

TORONTO AND REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Request for Information for Wedding, Corporate Meeting and Special Event Services

Date Issued: October 25, 2024

Submission Deadline: 11:59 p.m. (EST) on November 15, 2024

**Contact: Adrian O'Driscoll
Email: adrian.odriscoll@trca.ca**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 About TRCA

The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (“**TRCA**”) is a corporate body whose objectives and powers under the *Conservation Authorities Act* enable TRCA to create and administer its policies and programs. Under the *Canadian Income Tax Act*, TRCA is registered as a charitable organization. TRCA is also a not-for-profit organization, governed by a Board of Directors comprised of members appointed by local municipalities and the majority of representatives are elected municipal officials.

1.2 The Venues

- (a) The TRCA owns and operates two historic venues:
 - (i) Kortright Centre for Conservation, located at 9550 Pine Valley Drive, Woodbridge ON, L4L 1A6 (“**Kortright**”); and
 - (ii) Black Creek Pioneer Village (renamed “The Village at Black Creek” in September 2024) located at 1000 Murray Ross Parkway, North York ON, M3J 2P3 (“**Black Creek**”).
- (b) Both Kortright and Black Creek (collectively, the “**Venues**”) are highly attractive venues for weddings, private events, and corporate meetings and have a history of offering high-quality end-to-end services for events. Traditionally, events at Kortright have accommodated groups of up to 150 people and events at Black Creek have accommodated larger groups of over 200 people.
- (c) Both Kortright and Black Creek have food serving areas located adjacent or proximate to key events spaces. However, food preparation facilities are not available.

2. RFI PROCESS

2.1 Notice to Respondents

- (a) This Request for Information, including any and all attachments and amendments (this “**RFI**”) is issued for the purpose of obtaining information (each, a “**Response**”) from interested vendors (the “**Respondents**”) for the provision of wedding, corporate meeting, private event planning, catering, and special event services at both Venues, as described in in this RFI and Annex “A” (collectively, the “**Services**”).
- (b) The purpose of this RFI is to obtain industry feedback, information, and comments by virtue of Responses and to enhance TRCA’s understanding of the extent of service offerings available from professional event service providers.
- (c) Responses to this RFI will also be used to inform and develop TRCA’s Request for Proposals (the “**RFP**”) for the provision of the Services at the Venues. The purpose of the RFP will be to establish a roster of pre-approved vendors that will be available for selection by prospective event hosts at the Venues.
- (d) TRCA does not intend, and this RFI shall not, nor shall it be interpreted, to create any contractual relations or obligations, including “Contract A”, with any Respondent or any other person or entity, and none will be created as a result of the issuance of this RFI or TRCA’s receipt, review, or consideration of any Response. No Respondent will acquire

any legal or equitable rights or privileges against TRCA, and TRCA shall not be obligated in any manner whatsoever to any respondent as a result of this RFI process.

2.2 RFI Timetable

- (a) The following is a summary of the key dates in this RFI process:

Event	Deadline
RFI issue date	October 25, 2024
Deadline for Respondent questions	4:00 p.m. (EST) on November 8, 2024
Deadline for submission of Responses (the " Submission Deadline ")	11:59 p.m. (EST) on November 15, 2024

- (b) TRCA may amend any deadline, including the Submission Deadline, without liability, cost, or penalty, at any time and within its sole discretion. In the event TRCA amends any such deadline, TRCA will notify the Respondents by written addenda.

2.3 RFI Contact

- (a) All communications regarding any aspect of this RFI must be directed to the RFI contact noted below (the "**RFI Contact**"). The RFI Contact for this RFI is:

Name: Adrian O'Driscoll
Title: Senior Manager, Community Outreach & Education
Email: adrian.odriscoll@trca.ca

- (b) Respondents, including their employees, agents, or other representatives, are not permitted to communicate with or otherwise contact any employees, officers, directors, members, agents, appointed officials, or other representatives of TRCA, other than the RFI Contact, concerning matters regarding this RFI. The Respondent's failure to comply with this section may result in the rejection of the Respondent's Response.

2.4 Questions

- (a) Respondents may submit questions regarding this RFI to the RFI Contact. The deadline for submission of questions is 4:00 p.m. (EST) on November 8, 2024.
- (b) As this is not a bid solicitation, TRCA will not necessarily respond to any or all questions or circulate answers to Respondents. Any answers/responses to questions posed by Respondents may be shared, in TRCA's sole discretion, with all Respondents.

3. **INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS**

3.1 RFI Responses

- (a) Through this RFI, TRCA is asking Respondents to consider the following in their Response:
- (i) assess, comment, and offer suggestions on the adequacy and clarity of the Services and proposed event services model set out in Annex "A";
 - (ii) offer suggestions regarding potential alternative solutions that would meet the requirements set out in Annex "A"; and

- (iii) comment on how the Respondent would staff or access the number of necessary qualified personnel to perform the Services.

In their Response, Respondents must also provide the following information:

- (iv) brief company profile; and
- (v) name of a key contact person, including telephone number and email address.

3.2 RFI Submission Instructions

- (a) Responses must be submitted by the Submission Deadline to Adrian O’Driscoll by email to adrian.odriscoll@trca.ca .
- (b) Responses should include comments to all items requested in Section 3.1 (RFI Responses) of this RFI. Respondents should not assume that TRCA has any knowledge of the Respondent or of its expertise, experience, or services and should ensure that all required information is submitted as part of its Response.
- (c) Respondents are specifically directed **not** to provide detailed prices or rates in their Response.
- (d) Responses are to be submitted in English.
- (e) Responses must be in either Microsoft Word or PDF format.
- (f) Respondents should, whenever possible, limit the amount of marketing or promotional materials that are included in their Response.

3.3 Confidentiality

- (a) The Respondent shall clearly mark "CONFIDENTIAL" on all information regarding the items and conditions or financial and/or technical aspects of their Response, which in the Respondent's opinion are of a proprietary or confidential nature at the relevant item or page.
- (b) TRCA shall use all reasonable efforts to hold all information marked "CONFIDENTIAL" by the Respondent in strict confidence but shall not be liable for any inadvertent disclosure or for any disclosure required by applicable privacy laws and any other laws that apply.

3.4 Next Steps

- (a) Responses will not be formally evaluated. The Responses received may be used by TRCA to develop or modify procurement strategies for the RFP in the sole discretion of TRCA.
- (b) Respondents acknowledge and agree that TRCA is not restricted from using any ideas, concepts, approaches, strategies, or recommendations included in any Response to this RFI. Respondents also acknowledge and agree that TRCA is not restricted from using, disclosing, or discussing anything submitted in a Response to this RFI.
- (c) TRCA will not return, and may destroy, any Responses or any accompanying documentation submitted by a Respondent.

4. RFI TERMS AND CONDITIONS

4.1 Respondents' Responsibilities

- (a) Each Respondent is solely responsible, at its own cost and expense, to perform its own independent research and due diligence, including any investigations considered necessary by the Respondent, to satisfy itself as to matters related to this RFI. The Respondents' obligations set out in this section apply irrespective of the information contained in this RFI or that is provided to or made available to the Respondents.
- (b) TRCA is not responsible for, and Respondents shall bear all costs and expenses incurred by them in any way related to, any aspect of their participation or intended participation or involvement in this RFI including, without limitation, all costs and expenses related to a Respondent's:
 - (i) due diligence, investigations, and information gathering processes;
 - (ii) review and/or consideration of this RFI, preparation and submission of any Respondent questions, and review of TRCA's responses thereto (if any); and/or
 - (iii) preparation and delivery of a Response, and response to any request for clarification of any information or material submitted or any request for additional information to be submitted, by a Respondent (each, a "**Request for Additional Information**").

4.2 Reserved Rights

- (a) In addition to any other rights of TRCA, TRCA may exercise any or all of the options described in this section. TRCA shall not be liable to Respondents in any way as a result of this RFI, nor shall TRCA be liable to Respondents for any costs, expenses, damages or losses incurred or claimed by a Respondent resulting from TRCA's exercise of any of its options herein.
- (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this RFI, TRCA:
 - (i) shall not be obligated to create a short-list of potential vendors for the purposes of undertaking any future work as a result of this RFI;
 - (ii) shall not be bound by any statement contained in this RFI, and reserves the right to change, at any time, any or all Response requirements, as it deems necessary;
 - (iii) reserves the right to revise its procurement approach, as it considers appropriate, either on the basis of information submitted in a Response, or for any other reason it deems appropriate;
 - (iv) may request re-submission of all or a part of a particular Response, from one or more Respondents, and may reject or not consider any such re-submission;
 - (v) may cancel this RFI;
 - (vi) may, in its sole discretion, not review a Response; and/or
 - (vii) may make changes, including substantial changes, to this RFI provided that those changes are issued by way of addenda.

4.3 No Liability

- (a) By submitting a Response, each Respondent acknowledges that TRCA:
 - (i) shall not accept or assume any responsibility for any interpretations or conclusions that Respondents may make or draw from this RFI;
 - (ii) shall not represent, warrant or guarantee that the RFI documents are complete, accurate, comprehensive or exhaustive; and
 - (iii) shall not assume any responsibility for the completeness or accuracy of this RFI or anything else provided or made available to Respondents during this RFI process.

ANNEX “A”

PROPOSED MODEL AND LIST OF SERVICES

1. Overview

In engaging the services of vendors of record for planning and delivery of Services for weddings and private or corporate events, TRCA wishes to ensure that all Services are provided in a manner consistent with first-class event operations.

Qualified vendors will provide high quality wedding, corporate, and private event Services at both Venues. This includes planning, execution, and catering for weddings and private events, corporate events and meetings, and end-to-end food service and delivery for selected special events at the facilities (e.g., Mother’s Day Brunch and premium holiday programs). Every effort will be made to work collaboratively and share spaces to benefit clients, vendors, and TRCA.

TRCA envisions providing clients with an array of options that include environmentally sustainable events, opportunities to support equity-deserving individuals with skills training at their events, and events that cater to their cultural or faith-based needs. TRCA is seeking vendors that share its commitment to environmental sustainability, social enterprise, and diversity.

2. Proposed Services

Successful vendors will have a proven track record and history of providing end-to-end services within this sector and possess a strong ecosystem of supporting suppliers for Services, which may include but are not limited to:

- (a) catering, including but not limited to menu planning, meal preparation, and service along with supply of all inventory, beverages, food, supplies, and other services required to cater events;
- (b) entertainment, including but not limited to DJ, stage, dance floor, audio visual equipment, and specialized lighting;
- (c) table settings;
- (d) photography;
- (e) event planning, set-up, delivery, and clean-up; and
- (f) add-ons and detailing for reception such as chairs, cruiser tables, decor, centre pieces, bar, chair coverings, etc.

3. Proposed Event Services Model

The proposed event services model is set out as follows:

- (a) Through the RFP process, TRCA intends to establish a roster of pre-approved vendors to provide event Services at the Venues. TRCA will enter into master services agreements with each pre-approved vendor, which will contain certain terms and conditions on the use of the Venues, among other terms. The initial term of this arrangement will be for three (3) years, with an optional extension term exercisable at TRCA’s sole discretion.
- (b) When a client host is interested in hosting an event at one of the Venues, TRCA will book directly with the client host and will invoice them for the Venue room rentals.

- (c) Client hosts will then be able to select a vendor from the pre-approved list of vendors to cater and plan their event. The selected vendor will enter into direct negotiations with the client host and will use their own form of agreement, which shall be in accordance with the terms and conditions for use of the Venues as established by TRCA through the master services agreement.
- (d) The selected vendor will work directly with the client host to plan and execute the event. In every instance, the selected vendor will work collaboratively with TRCA in utilizing the facilities and grounds.
- (e) The selected vendor will collect payment directly from the client host. The selected vendor will also pay to TRCA a “landmark fee” for each event hosted at a Venue.

This event services model is not an exclusive arrangement; vendors may coordinate events for other third-parties at other locations during the arrangement term. Similarly, TRCA may organize its own programs, festivals, and events at the Venue using other third-party operators.

4. Vendor Responsibilities

Vendors pre-approved on TRCA’s roster will have defined responsibilities, which may include but are not limited to the following:

(a) Management and Staff

- Manage services for booked events in an efficient and professional manner consistent with first-class operations.
- Provide qualified and experienced on-site management with authority to direct the business for each booked event.
- Provide sufficient qualified and trained on-site staff, including security for events as needed, to ensure a high level of patron satisfaction.
- Provide required insurance and WSIB coverage.
- Ensure that all employees wear clean uniforms that have been approved in advance by TRCA and, where applicable, wear all required personal protective equipment.
- Ensure that all employees comply with TRCA policies, procedures, and applicable industry regulations and laws. Ensure that all applicable employees attend required TRCA training sessions and comply with TRCA policies and procedures.
- Manage all issues pertaining to its employees, contractors or subcontractors.
- Cooperate with TRCA management and staff and attend all relevant management meetings.

(b) Services

- Deliver end-to-end social, corporate meeting, private and special event reception planning, and catering services for booked events.
- Accommodate various dietary requests. This should include but not be limited to cultural requests (e.g., kosher, halal, etc.) and dietary requests (e.g., vegetarian, gluten-free, etc.). Please note that all food is to be prepared off-site and delivered, plated, and served on location.
- Provide service to the standards accepted by TRCA.
- Obtain and maintain required licenses (e.g., liquor license) as required.
- Ensure adequate and required training for employees related to the service and sale of alcohol. Abide by and be fully responsible for all terms and conditions associated with all licenses.

- Provide computer systems necessary to effectively manage the business.
- Work with TRCA to coordinate use of facility and grounds.
- Maintain sufficient inventory of food, beverages, and supplies for weddings and private events.
- Ensure that all food used on the premises is “Canada Grade/Number 1” quality or equivalent.
- Work with TRCA to promote and market the services with the goal of increasing client uptake and revenues.
- Manage, remedy, and provide compensation to clients stemming from issues connected to the responsibilities of the Vendor.

(c) Property

- Keep in good working order any equipment that TRCA provides for use during the arrangement term.
- Report any damage to TRCA facilities, grounds, or equipment if caused by the vendor’s staff. Vendor is responsible for any and all damage caused by or due to vendor’s staff and/or subcontracted staff.
- Remove garbage, recycling, and compost immediately following weddings or private events to the area(s) specified by TRCA.
- Clean event spaces at the conclusion of the event and leave any rooms in a neat and tidy condition.
- Comply with TRCA’s policies regarding security, waste removal, and pest control.
- Maintain sufficient staffing levels to ensure responsible oversight of property.