

**Ottawa firm wins contract to map Sask.**

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Byline: **Stefan Schussler**

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The provincial government awarded a \$3-million contract to OSI Geospatial, the Ottawa-based company announced Wednesday.

There are few available details on the deal, however the request for proposal came through the Saskatchewan Research Council (SRC).

Under the terms of the contract, OSI Geospatial's mapping operations will provide digital mapping products and services over three years.

Since the contract has not been finalized, officials at the OSI Geospatial would not comment on the deal. However, officials with the company did indicate that it was a very exciting proposal.

Officials with the SRC would not comment on the deal.

The services that OSI Geospatial will be providing to the government are for a new program being managed by SRC, called the Geospatial Imagery Collaborative.

Richard Murray, executive director of policy and planning at the Information Technology Office (ITO), said that the collaborative is a project involving 22 ministries, including ITO, and is being managed by SRC.

Murray would not provide further detail citing the fact that the deal has not been finalized.

The tender says the purpose of the request for proposal is "to solicit pricing proposals from qualified suppliers to provide digital ortho photography coverage for Saskatchewan."

Orthophotography combines the characteristics of an aerial photograph with the geometric quality of maps. Distortions due to relief displacement and camera lens positions are removed so that all ground features are shown in their proper positions. Direct measurement of distance, angles, and ground features -- often omitted from common maps -- is possible with an orthophotographic image.

The data these images supply has many uses for governments and private companies, providing information for urban planning, soil sciences, geology, agriculture, and so on.

Jayne Hayword, a spokeswoman at OSI Geospatial, said the contract should be finalized within a few weeks.