



HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PIMA COUNTY PROCUREMENT PROCESS

Revised: February 14, 2008

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide Suppliers to Pima County with a basic understanding of the County's Procurement processes, general requirements and sources of information that might be useful in preparing a response to County solicitations for Materials and Services.

GENERAL

County procurement processes are defined by the Pima County Procurement Code and the Board of Supervisor's Policies .

The Pima County Procurement Department is dedicated to promoting the conservation of public funds and conducting its Procurement processes in a fair, open and equitable manner.

There are two "procuring" Divisions within the Procurement Department, the Design & Construction (DC) and Materials & Services (MS) Divisions. Different code and law apply to the procurements performed by each Division, and each has separate websites/pages. Generally, the DC Division procures Architectural, Engineering and Construction services, and the MS Division procures all other items. County Departments create and submit requisitions and specifications defining the items to be procured. The Procurement Department manages the subsequent solicitation and procurement process.

The Procurement Department delegates Authority to various County Departments to conduct solicitations and establish contracts pursuant to the Procurement Code, Board of Supervisors Policies and Procurement procedures.

A third division, the Vendor Relations/Minority and Women owned Business Enterprise Division, is established to promote the achievement of MWBE objectives and to address the needs and concerns of Pima County vendors.

For "As Required" Materials and Services the MS Division typically issues Blanket Contracts from which most County Departments may authorize Staff to make and issue Purchase Orders within the scope of the Blanket Contract to satisfy their requirements. During 2007 about 60,000 Purchase Orders were issued by County Departments from these contracts, which represented greater than 90% of the expenditures made from contracts established by the Procurement Departments MS Division.

Links to contact and buyer/commodity information are provided on the Procurement Website:

"Telephone and Email Directory": <http://www.pima.gov/procure/empinfo/>

"Buyer Commodity Assignments": <http://www.pima.gov/procure/buyerteams/db/index.asp>

PROCUREMENT DEPARTMENT WEBSITE

The Procurement Department website provides access to applicable Pima County Procurement code (law), active solicitations and other procurement related information. The website address is: <http://www.pima.gov/procure/>

The screenshot shows a Windows Internet Explorer browser window displaying the Pima County Procurement Department website. The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://www.pima.gov/procure/>. The website header features the Pima County Procurement logo on the left and the pima.gov logo on the right, with a central banner image depicting a desert landscape with people on horseback and a building. Below the header, the page is divided into a left sidebar and a main content area. The sidebar, titled "Services", contains a list of links: Home, How to do Business with Pima County, Materials & Services Solicitations, Design & Construction Solicitations, Surplus Property Auction, Vendor Registration, Vendor Relations, IFB Tabulation & Award Recommendations, Phone and Email Directory, Buyer Commodity Assignments, Minority & Women Business (MWBE), e-Contracts, Anticipated Projects, Special Events, Procurement Code, and Authorized Use of County Agreements. Below the list is the contact information for Pima County Procurement: 130 W. Congress, Tucson, AZ. 85701, 520-740-8161. The main content area contains two paragraphs of text. The first paragraph states: "The Pima County Procurement Department is dedicated to conserving public funds and conducting its procurement process in a fair, open, and competitive manner." The second paragraph states: "The Procurement Department will cultivate and maintain good vendor relations. Qualified vendors are encouraged to participate in doing business with Pima County." Below the text is a section titled "ANNOUNCEMENTS" in bold. The announcement reads: "Pima County Procurement is pleased to bring you the **Procurement Online Newsletter**. We've designed our newsletter to provide assistance and education on the Procurement process.....". At the bottom of the main content area, there is a bolded headline: "PIMA COUNTY RECEIVES OUTSTANDING AGENCY AWARD FROM THE NATIONAL". The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows the Start button, several application icons, and the system tray with the date and time: Wednesday, 2:58 PM. The browser's status bar at the very bottom indicates "Trusted sites" and "100%" zoom level.

Services

- Home
- [How to do Business with Pima County](#)
- [Materials & Services Solicitations](#)
- [Design & Construction Solicitations](#)
- [Surplus Property Auction](#)
- [Vendor Registration](#)
- [Vendor Relations](#)
- [IFB Tabulation & Award Recommendations](#)
- [Phone and Email Directory](#)
- [Buyer Commodity Assignments](#)
- [Minority & Women Business \(MWBE\)](#)
- [e-Contracts](#)
- [Anticipated Projects](#)
- [Special Events](#)
- [Procurement Code](#)
- [Authorized Use of County Agreements](#)

Pima County Procurement
130 W. Congress
Tucson, AZ. 85701
520-740-8161

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pima County Procurement is pleased to bring you the **Procurement Online Newsletter**. We've designed our newsletter to provide assistance and education on the Procurement process.....

PIMA COUNTY RECEIVES OUTSTANDING AGENCY AWARD FROM THE NATIONAL

TYPICAL PROCUREMENT PROCESS

A typical procurement commences when a County Department creates a purchase requisition , acquires appropriate approvals and submits it to Procurement. The Department includes a definition of the required services and/or products including appropriate specifications, terms, minimum requirements, and approval of funding.

The Procurement Department is responsible for selecting the appropriate Procurement (Solicitation) process, managing the procurement and subsequent contracting processes.

Active Procurement solicitation documents are posted on and may be downloaded from the Procurement website at: <http://www.pima.gov/procure/ifbrfp.htm>

The solicitations are removed from the website after the solicitation due date has passed.

FORMAL FULL COMPETITION SOLICITATIONS

Notice of Solicitation:

Formal solicitations conducted by the Procurement Department for bids or proposals are published at the Procurement website and in the Legal Newspaper of Pima County, subject to annual change. As of January 2008, that publication is The Daily Territorial.

Interested Suppliers should review the Procurement website and the Legal Newspaper of Pima County each week to identify and respond to solicitations of interest.

Although Pima County has no obligation or requirement to do so, the Procurement Department has historically transmitted notice by facsimile that a solicitation has been published to prospective Suppliers that have registered with Pima County and expressed an interest in the commodity being solicited.

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

By April 2008, Pima County plans to implement functionality to allow use of Vendor records and information, email address and commodities of interest, provided by each Supplier to provide email notification to Vendor(s) that a solicitation has been published for a commodity included in their Vendor record. When implemented, direct notice by facsimile will be eliminated.

Invitation for Bids (IFB)

This preferred procurement process involves competitive, sealed bids, typically referred to as an Invitation for Bids (IFB), which the County publishes in *The Daily Territorial* and on the Procurement website. The process usually requires about 90 -110 days to complete (publish-to-contract or purchase order date). This process typically is evaluated and awarded according to the lowest, most competitive price bid.

Requests for Proposals (RFP)

For Procurements whose specifications are difficult to define & quantify a Request for Proposal (RFP) process may be used. The solicitation will be published in *The Daily Territorial* and on the Procurement website. This solicitation process requests proposals that will be qualitatively graded and ranked in accordance with the solicitation documents and is awarded accordingly.

INFORMAL SOLICITATIONS

Requests for Quotes or Offers

For Small Purchases, that will result in a contract amount of less than \$50,000 for the aggregate or extended term of the contract (Blanket Contract, Purchase Order, etc.) the Procurement code prescribes and allows for the use of a process referred to as a Request for Quotations (RFQ). The Requesting Department may identify "Suggested Suppliers" on their requisition. The Procurement Department Buyer identifies potential suppliers using the County Vendor Records and other sources and issues RFQ documents, or verbal requests if allowed by the Procurement Code, to those selected to participate. This process typically takes about 30 days to complete.

If the County does not have an existing contract, some (not all) Procurements (Vendor Selection Process) for Non-Construction/Architectural & Engineering Materials & Services requirements of less than \$5,000 per year may be conducted by County Departments other than Procurement utilizing the Procurement Small Purchase Procedure and subsequently paid for via P-Card or Pima County Claim form.

VENDOR REGISTRATION

To be eligible to receive Notices of Solicitations and Award of Contract, Suppliers must create a Vendor Record. The record includes contact information, Payment and Tax information, Commodities of interest, and e-mail address to allow the County to quickly and economically transmit Contract documents. All firms desiring to participate in County procurements are encouraged to register with Pima County using the Procurement Department website's link to the '*Vendor Registration Form*': <http://www.pima.gov/procure/venreg.htm>

By April 2008, Pima County plans to implement functionality to allow Suppliers to create and maintain their vendor record via the Internet. At that time the website link will be changed to direct Suppliers to the Internet portal website.

SOLICITATION SUBMITTAL PREPARATION and PRE-BID CONFERENCES

IFB and RFP solicitations may include provisions for a pre-bid conference to discuss requirements and to provide clarifications or accept questions and suggestions. All potential respondents are highly encouraged to attend. Solicitation documents may be amended only via issue of a formal Addendum document. Verbal responses do not modify the solicitation documents.

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/econtracts/>

Most contracts established by the MS Division are resident in the Synergen contract database that is not accessible by the *Public*. Copies of these contracts 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: www.pima.gov

Most IFB solicitations conducted by the Procurement Department MS Division will contain an "Offer Agreement" document that the respondent is required to complete and execute prior to submittal as defined by each solicitation. That document forms a binding offer from the supplier that when accepted by the County by issue of a Blanket Contract, Purchase Order or other form establishes a legal contract for performance. Most RFP solicitations include a sample contract with requirements that the Supplier execute within a period specified by the solicitation document.

EVALUATION, AWARD AND MWBE PREFERENCE

Each solicitation is unique. The method used to evaluate submittals and to make the Award recommendation is defined by the solicitation documents. To avoid misunderstandings, all questions regarding the solicitation should be made in writing to the Contracts Officer administering the solicitation.

Generally, it is the County's practice to recommend the award of contract(s) to the Responsive and Responsible bidder(s) that submitted the lowest bid amount or Highest Ranked respondent for Proposals (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.

In accordance with applicable code, County Procurement processes include preferences for certified local Minority/Women Business Enterprise. For Bids (IFB), 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 Proposals (RFP) involving Professional Services that are not medical or legal in nature, points, in accordance with the code and solicitation documents are added to the certified local MWBE firm's evaluation score.

Further information regarding M/WBE Code, Disparity Studies, Utilization reports, Brochures, and M/WBE Certification may be viewed at the following Procurement website address:

<http://www.pima.gov/procure/mwbe.htm>

AWARD RECOMMENDATION

Upon evaluation of submittals, and in accordance with the solicitation documents, the Requesting Department and Procurement must agree on the firm(s) to whom an award will be recommended.

The Recommendation for Award and IFB Bid Tabulation is posted on the Procurement website:

<http://www.pima.gov/procure/awards/index.html>

Subsequent to the award being made by either the Procurement Director or the County Board of Supervisors, Procurement will issue the Contract or Purchase Order and coordinate execution with the selected supplier.

Unless otherwise specified, subsequent to issue of the Purchase Order or Contract, the Requesting or using Department is responsible for the issue of orders, performance administration and payment as defined by and pursuant with the Blanket Contract, if appropriate, and Purchase Order(s).

END OF GUIDE