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## MEMORANDUM

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TO: Mayor Walker and Councilors  
FROM: Stacy Marquardt, Community Development Planner  
SUBJECT: RFP for Building Inspection & Permit Services  
DATE: August 24, 2023

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### **Background:**

Since 1992, the City of Princeton has engaged Metro West Inspection Services to provide building permitting review, inspections and Building Official services.

While Metro West has served the City well for 31 years, it's deemed by proponents of 'good governance' groups to test the waters to make sure that the consulting inspection services firm is providing the best value to the City.

The City Council directed Staff to obtain proposals from other qualified inspection firms. The contract required us to give our current inspection services company a 90-day notice if we decide to change the company we contract with.

I have attached the letter that was sent on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023 to several different inspection service firms along with the one sent to Sherburne County as a contracting agency. The proposals were to be submitted by 3:00 pm Friday August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023 for consideration.

Attached is a summarized table of the five RFP's submitted.

### **Staff Recommendation:**

Building Inspections are a fee-based service, but there is still a budget impact. At this time, Staff have not contacted the various references provided by each proposer. The RFP process included a step to interview the proposers. Given the additional work required by Sherburne County and Rum River Consultants, Staff would recommend limiting interviews to the remaining three unless Rum River Consultants can guarantee a work around to the scanning of plans by Staff. Interviews would be scheduled for the September 7<sup>th</sup> Council Study Session. If the council agrees, Staff would request the Council to provide a list of questions.

The City received 5 RFP's, which are summarized in the table below.

Company	Fees	Number of Staff	Age of Company	Other Jurisdictions Served	Paper, Digital, or Both	Comments
Metro West Inspection Services Inc. (current service provider)	38% of all permit fees and 38% of all plan review fees	22	1976	City of Medina, Credit River, Waconia, Long Lake and Carver County	Both	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They accommodate coming to the office to pick up plans/permits,</li> <li>• We currently pay them 32% of the revenue generated through permit costs.</li> <li>• One item to note that they have not provided us but that might be because of contract, is updates to codes and local regulations to stay consistent with the State.</li> </ul>
Sherburne County Planning and Zoning	100% of all permit, plan review and inspection fees.	4	Old	8 Townships in Sherburne County	Both	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After speaking with Lynn at the County, it appears they would not come to our office to pick up building plans and permits. They would rather people apply digitally to them, in person at their office or through the mail which seems a little counterintuitive.</li> <li>• Business hours are Monday - Friday 8:00 am - 4:30 pm</li> </ul>
Mid-MN Inspections LLC	70% of all permit fees and 70% of all plan review fees	2	2019	Mille Lacs County, City of Milaca, Foreston and Mora	Both	
Rum River Consultants	60% of all permit fees and 60% of all plan review fees.	24	2009	They service a number of communities which includes: Cities of Andover, Anoka, Braham, Isanti, East Bethel, Grasston, Pine City, and a few Townships such as Baldwin and Linwood.	They are working towards 100% online permitting, inspections, etc., However, did communicate they would work with current system of paper permits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They also offer services to keep ordinances and code up to date at the local level so we are always compliant.</li> <li>• Business hours are Monday – Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm but are willing to work on Saturday if scheduled in advance.</li> </ul>
MNSPECT	75% of all permit fees and 75% of all plan review fees	25	Roughly 35 years old	40 plus communities which include: Cities of Bayport, Glencoe, Maple Lake, Mendota, Mound, Nowthen, and Watertown, also the Townships of Greenvale and Waterford.	Digital but it was confirmed they will also pick up paper permits as well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business hours are Monday – Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm but are willing to work outside that when needed.</li> <li>• They also offer Rental Housing Inspection services which is something we may be looking at in the future.</li> </ul>