will be attributed to consultants who can sub-contract to local consulting consultants.
- 4.4 Assigned staff qualification
- 4.5 Methodology and Work Plan. Note: Since this project receives funding from both federal and provincial grants, the consultant's work plan must consider and respect the assigned budget for each component.
- 4.6 Should the consultant's experience provide insight which differs from that of the Partnership's, the consultant can suggest specific additions or alternatives to components requested and a rationale or example to justify the change.
- 4.7 Project cost summary – consultants must provide how it intends to break down the prescribed budget into its activities.

- 4.8 References - Provide two recent references that may be contacted concerning your consultant's performance on this type of service.
- 4.9 consultants must provide a payment schedule

5.0 OWNERSHIP OF PROPOSALS

All documents submitted and accepted by the Partnership will become the property of the Partnership. All documents generated as a result of this project will become the property of the Partnership and the successful proponent will be required to assign any copyright to the Partnership. The Partnership will have exclusive rights to copy, edit, and publish the material.

The members of the partnership reserve the right to waive any minor irregularities in submissions and/or to reject any or all proposals.

6.0 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The Partnership is subject to the access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Section 21 of this Act does offer some protection for third party business interests; however, the Partnership cannot guarantee that information provided to the Partnership can be held in confidence.

7.0 CONSULTANT'S EXPENSES

Consultants shall be solely responsible for their own expenses in preparing the proposal to the Partnership and subsequent negotiations with the Partnership, if any.

8.0 EVALUATION PROCESS

- 8.1 Before going to the evaluation stage, all proposals will be screened upon these criteria:
 - 8.1.1 Proposals are sent in a sealed envelope as per the requirements of Section 15 of this request.
 - 8.1.2 Six (6) hard copies of the proposals are included.
 - 8.1.3 Three (3) PDF electronic copies of the proposals are included
 - 8.1.4 All requirements outlined in section 4 of this request have been met.
 - 8.1.5 The budget allowances in section 3 of this request have not been changed or exceeded.

- 8.2 Proposals which do not pass the preliminary screening will be retained for reference but will not be evaluated by the selection committee, unless:
 - 8.2.1 No proposals pass the initial screening, in which case the top three (3) proposals ranked by the number of screening criteria which they fulfil will be retained for evaluation.
 - 8.2.2 Less than three (3) proposals pass the initial screening, in which case the top two (2) proposals ranked by the number of screening criteria which they fulfil will be retained for evaluation.
- 8.3 All proposals which pass the selection criteria will be selected for the evaluation process.
- 8.4 Proposals selected for the evaluation process will be evaluated by a selection committee. The selection committee will comprise of eight (8) individuals; two (2) for each Partnership members. The selection committee will evaluate the consultant's proposals based on the following qualification criteria and weighting:
 - 8.4.1 Project understanding and suggestions by proponent.
(15 points)
 - 8.4.2 Methodology and work plan designed to follow section 3 of this request.
(15 points)
 - 8.4.3 Experience of project manager, support staff, and sub-contractors on similar projects.
(10 points)
 - 8.4.4 Location of main office, and amount of employees and sub-contractors located in the municipalities' region.
(10 points)
 - 8.4.5 Fees and cost schedule designed as to prevent overruns.
(50 points)
 - 8.4.6 A total of 100 points
- 8.5 The evaluation process is as follows:
 - 8.5.1 All proposals will be reviewed and discussed in committee by the entire group.
 - 8.5.2 Then, proposals will be evaluated individually against the ranking scheme described in section 9.4 of this request by each member of the committee.
 - 8.5.3 Then, each proposal scores will be averaged for the whole committee.
 - 8.5.4 The proposal with the highest score will be selected.

9.0 CONTRACT

If a proposal is accepted, the Consultant will be required to sign a contract which will be governed by the laws of the Province of Ontario.

The Request for Proposals and the Consultant's response will form part of the contract by attachment and incorporation by reference.

If the proposal is accepted, the contract will provide for the following:

- The Partnership's standard payment terms
- Expected documentation to support payment

10.0 TIMELINE

10.1 RFP TIMELINE

April 8 th , 2011	Issue of RFP
April 25 th , 2011	Deadline for Questions
April 29 th , 2011	RFP Closing date
May 6 th , 2011	Interview date (if required)
May 20 th , 2011	Selection of the Preferred Bidder

10.2 PROJECT DELIVERABLE TIMELINE

A timeline for the submission of all deliverables as described in section 3.0 above is to be set by the proponent and included in the proposal. However, in order to be prepared for the onset of the next provincial elections and in order to respect the deadline set by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' funding, the Partnership requests also that the timeline respect the following hard deadlines:

June 20 th , 2011	Deadline for all outlines and basic collection of data
July 20 th , 2011	Deadline for all first drafts and reviews
September 2 nd , 2011	Deadline for all final reports and reviews
September 9 th , 2011	Deadline for presentations and website master page
October 7 th , 2011	Deadline for start of Website test run and final document assembly and packaging
December 2 nd , 2011	Deadline for training sessions, Media Kit, and website launch

December 9th, 2011 The absolute deadline for all billable expenses to respect the deadline for the federal government's funding. Therefore the consultant must complete all required activities and submit all invoices before the required date.

If the consultant fails to complete all activities and submit all invoices, the Partnership reserves the right to withhold payment equal to the amount not received by the federal or provincial government as a result of any late submissions of the Foreign Investor's Information Package Project.

11.0 INDEMNIFICATION

In carrying out this project the Consultant will act as an independent consultant and must agree to keep the Partnership indemnified against any and all claims, actions or demands that may be brought, made or arise in respect of anything done or omitted to be done by its employees who shall be and remain at all times and for all purposes, the servants or employees of the consultant.

12.0 CANCELLATION

The Partnership reserves the right to cancel any contract resulting from this RFP if, in the Partnership's opinion, the service provided is not satisfactory. In the event of cancellation, the consultant will have no right of action against any of the Partnership's members individually or as a whole for damages; however, cancellation would not, in any manner, limit the Partnership's right to bring action against the Consultant for damages for breach of contract. Ten days written notice of cancellation will be provided.

13.0 ENQUIRIES

All enquiries regarding this RFP must be directed to André Couture, Economic Development Agent and Partnership Liaison, by telephone only to 705-335-6146. A minimum of two (2) business days must be allowed for a reply.

14.0 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- 14.1 Basic Eligibility: The successful consultant must be eligible to do business in Ontario.
- 14.2 The successful consultant will provide proof of Insurance and Insurance expiration
- 14.3 Prior to undertaking any work under this contract, the consultant shall procure and maintain continuously for the duration of this contract, at no expense to the Partnership, insurance coverage as specified below, in connection with the performance of the work of this contract by the consultant, its agents, representatives, employees and/or subcontractors. The consultant's insurance shall be primary as respects to the Partnership members', and any other insurance maintained by the Partnership members shall be excess and not contributing insurance with the consultant's own insurance. Failure of the consultant to fully comply with the insurance requirements of this contract will be

considered a material breach of contract and, at the option of the Partnership, will be cause for such action as may be available to the Partnership, under the provisions of this contract or otherwise in law including immediate termination of the contract.

14.4 Required Insurance Coverage:

14.4.1 Commercial General Liability Insurance. A policy of Commercial General Liability insurance including bodily injury, property damage, with the following minimum coverage:

14.4.1.1 \$1,000,000 for each occurrence, and

14.4.1.2 \$2,000,000 aggregate

14.5 Professional Liability Insurance. A policy of Errors and Omissions Liability Insurance appropriate to the consultant's profession. Coverage should be for the professional errors, act or omission arising out of the scope of the services shown in the contract, with the following minimum coverage:

14.5.1 \$1,000,000 per claim/aggregate

15.0 SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

All submissions must include six(6) hard copies and three(3) electronic copies and must be delivered before April 29th 2011 at 4:00 pm (EST) in a sealed envelope marked:

Foreign Investors' Information Package Project
c/o André Couture
Economic Development Agent
C.P. 100
Val Rita, ON
P0L 2G0