How to Do Business with the city of Aurora

City of Aurora Finance Department in collaboration with the Office of International and Immigrant Affairs and Small Business Development Center (SBDC)
Virtual attendees do not have the ability to speak during the presentation. If you have a question to ask during the Question-and-Answer session at the end of the seminar, click on the icon below to raise your hand.
Preliminary Matters

This will cause a raised hand icon to appear next to your name in the meeting screen to signal to the presenter that you have a question to ask.

You will be called upon to ask your question. At this time, you will be given the ability to speak to the meeting. Ask your question and any follow-up questions at this time. Once your turn is over, please click on the hand icon at the top of the screen once again to remove the hand icon next to your name.
Questions may be submitted by chat at any time during the presentation. They will be answered at the end of the meeting during the Q&A session. To ask a question using the Chat function, click on the Chat icon at the top of the screen at any time.
Preliminary Matters

Spanish interpretation is available for the in-person session

- If you need interpretation, please go to the sign-in table to get a headset.
  - Si necesita interpretación, diríjase a la mesa de registro para obtener un equipo.
- Please speak slowly when asking questions to allow time for interpretation.
- For questions not addressed in the seminar, please call 720.372.3792 (Spanish).
- A video tutorial of BidNet in Spanish will be available at AuroraGov.org/Purchasing in mid-July.
Overview of Purchasing

• Purchasing Services is responsible for awarding contracts to commercial sources for goods, services and construction needs of the city of Aurora.

• Purchasing Services is staffed by eight (8) full-time Procurement Agents (two are also Procurement Supervisors) and the Purchasing Manager.

• Names and contact information for staff may be found at AuroraGov.org by selecting Bids, Proposals and Purchasing Services.
Categories of Purchases

Purchases are made in the following categories:

• Commodity purchases, which are the exclusive purchase of end items like vehicles, computers, fuel etc.

• If the purchase involves a consumable resource, it falls within the commodity category.

• Regular services such as custodial, mowing, weed control, pest control, operating and maintenance, etc.
Categories of Purchases (cont’d)

• Professional services such as consulting and architectural and engineering services.
• Construction contracting, which involves all contracting that directly affects real property, from construction of a new building to the repair of city streets, etc.
Dollar Thresholds

• Procurement cards are used for purchases under $5,000. The Finance Department administers the city’s Procurement Card Program.
Dollar Thresholds (cont’d)

• Departments are authorized to conduct informal solicitation procedures for requirements of $25,000 to $49,999.

I. Results are sent to Purchasing for review and issuance of a purchase order.

II. Interested businesses should contact departments directly if they are interested in smaller requirements (less than $50,000).

III. Purchasing staff can assist in identifying appropriate department contacts.
Dollar Thresholds (cont’d)

• Formal written solicitation processes are required to be conducted by Purchasing for procurements of $50,000 or more.
Dollar Thresholds (cont’d)

• The city posts its solicitations for procurements of goods and services of $50,000 or more on the Rocky Mountain E-Purchasing System (BidNet), which can be found at the following link BidNetDirect.com/Colorado.
Dollar Thresholds (cont’d)

• Businesses must register on BidNet in order to access the solicitations.

• A registration tutorial is available from the following sources:
  I. A hard copy will be given out at this seminar.
  II. Purchasing page on the city’s website at the following link: AuroraGov.org. Select Bids, Proposals and Purchasing Services. BidNet may also provide assistance by emailing e-procurementsupport@bidnet.com or calling 1.800.835.4603
Procurement Methods

• The solicitation document will provide specific details regarding the requirement, the procurement method, how to respond to the solicitation and the process for selecting the successful business.

• The city uses two procurement methods for solicitations, Invitations for Bids and Requests for Proposal. Both are found on BidNet.
Procurement Methods (cont’d)

• Invitation for Bids (IFB)

I. The award is made to the lowest responsive bidder.

II. Bidders may be pre-qualified and then the award made to the lowest responsive pre-qualified bidder.
Requests for Proposal (RFPs)

I. Awards are made based on “best value.”

II. Best value is determined by the evaluation of proposals based on criteria established in the RFP document. Price is just one evaluation consideration, weighed along with technical considerations.
Procurement Methods (cont’d)

• An example of best value criteria is as follows:

I. Firm’s background, experience and understanding of the scope of services, including past record of performance, and capacity to provide necessary resources

II. Experience of key proposed staff

III. Approach, methodology and schedule

IV. Price
Pre-proposal Conferences

- Pre-proposal Conferences are conducted for each solicitation and businesses are strongly encouraged to attend. The purposes of the Pre-proposal Conference are:
  I. Interpretation of the solicitation document, including scope of services, service agreement, if applicable and other technical and contractual matters
  II. Meet city staff
  III. Get a better understanding of the requirement
  IV. Ask questions
  V. Identify prime contractors for potential subcontracting opportunities.
Submission of Bids and Proposals

• Bids or proposals submitted in response to a solicitation must be submitted electronically through BidNet.
• Instructions are included in the tutorial noted above.
• BidNet may also provide assistance by emailing e-procurementsupport@bidnet.com or calling 1.800.835.4603
A Service Agreement may be included in the solicitation and the successful firm will be required to sign it prior to beginning services. The agreement should be reviewed and understood prior to responding to the solicitation. Depending on the requirement, the following types of agreement may be used:

I. Regular Service Agreement
II. Professional Services Agreement
III. Professional Design Services Agreement
IV. Construction Agreement
Insurance and Bonding Requirements

• Insurance requirements are included in the solicitation document and should be reviewed and understood prior to responding to the solicitation.

• Bonding requirements for construction projects of $50,000 or more are as follows:
  I. Bid Bond in the amount of 5% of the contractor’s bid amount
  II. Performance Bond for the entire amount of the contract
  III. Payment Bond for the entire amount of the contract
Cooperative Purchases

• City code allows for cooperative purchasing with any agency/organization that allows for it. This allows purchasing to use their competitive process in lieu of our own.

• The city may purchase off state agreements, other city and county contracts, regional and national cooperatives, etc.
Small Business Enterprise Program

• The city does have a Small Business Enterprise Program to encourage large businesses to contract with small businesses.

• The Program is designed as an outreach rather than a compliance-driven program.

• It encourages indirect awards with small businesses as subcontractors.
Small Business Enterprise Program (cont’d)

• The city asks large businesses who are awarded service and construction contracts of $250,000 or more to make a good faith effort to award 10% of anticipated subcontracting dollars to small businesses.

• The small businesses can self-certify as to their business state. The city does not have a certification program and no other certification is required.
Small Business Enterprise Program
(cont’d)

• Self-certification
  I. A form is completed and signed by the subcontractor claiming small business status.

  II. For purposes of the city’s program, SBEs are defined as a small business if they meet 50% of the Small Business Administration’s size standard that applies to the appropriate North American Industry Classification (NAICS) code for the scope being procured.

• It is important to note this program is not monitored and data associated with the program is not collected.
Disparity Study

- The city underwent a Disparity Study in the fall of 2023.
  - The city had not conducted a disparity study until this time.
- A disparity study is a statistical analysis of the availability and utilization of Minority/Women/Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (M/W/DBE) in contracting and purchasing.
- The study found that there are general perceptions that disparities exist, but it did not present in-depth data gathering and analysis to support those perceptions. The main takeaway is that the city lacked adequate outreach efforts to those firms who are interested in doing business with the city.
Disparity Study (cont’d)

- Purchasing staff will continue to build upon their outreach and education efforts to make sure businesses understand how the city’s procurement process works and how to engage if they are interested in city opportunities.

- Quarterly seminars are being held to provide information to interested firms on how to do business with the city.

- In addition, the city will be hosting an annual Contractor Business Opportunity Fair where businesses can learn more about upcoming opportunities from departments such as Public Works, Parks Recreation and Open Space (PROS) and Aurora Water.
  - The first fair is scheduled for Thursday, October 17, 2024.
City Council Reporting Requirements

- City Council reporting requirements are as follows:
  I. Awards of $50,000 or more are reported on Purchasing’s Weekly Report to council.
  II. Purchasing’s Weekly Report (contracts pending approval) can be found at AuroraGov.org by selecting “Council Meetings.”
  III. Contracts pending approval can be found at the end of this page.
  IV. The report is updated every week.
  V. Pending awards stay on the report for one week before purchasing proceeds with the award unless a council member calls the award to a formal meeting.
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More to Come

• Purchasing’s webpage can be found at AuroraGov.org/Purchasing

• Additional resources will be posted to this page including video tutorials on how to navigate BidNet as well as a Purchasing 101 video tutorial.
  • The target date for these postings is mid-July 2024.

• A copy of this presentation on How to Do Business with the city of Aurora is currently available on this page.
Questions?