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## Strata Living

Headline: Are 3 bids required? The scope of work

Topics: Repair & Maintenance; quotes; scope of work

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**Dear Tony:** Does a strata corporation have to get 3 bids when a contract is over \$100,000? Our strata defeated a resolution last night for a roofing repair of \$189,000 because the strata did not get more than 1 bid, and the contractor who is bidding on the project has a very poor rating with the Better Business Bureau. As a community of 148 units everyone has an opinion on everything, and few owners are experienced with contracting, negotiating pricing and managing major construction. Is there an easier method to get through major construction without creating a disaster in our strata?

*Colin W. Coquitlam*

**Dear Colin:** There is no requirement in the *Strata Property Act* for multiple bids or specific conditions on how strata corporations purchase services or products. That is determined in the resolutions approved by the owners at general meetings, and in the bylaws of the strata. Start from the common objectives. Every consumer ultimately wants the same thing. Maintain our buildings, and have construction done for the best price and for the best comparable quality. No one wants a construction disaster that ends up in uncontrollable cost over runs, construction delays, or worse yet, a project that has to be redone 5 years later, when it should have lasted 25 years.

Like any project, accurate pricing can only be obtained when everyone knows the details of what they are bidding on. This is known as the scope of work. The scope of work is often created by an independent consultant, technician or engineer who sets out the details of construction and the terms and conditions of the contract. You don't have to go to multiple bids to get a good price for reasonable work, but if you don't set a scope of work that clearly defines the construction and the conditions of the contract, you will surrender

control and cost of the project ultimately to your contractors. Your strata may very well have a preferred contractor that will do a great job, and the best method to accomplishing that is to put everything in writing. When a scope of work is created, it may also include contingencies for unknown conditions, such as damage to roof decks or rotted wood products. The Roofing Contractors Association of BC provide excellent technical guidelines for roofing conditions and a roster of certified roofing inspectors who set scope of work and technical information for strata corporations to tender or negotiate pricing with contractors. As a consumer I always want to know that I am getting what I paid for, the only way I do that is by describing what I want: the scope of work.