How to Participate in the Pima County Procurement Process

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PIMA COUNTY
PROCUREMENT

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The Pima County Procurement Department's mission is to maximize the benefits that Pima County citizens receive from the expenditure of public funds on goods and services in a professional, ethical, and lawful manner, through a program dedicated to transparency, impartiality, accountability and excellent customer service.

Foreword

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, Materials & Services (M&S) and Design & Construction (D&C). The D&C Division procures Architectural, Engineering and Construction services, and administers the Small Business and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise programs, 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, Administrative Services, includes Vendor Relations that addresses the needs and concerns of Pima County vendors, Systems Administration/PCard Services that coordinate department systems requirements and provides an effective means of purchasing and paying for goods and services, and Contracts Processing that 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 and some recorded agreements) requiring the approval of the Board of Supervisors, Procurement Director or other designated signing authority are processed through this Division to ensure proper administrative review. A comprehensive contract repository system is maintained and its contents are publicly accessible, at
https://onbase.pima.gov/publicaccess/PO/datasourcetemplate.aspx

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What is your website address?

Our website address is: http://webcms.pima.gov/government/procurement/

The Procurement Department website provides access to department news, a department directory, Vendor Self Service System (VSS) and other procurement related information:

Who may I contact about providing goods or services to the County? Which Buyer or Procurement 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

Procurement Officer 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 submits a

purchase requisition to Procurement. The Procurement Department is responsible for managing the procurement and contract award processes, which includes selecting the appropriate solicitation process, creating the solicitation, managing the evaluation process, making the recommendation for award and issuing the contract.

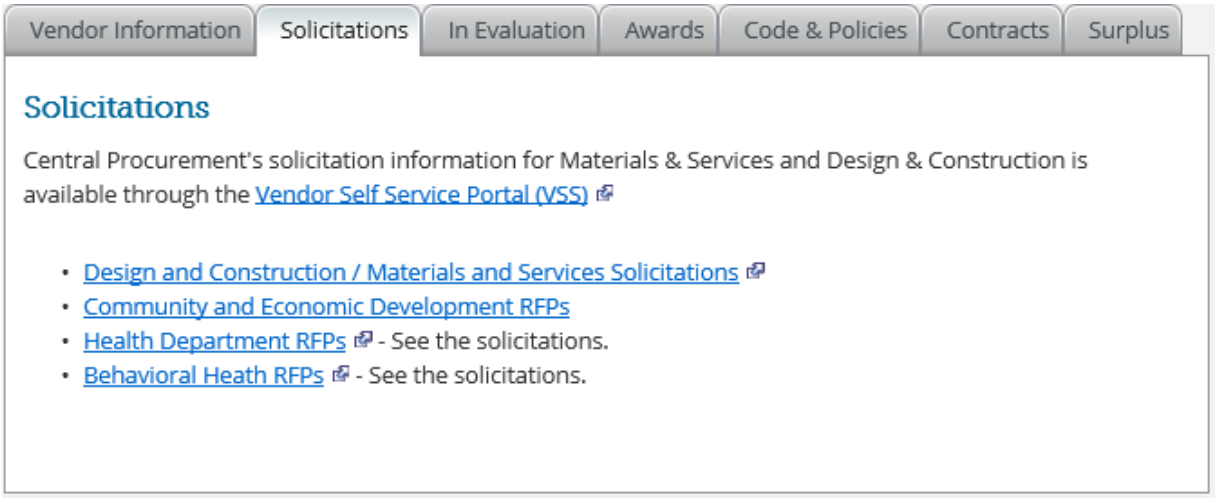
The Pima County Procurement Code requires that contract awards greater than $250,000 per year, or for terms of five years or greater, and IGA's, Grant Awards, and Professional Services greater than $100,000, must be awarded by the Pima County Board of Supervisors. All other contracts (i.e. contracts 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 solicitations (IFB, RFP, SFQ) Pima County Procurement is advertising, which include the Procurement VSS Public Access website, the official Legal Newspaper of Pima County, or directly by email to those vendors that are registered for the commodity being solicited.

Website:

All solicitations being conducted by the Procurement Department are posted on our Vendor Self Service Portal VSS (Public Access). In order to receive an email notice, you MUST be registered as an active vendor in VSS or the principal contact person associated with the Default Ordering address. *To view the full list of open solicitations please visit the Vendor Self Service Portal (VSS)* *https://vendors.pima.gov/webapp/VSSPROD1/AltSelfService*



Newspaper:

Formal solicitations are also published in the Legal Newspaper of Pima County. At the time of this publication, 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 Vendor Self Service Portal (VSS) 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 that 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 typically 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 awarded to the highest-ranked respondent. Price negotiation then occurs to arrive at a mutually agreeable Contract between the parties. The process typically 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 or Procurement Officer 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 $10,000 per year may be conducted by County Departments utilizing the Procurement Small Purchase Procedure and paid by P-Card or Pima County Payment Request.

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 or pre-proposal meeting 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 or pre-proposal meeting, you are encouraged to contact the assigned Buyer or Procurement 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 using OnBase: https://onbase.pima.gov/publicaccess/PO/datasourcetemplate.aspx

Prior solicitation documents may be acquired by making a Public Records Request in accordance with Pima County Administrative Procedure 4-4: Cost Recovery for Release of Public Data, posted at the County Administration website:
http://webcms.pima.gov/UserFiles/Servers/Server_6/File/Government/Administration/Administrative%20Procedures/4-4%20Administrative%20Procedures%20(10-30-2015)%20Revised.pdf

You may contact the assigned Buyer or Procurement 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?

Solicitation documents contain specific instructions on how to turn in a bid or a proposal. All formally advertised bid and proposal responses must be received as instructed by the solicitation documents at or before the date and time indicated in the solicitation documents. No late bids or proposals will be accepted. If a paper submission is requested by the solicitation documents, 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, Tucson, Arizona. The Procurement 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 Procurement Officer will read the price, delivery, terms and conditions of each submitted bid. Any results are "As Read" and unofficial until the Procurement Officer has

evaluated all submitted materials for compliance and accuracy. At an opening for a Request for Proposal, only the names of the submitting firms are publicly read. According to statute, no information is publicly read at an opening for a Solicitation for Qualifications conducted by the Design and Construction Division.

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 IFBs & RFQs, 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.

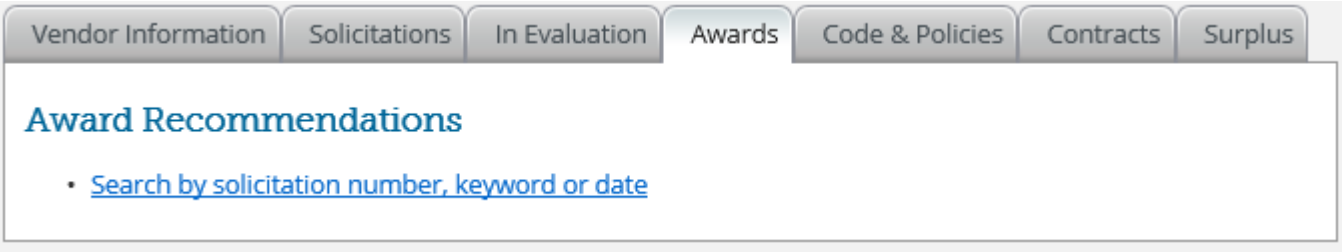
Responsible is a term that generally refers to the respondent's capacity and competence to provide the solicited services and/or products.

Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Preference:

It is the policy of Pima County government to ensure full and equitable economic opportunities to persons or businesses that compete for business with Pima County including Small Business Enterprises (SBE). The goal of the race and gender-neutral SBE program is to expand employment opportunities and promote the local economy by fostering the formation and growth of local small businesses by encouraging contracting with small local businesses. According to County Code Title 20, Procurement processes include incentives for certified local SBEs. For IFB and RFQ, submittals of firms that include proof of local certification in accordance with materials and services solicitation documents are evaluated for "Low Bid" calculating 95% of the submitted total bid amount. The Contract or Purchase Order will be awarded at 100% of the total bid amount. In procuring architects and engineers and other professional services, not including the medical and legal fields, points in accordance with the Code and solicitation evaluation criteria are added to the certified SBE firm's evaluation score for SBE utilization. For additional information regarding SBE Code, and SBE Certification, please contact the Business Enterprise Program Coordinator at (520) 724-3807 or SBE@pima.gov

Where may I find bid results and award information?

After evaluation of submittals in accordance with the solicitation documents, the Procurement Department will issue a Notice of Recommendation for Award identifying the vendor(s) for award and other respondents. Award Recommendations are posted on the Procurement website under the Awards tab on the Main Page:



Direct links to the 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, mandates 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

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

Registration in the Pima County Vendor Self Service System (VSS) is required to receive email notifications based on your commodity selections.. Vendors can also manage account information, view financial transactions and much more. Registration is required before you can be awarded a contract. You MUST be a registered user or the principal contact person associated with the Default Ordering address, all other ordering contacts will not be sent the solicitation email notices. If you are not receiving email notifications and have confirmed your email address is entered correctly in your vendor record, check your Spam or Trash folder.

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

PIMA COUNTY
PROCUREMENT

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Procurement Information

(520) 724-8161

Thank you for your interest in doing business with Pima County.