
MEMORANDUM



TO: Mayor Walker and Councilors
FROM: Stacy Marquardt, Community Development Planner
SUBJECT: **RFP for Inspection and Building Official Services**
DATE: September 26, 2023

Background:

On July 17, 2023 the City distributed a letter soliciting proposals from qualified business, firms and organizations to provide Certified Building Office and Inspection Services for the City. Five (5) RFP responses were received. At the August 24th City Council meeting each submittal was presented to the Council for review. The Council then directed staff to schedule interviews with four (4) of the responders for their September 7th Study Session.

After the interviews some questions arose from the Council and Department Heads. Staff was asked to reach back out to the four (4) companies with the following questions:

1. Can you provide up to five contractor references that you have worked with on projects;
2. Can you cite a contentious discussion you have had and cite a reference for that situation; and
3. How would you handle a public health nuisance? The responses are attached.

It was also asked if we continued with Metro West for services, if the City could request a different inspector to be assigned to our jurisdiction (response is attached).

Reference recap:

1. Metro West – Four contractor references were called and two responded. Both have been working with Metro West since Loren owned the company and both stated they were very impressed with Todd. They said they are prompt in returning calls and keep great communication going which was pointed out that is not the norm in this industry. They have good and experienced people working for them which is not always easy to find. They give a schedule for projects and they keep to it. They don't change the rules after you start a project like some inspectors do. They always know their stance on things because they abide by the building code. They are always up front about their expectations and bring things to the customer when they may become controversial. High recommendations for the company and the people that work there.
2. Rum River Consultants – Two references were called and two contractor references responded. Both said they were an excellent company to work with. They had them on some larger projects with several different inspections and they were very good to work with through the entire project. They met with them every day regarding the project until its completion. Andy is good to work with and is great working with builders.
3. Mid- MN Inspections – Three contractor references were called and three responded. Both of the references could not say enough about Tad. He is the best to work with and had worked with him for 23 years. He has worked in the field with contractors and works well with them. He is very knowledgeable and is flexible to make inspections work when needed. He is very knowledgeable about the code and will investigate various codes if questions come up where there may be a dispute to ensure the proper code is followed.

4. MNSPECT – Four contractor references were called and one responded. They have worked with MNSPECT on a couple different jobs and they were overall very good to work with. They plan ahead with the contractors on projects to make sure things stay on track. The office staff was prompt in getting back to them. They know what they doing, they know code well, and they know what to look for which makes them not “easy” but also not “lax” as some companies are. Inspectors in the field were great with work with.

Recommendation:

Metro West is, from a fiscal standpoint, the wisest choice. However, cost is not the only factor to consider when choosing a service provider. Metro West has been providing services for City residents for many years and has had an opportunity to build relationships with residents and contractors alike; all of the references were very favorable. Mr. Geske indicated that a change in inspectors would be granted if requested.

On the other hand, as discussed, sometimes it costs more to get what you are looking for. One reference stood out to Staff when they said the inspectors are not “easy” because they know what they are doing and know code well. They do not let things slide because of this mentality but then you always know the job is done correctly and to code which is ultimately the goal. However, all three of the companies are almost double what Metro West is proposing for cost.