How to Participate in the Pima County Procurement Process

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The Pima County Procurement Department's mission is to conserve public funds and conduct all procurement processes in a fair, open and competitive manner.

Forward

The purpose of this document is to provide Vendors with a basic understanding of Pima County's Procurement process, general requirements and sources of information that might be useful in preparing a bid or proposal for Pima County. If you have any questions not answered here, please contact our office at (520) 724-8161. Below are answers to frequently asked questions about our Department and its processes.

How is the County Procurement Department organized?

Pima County Procurement Code Title 11, and Board of Supervisor's Policies D29.1 through D29.11 provide for the establishment and define the authority of the Pima County Procurement Department.

There are two purchasing Divisions in the Procurement Department, Design & Construction (D&C) and Materials & Services (M&S). The D&C Division procures Architectural, Engineering and Construction services, and the M&S Division procures all other goods and professional services. Different code and law apply to the procurements performed by each Division, and each has separate webpages for their respective solicitations.

A third Division, the Small Business Enterprise/Vendor Relations Division, promotes the achievement of SBE objectives and addresses the needs and concerns of Pima County vendors. Contracts Administration is included in this Division and provides a centralized control point for contract processing and retrieval. Pursuant to Board of Supervisors Policy D29.4 and the Procurement Code, all contracts (excluding Grant Agreements) requiring the approval of the Procurement Director or Board of Supervisors are processed through this Division to assure proper administrative review. A comprehensive contract repository system is maintained and its contents are publicly accessible, at http://www.pima.gov/public-eContractsz/

What is your website address?

Our website address is: http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=18377

The Procurement Department website provides access to department news, a contact directory, our active formal solicitations and other procurement related information:

PIMA COUNTY
PROCUREMENT

Who may I contact about providing goods or services to the County? Which Buyer or Commodity/Contracts Officer is assigned to the items or services I provide?

The most up to date contact information and buyer commodity assignments are provided on our website, on the webpages below:

Department Directory: https://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=84302

Buyer Commodity Assignments: http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=127735

How does the procurement process typically work in Pima County?

A typical procurement begins when a County department identifies a specific need for an item or service to fulfill their department's mission and objectives. The requesting department creates a purchase requisition, attaches their item specification or a scope of work for services to be procured, acquires appropriate approvals and submits it to Procurement. The Procurement Department is then

responsible for selecting the appropriate solicitation process, drafting and advertising the solicitation, and managing the procurement and contract award processes.

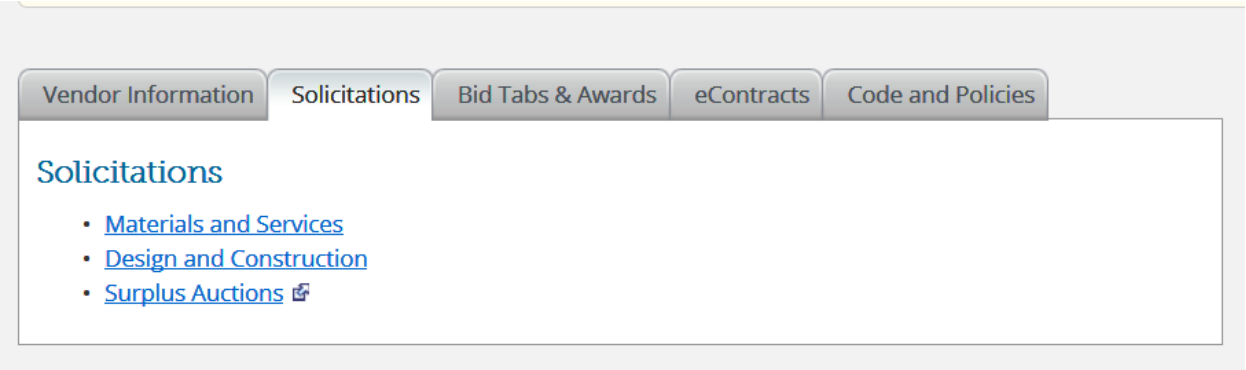
The Pima County Procurement Code requires that all contract awards greater than $250,000 per year, or for terms of five years or greater, and all IGA's, Grant Awards, and Professional Services greater than $50,000 per year, must be awarded by the Pima County Board of Supervisors. All other contracts (i.e. contracts less than $250,000 per year and a term less than five years) may be awarded by the Procurement Director.

What solicitations do you currently have advertising?

There are currently three ways to find out about the formal IFB and RFP solicitations Pima County Procurement is advertising. They are: our website, the official Legal Newspaper of Pima County, or directly by email.

Website:

Active formal solicitations being conducted by the Procurement Department are posted on our Procurement Department website. Depending on the solicitation, most may be downloaded from the Procurement website under the *Solicitations* tab on the Main Page:



Direct links to the Division solicitation pages may be bookmarked in your browser at the following locations:

Design & Construction: http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=90764

Materials and Services: http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=90712

Newspaper:

Formal solicitations are also published in the Legal Newspaper of Pima County. As of July 2014, the approved publication is *The Daily Territorial*. Interested Vendors may also review the Legal Newspaper of Pima County each week to identify and respond to solicitations of interest.

Email:

Vendors interested in receiving direct email notification of solicitations may register online with our messaging service called VRAMP at http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=90700. See additional information below on Vendor Registration.

It is the responsibility of each prospective respondent/supplier to obtain all associated solicitation documents, familiarize themselves with all requirements, and deliver a responsive submittal as directed by the solicitation documents.

Which types of solicitations does the County utilize?

Invitation for Bids (IFB)

This solicitation type involves competitive sealed bids, generally referred to as an Invitation for Bids (IFB). This process is typically evaluated and awarded according to the lowest, most responsive and responsible bidder meeting specifications. The process usually requires about 90--110 days to complete (from publication of solicitation to final Contract or Purchase order).

Requests for Proposals (RFP)

For Procurements where price alone may not be the only factor, or for specifications which may be difficult to define and quantify, a Request for Proposal (RFP) process may be used. This solicitation process requests proposals that will be qualitatively graded and ranked in accordance with the solicitation documents and is awarded to the highest ranked offeror or offerors. The process usually requires about 120--160 days to complete (from publication of solicitation to final Contract or Purchase order).

Solicitation for Qualifications (SFQ)

For Procurements where the objective is to select the most qualified respondent for the required service, a Solicitation for Qualifications (SFQ) process may be used. This qualifications-based selection process requests proposals that will be qualitatively graded to perform the service and ranked in accordance with the solicitation documents and is awarded to the highest ranked

respondent. Price negotiation then occurs to arrive at a mutually agreeable Contract between the parties. The process usually requires about 120--160 days to complete (from publication of solicitation to final Contract).

Requests for Quotes (RFQ)

For Procurements that result in a contract amount of less than $100,000 for the term of the contract, the Procurement code prescribes a process referred to as a Request for Quotations (RFQ). Currently, RFQ's are not posted on the Procurement website nor published in *The Daily Territorial.* For RFQ's the Requesting Department may identify "Suggested Vendors" on their requisition. The Procurement Department Buyer identifies potential vendors using the Vendor Registration database and other sources and issues the RFQ documents to those selected, or by way of verbal request if allowed by the Procurement Code. This process typically takes about 14-30 days to complete.

Small Purchases

If the County does not have an existing contract, most Procurements for requirements of less than $5,000 per year may be conducted by County Departments utilizing the Procurement Small Purchase Procedure and paid for via P-Card or Pima County Payment Request form.

How do I prepare to submit my bid or proposal to Pima County? What if I have questions?

Most IFB and RFP solicitations include a pre-bid conference to discuss the requirements, provide clarifications or accept questions and suggestions. All potential respondents are highly encouraged to attend.

If you have any questions before or after the pre-bid meeting, you are encouraged to contact the assigned Buyer or Contracts Officer by email, fax or phone with your question or concern. Contact information is provided in the solicitation documents, or through our website directory.

Solicitation documents may be modified or clarified only by a formal Addendum document. Verbal responses to inquiries do not modify the solicitation documents.

May I view who has the current contract or look at the prior solicitation that was conducted?

Current and historical contracts may be useful in preparing a submittal. Many of these contracts may be viewed at the following County Internet address: http://www.pima.gov/econtractsz/

Prior solicitations may be acquired by making a Public Records Request in accordance with Pima County Administrative Procedure 4-4: Cost Recovery for Public Data, posted at the County Administration website:
http://webcms.pima.gov/UserFiles/Servers/Server_6/File/Government/Administration/Administrative%20Procedures/0404costdat.pdf

You may contact the assigned Buyer or Contracts Officer of the solicitation for the prior Solicitation Number and Name/Description to include in your Public Records Request.

What contract will I be required to sign if I win a solicitation?

Most IFB solicitations conducted by the Materials & Services Division will contain an "Offer Agreement" document that the respondent is required to execute and include with their sealed submittal. The signed document forms a binding offer from the Vendor and establishes a legal contract for performance when accepted by the County by issue of a Master Agreement, Purchase Order or other form. Most RFP and SFQ solicitations include a sample contract or agreement document with the requirement that the Vendor provide a statement of acceptance or suggested alternate language for possible consideration. The Vendor must execute the final negotiated contract or agreement within the time period specified by the solicitation document.

How do I turn in my bid or proposal? Will there be a bid opening?

All formally advertised bid and proposal responses must be physically received by the date and time indicated in the solicitation documents. No late bids or proposals will be accepted. Bids and proposals must be sealed in an envelope or boxed, and must clearly indicate the solicitation number and description on the outside for identification purposes.

Unless otherwise stated in the solicitation documents, Invitations for Bid are publicly opened in the Procurement Department Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Administration East Building, 130 West Congress Street. Requests for Proposals are not publicly opened.

The Commodity/Contracts Officer of the solicitation presides over the bid opening. Other representatives of the County may be in attendance, and all participating vendors and public are invited to attend. The Contract/Commodity Officer will read the price, delivery, terms and conditions of each submitted bid. Any results are "As Read" and unofficial until the Commodity/Contracts Officer has evaluated all submitted materials for compliance and accuracy.

How are bids and proposals evaluated? What preferences does the County apply?

Each solicitation is unique. The solicitation documents will identify the method used to evaluate submittals and to make the award recommendation. Generally, award recommendation is made to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder for IFB's & RFQ's, or to the highest ranked respondent or respondents for an RFP.

Responsive is a term that refers to the respondent's compliance with all requirements of the solicitation documents. Non-compliant submittals are deemed non-responsive and are not considered in the evaluation.

Responsible is a term that generally refers to the respondent's capacity and competence to provide the solicited services and/or products.

Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Preference:

In accordance with applicable code, County Procurement processes include preferences for certified local Small Business Enterprises. For IFB and RFQ's, submittals of firms that include proof of local certification in accordance with the solicitation documents, are evaluated for "Low Bid" using 95% of the submittal amount. The Contract or Purchase Order, when awarded, would be made at 100% of the submittal. For RFP's, points in accordance with the Code and solicitation documents, are added to the certified local SBE firm's evaluation score.

For additional information regarding SBE Code, and SBE Certification, please contact the SBE Program Coordinator at (520) 724-8260.

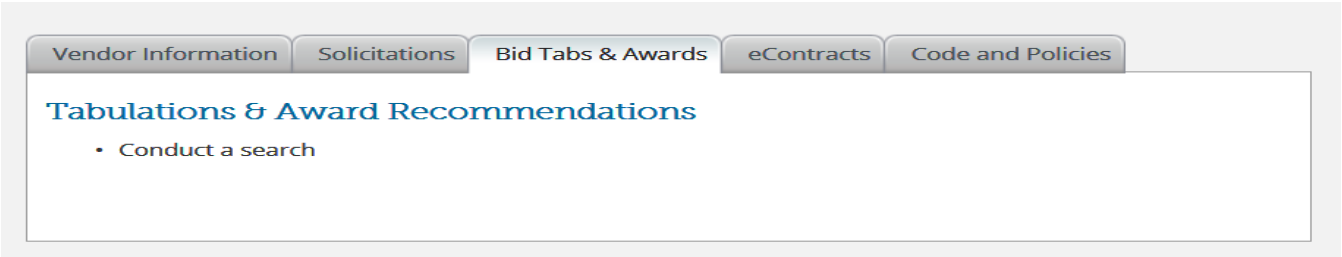
Sustainable Community Preference:

On May 1, 2007, the Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted Resolution No. 2007-84, which sets forth a series of initiatives designed to promote and advance sustainability. Procurement solicitations utilizing qualitative criteria to evaluate proposals shall include criteria, with a weighting of not more than 5% of the total possible score, that recognize and consider the

relative magnitude by which each proposal advances the sustainability initiatives of Resolution No. 2007-84. The evaluation may include and not be limited to: (1) the resource extraction and manufacturing processes utilized; (2) distance and type of transportation required; (3) life-cycle costs; (4) amount of waste generated; (5) the recyclable content of the product, the product's capacity to be recycled or reused, and the product and packaging "take-back" policies of the manufacturer or distributor; (6) energy and water efficiency; and (7) socioeconomic benefits to Pima County which may include preference to firms that are located within Pima County.

Where may I find bid results and award information?

Upon evaluation of submittals in accordance with the solicitation documents, and upon the review and recommendation of the requesting department, the Procurement Department will issue a Recommendation for Award and where applicable, the final tabulation of the bids or ranking of proposals. The tabulations and awards are posted on the Procurement website, under the *Bid Tabs & Awards* section on the Main Page:



Direct links to the Tabulations & Award Recommendations page may be bookmarked in your browser at the following location: http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=128681

Subsequent to the award being made by either the Procurement Director or the County Board of Supervisors, Procurement will prepare the Master Agreement, Contract or Purchase Order and coordinate execution (signature) with the selected Vendor.

Unless otherwise specified, following execution of the Master Agreement, Contract or Purchase Order, the requesting Department is responsible for the ordering, performance administration and payment as defined by the Master Agreement, Contract or Purchase Order.

What is the "Living Wage" Program?

Pima County Procurement Code Title 11, Chapter 11.38, incorporates Ordinance 2002-1 passed by the Pima County Board of Supervisors January 8, 2002 that establishes a living wage requirement in County

contracts for specific services utilized by County government. The Procurement Department is tasked with the monitoring and compliance of this program.

The types of contracts requiring contractors to pay the living wage are facility/building maintenance, refuse collection and recycling, temporary employee services, janitorial and custodial services, landscape maintenance and weed control, pest control, security, and moving services.

More information regarding the County's Living Wage Program and the rates in effect for the current calendar year go to: https://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=92919

How do I officially register as a vendor with Pima County?

There are two ways to register as a vendor with Pima County. The first is to register to receive notices of solicitations of interest. This is done through our Vendor Messaging Portal called VRAMP. The second registration is required if you are successfully awarded a contract, to provide your payment and tax information for IRS reporting purposes. This is done through our Vendor Self Service system (VSS).

Vendor Messaging Portal (VRAMP)

To receive Notices of Solicitations directly to your email, you may create a Vendor Record in the Vendor Registration and Messaging Portal (VRAMP) containing contact information, Commodities of interest and e-mail address.

VRAMP Website: http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=90700

Please call (520) 724-8465 if you need assistance with your registration in VRAMP.

Vendor Self Service: (VSS)

In order to be eligible to receive award of a Contract and payment for goods and services, you must register your business information in the Vendor Self Service Portal (VSS). Please call (520) 724-8465 if you need assistance with this vendor registration.

VSS Website: https://vendor.pima.gov/webapp/VSSPROD1/Advantage

The VSS Registration process is very detailed and contains a number of steps to complete. You must have your IRS W-9 information on hand before you begin. Detailed instructions to guide you through VSS registration are available on our website:
https://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=90700

Director
Mary Jo Furphy

Materials and Services
Terry Finefrock, Chief Contracts/Procurement Manager

Design and Construction
Melissa Hala'ufia, Division Manager

Vendor Relations/SBE Division, Contracts Administration, Admin Services
Terri Spencer, Division Manager

Procurement Information

(520)724-8161

Thank you for your interest in doing business with Pima County