



January 21, 2025

Mayor Mark Sutcliffe  
City of Ottawa

*Via email: Mark.Sutcliffe@ottawa.ca*

Dear Mr. Mayor,

***RE: Design and Construction of Newcomer Reception Centre, 1645 Woodroffe Ave***

The Ottawa Construction Association (OCA) and the General Contractors Association of Ottawa (GCAO) were recently made aware of the City's decision to sole-source the design and construction of a 'sprung structure' needed to house the above-mentioned new facility, pending the results of the Advanced Contract Award Notice (ACAN) process closing January 28, 2025.

The ACAN outlines that the City proposes to award the project, valued at approximately \$15 million, to a Toronto-based contractor, BLT Construction Services (BLTCS), based on a market assessment that determined that no local contractors are capable of designing and supplying a pre-engineered structure on a condensed or 'fast-track' basis. The proposed structure will serve an important community use as the home of the City's Newcomer Reception Centre, potentially the first of two such facilities.

As regular collaborators with the City of Ottawa, the OCA and GCAO are dismayed that the City staff never reached out to the industry in the past year to ask for our input.

In fact, the reaction of many of our members is that it is profoundly insulting to the abilities of the local industry that the City has relied on a consultant's market assessment that concludes that there are no local contractors capable of designing and building the proposed sprung structure. We are advised by the City's Chief Procurement Manager that the market assessment is not publicly available and we therefore request that it be released immediately in the interests of transparency.

Our membership understands that the goal of the ACAN release to the marketplace is to hear from other general contractors whether there are alternative options available before signing a \$15 million contract with BLT Construction. The reality however is that, firstly, the two-week allotted response period is totally inadequate for bidders to assemble serious proposals and, secondly, that local 'bidders' understand that internally, City staff have already declared their chosen path with a sprung structure by BLTCS.

As a result, the OCA and GCAO believe that the only reasonable remedy to this unfortunate situation is for the City to reboot the procurement process entirely by cancelling the ACAN and putting out a request for proposals (RFP) to the local construction industry.

Yours truly,

Mr. C.A. Markell, P.Eng., P.GSC  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Tendering Practices  
General Contractors Association of Ottawa  
cmarkell@gcaottawa.com

Mr. Hubie Splinter  
Ottawa Construction Association Chairman  
President, Graebeck Construction  
hubie@graebeck.com



c: Councillor Matt Luloff, *Matt.Luloff@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Laura Dudas, *Laura.Dudas@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor David Hill, *David.Hill@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Cathy Curry, *Cathy.Curry@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Clarke Kelly, *Clarke.Kelly@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Glen Gower, *Glen.Gower@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Theresa Kavanagh, *BayWard@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Laine Johnson, *Collegeward@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Sean Devine, *knoxdalemerivale@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Jessica Bradley, *Jessica.Bradley@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Tim Tierney, *Tim.Tierney@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Stephanie Plante, *Stephanie.Plante@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Rawlson King, *rideaurockcliffeward@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Ariel Troster, *Ariel.Troster@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Jeff Leiper, *Jeff.Leiper@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Riley Brockington, *Riley.Brockington@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Shawn Menard, *capitalward@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Marty Carr, *Marty.Carr@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Catherine Kitts, *Catherine.Kitts@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor George Darouze, *George.Darouze@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor David Brown, *Ward21@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Steve Desroches, *Steve.Desroches@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Allan Hubley, *Allan.Hubley@ottawa.ca*  
Councillor Wilson Lo, *Wilson.Lo@ottawa.ca*  
Chief Procurement Officer Joanne H. Graham, *joanneh.graham@ottawa.ca*

*N.B.: Please reply including GCAO Executive Director Richard Moore (rmoore@gcaottawa.com) and OCA President & GM John DeVries (jdv@oca.ca).*