

City of Greater Sudbury Contract for CCTV Camera Systems

Summary

The City of Greater Sudbury established a contract in 2013 for the installation and ongoing maintenance of Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras across the City with i-Vision Systems (Vendor). The operation of these cameras is governed by City of Greater Sudbury By-law. The City standardized on one system for CCTV installations to assure efficient, cost-effective and controlled management of camera systems. The Greater Sudbury Police Services and the Greater Sudbury Airport subsequently also purchased under this contract.

This report will summarize the current service provided and make a recommendation to negotiate updated unit pricing for a single source contract for the purchase and service of CCTV camera systems with the current Vendor.

Background

In 2013, the City of Greater Sudbury established a policy regarding video surveillance cameras (By-law 2013-128) and standardized on one system and vendor for those systems. In accordance with the Video Camera Policy (By-Law 2013-128), camera systems are to be standardized and all cameras will be part of a centralized system. This assists with corporate security initiatives and ensures the management and maintenance of detailed logs of access, retention and disposal as required to meet requirements under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, other applicable legislation and the policy.

The City of Greater Sudbury currently uses video systems to protect the safety of CGS employees and the public; to protect facilities, equipment and assets; to deter, detect and or investigate incidents; and to meet specific operational needs, as for example the remote verification of an individual request to access a secure area. These cameras are used in several buildings and facilities, as varied as libraries, arenas, public works depots and Tom Davies Square. Camera installations are planned in other municipal venues based on security reviews of those specific buildings. For example, Sudbury Housing Operations is planning to replace and expand their camera system across 20 properties over the next 4 years. The City of Greater Sudbury and the Greater Sudbury Police Services selected i-Vision Systems to provide a centralized and standardized CCTV system. The City of Greater Sudbury operates 436 cameras, Greater Sudbury Police Services operates 163 cameras, and Greater Sudbury Airport now has 58 CCTV cameras in this system.

The service and support from the Vendor has been excellent and the Vendor also receives an excellent recommendation from the software manufacturer. The ability to have one vendor provide equipment, installation and support for the CCTV camera system affords the City a cost effective and efficient solution.

The current Vendor provides the following:

- Maintains inventory on-site. The City does not have to keep a stock of cameras or manage inventory for orders of new cameras.
- Deals with warranty issues. If a warranty issue occurs during or after installation, the current provider will diagnose and replace equipment and manage the warranty for the defective equipment.
- Resolves issues related to hardware and software configuration. If there is any issue with the camera, the vendor can diagnose the entire system from software to camera to assure the system is up and running as quickly as possible.
- Is based in Sudbury and maintains a good response time to address service requests, support issues and this includes onsite service when needed.

The original contract with the Vendor is up for renewal and City staff considered options for the next period. Staff agree that staying with the Vendor will provide the most efficient and cost-effective solution for the next contract renewal.

Other alternatives considered included:

1. Select a new provider. This would require purchasing new software and it is possible that some of the camera hardware would have to be replaced as well. Purchasing a new system would require all new software licenses for the cameras compared to keeping the licenses we own with the current system. The staff time to replace and reconfigure a new system and retrain staff would be a time-consuming project. The combination of the one-time cost of new software licenses, adding new hardware, plus the staff effort to make the change would erase any possible ongoing cost savings from a new system.
2. Split the procurement. Keep the current Vendor to provide software licensing, network video hardware and applicable support and source the camera hardware from a different supplier. To date, we have not found more competitive pricing for camera hardware from other sources. Splitting the procurement would increase the service costs by requiring two vendors to be involved in the install and configuration of new equipment. The cost of support issues would also increase when troubleshooting equipment and software related issues. Currently, the Vendor manages orders, installations, warranty issues and service issues with little involvement from City staff.

During installation or an outage, having one vendor manage the entire supply, installation and support will continue to provide cost efficiencies and assure the system is serviced as quickly as possible in a 24/7 environment.

The City of Greater Sudbury spent \$250,000 on CCTV equipment, service and support in 2019. The spending will increase with some of the planned legacy replacements and improvements currently under consideration.

Recommendation

Because of the existing investment, the most cost-efficient option is to stay with a single authorized vendor to provide CCTV camera systems and support. Since there is no other established company that currently meets reasonable response times, it is our recommendation that Council authorize City staff to negotiate a Standing Offer Contract with i-Vision Systems for the provision of installation and servicing of CCTV camera systems and software for a Contract Term of five years.