

Turning Fleet Disposal into Higher Returns: City of Grande Prairie Reconsiders Trade-Ins



Background

The City of Grande Prairie manages a diverse municipal fleet that includes light-duty vehicles, heavy equipment, and specialty assets. As part of its regular replacement cycle, the City historically relied on vendor trade-in programs for specific equipment types, primarily heavy equipment, where trade-ins were operationally practical.

While trade-ins offered convenience in those limited cases, procurement staff recognized that trade-in values were typically based on wholesale pricing and often did not reflect the true market value of surplus assets. The City began exploring alternative disposal methods that could deliver stronger financial returns while maintaining transparency, compliance, and operational efficiency.

Challenge

Like many municipalities, the City faced common challenges when evaluating options beyond traditional trade-ins:

- Trade-in values were consistently lower than the expected open-market value
- Private sales required significant staff time for advertising, buyer inquiries, and transaction management
- Limited buyer exposure reduced competition and price discovery.

In addition, the City wanted a disposal approach that promoted fairness and open access for members of the public who may wish to purchase surplus municipal assets, while remaining compliant with procurement policies and minimizing administrative risk.

The City needed a low-risk, transparent process aligned with public-sector procurement standards that could maximize asset value without increasing staff workload.

“Trade-ins are convenient, but once we started comparing the numbers, it became clear we were not capturing full value,” said Jason Graves, Senior Buyer, Supply Chain Management and Procurement for the City of Grande Prairie. “GovDeals gave us access to a much larger buyer pool and a transparent process that consistently delivered stronger results, while also ensuring fairness for the public.”

Solution

To address these challenges, the City of Grande Prairie transitioned from vendor trade-ins to selling surplus vehicles and equipment through GovDeals' online auction platform.

Selling assets via auction expanded exposure to a broad, qualified buyer base and promoted fairness by allowing any interested party to participate in an open, competitive bidding process. Listings included detailed descriptions, photos, service histories, and clear bidding requirements, supporting informed purchasing decisions and transparent price discovery.

GovDeals managed bidder registration, payments, and buyer communication, allowing City staff to remain focused on core operations while maintaining oversight and compliance.

Results

By comparing trade-in offers with auction outcomes, the City of Grande Prairie made immediate and measurable improvements:

- Sale proceeds exceeded traditional trade-in values by more than 25 percent on comparable assets
- Increased bidder participation, including buyers outside the local market, driving stronger competition and pricing
- Predictable sale timelines aligned with fleet replacement schedules
- Reduced administrative effort through a streamlined and standardized disposal process.

The additional revenue generated through GovDeals created opportunities to reinvest in municipal priorities and strengthened overall asset stewardship. The platform has become a reliable component of the City's surplus strategy, offering flexibility, transparency, and improved financial outcomes without added complexity.

Why It Matters

The City of Grande Prairie's experience demonstrates how municipalities can move beyond limited trade-in programs and unlock greater value from surplus fleet assets. By leveraging an online auction platform, the City increased transparency, expanded buyer reach, promoted fairness to the public, and achieved stronger financial results without increasing staff workload.

If your agency is interested in learning how GovDeals can help turn fleet disposal into higher returns, you can [learn more here](#) or [sign up to start selling today](#).

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