

# **City of Bellingham, Washington Vendor Guide**

## **Welcome**

We appreciate your interest in doing business with the City of Bellingham, Washington. We hope you will find this guide helpful in your business experience with the City. We strive to obtain the best quality, service, and price, while promoting good relationships, which are beneficial to the City and its vendors. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact us at the telephone number provided below.

## **Purchasing Office Goals**

- Provide City Departments and employees the highest level of purchasing service,
- Achieve maximum value for dollar spent,
- Provides fair and equal access for vendors interested in doing business with the City,
- Provides a level of fiscal control by issuing Purchase Orders
- Ensures conditions of City purchase orders are met by vendors performing under those conditions.

## **Purchasing Office Information**

The City of Bellingham Purchasing Office is comprised of the Superintendent of Purchasing, a Lead Buyer, and two Buyers. The Purchasing Office is located at 2221 Pacific Street.

Telephone number: 360-778-7750

Facsimile number: 360-778-7706

## **Sales Calls and Contacts**

The Purchasing Office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding City holidays. Vendors are encouraged to schedule appointments. You may schedule an appointment by calling 360-778-7750.

Vendors are encouraged to forward product and service literature to the City of Bellingham, Attn Purchasing, 2221 Pacific Street, Bellingham, WA 98229.

Please make the Purchasing Office your first contact. If consultation with other Departments is desired, the Purchasing Office will arrange interviews between the vendor's representatives and other City Departments. No one else outside the Purchasing Office can issued a City Purchase Order to purchase equipment and/or supplies over \$10,000. Do not deliver any equipment and/or supplies without a purchase order number.

## **Bid Notification**

On the City's website (<http://www.cob.org/services/business/purchasing.aspx>), under the Purchasing Office section, vendors can register for automatic notification of bid/quote offerings. Vendors are strongly encouraged to check the "Current Opportunities" section on a regular basis for opportunities to provide bids or quotes to the City.

## **What the City Of Bellingham Purchases**

The City of Bellingham purchasing activity is divided into three categories:

- **Public Works Projects**
- **Services (Professional and Non-professional)**
- **Materials, Supplies & Equipment**

## **Public Works Projects**

Public Works is all work, construction, alteration, repair or improvement that the City performs. Public Work includes, but is not limited to:

- Demolition
- Remodeling
- Renovation
- Maintenance
- Painting
- Road Construction
- Utilities Construction
- Offsite prefabrication of ducts, liners and certain steel products
- Production and delivery of sand, gravel, rock, concrete and asphalt

A purchase order is required prior to work beginning. In addition:

Written contracts are required on all public works project.

A Memorandum of Agreement is required when the total cost of the public work projects is less than \$5,000.00.

An alternative to the formal bid processing called the **Small Works Roster** process may be used on Public Works projects up to \$300,000.00. The process is the same as the formal bid process other than there is no advertisement required or Council approval and only vendors on the small works roster are eligible to bid on the project. There are various categories of Small Works:

- Construction
- Plumbing
- Painting
- Electrical
- HVAC
- Site work, including landscape & tree removal
- Metal Fabrication/Welding
- Fencing
- Incinerator repair
- Demolition
- Asbestos abatement
- Pressure washing
- Sand Blasting

Vendors may acquire the small works application from the City's website or contact the purchasing department to request it be mailed.

Vendors are required to be licensed by the State of Washington, hold a current City of Bellingham Business registration, provide references and provide a certificate of insurance.

Prevailing Wages: Chapter 39.12 RCW is the Washington Public Works Act. This law requires workers be paid certain hourly wages for all public work and public service maintenance contracts, no matter what the dollar amount.

## **Services**

Procurement of services is accomplished by the solicitation of proposals. A Request for Proposal (RFP) and sometimes as Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is conducted.

City departments may use an on-call service roster for specific types of services.

Requests for Proposals for services will be published in the Bellingham Herald. Publication may also be made in out-of-town or out-of-state publications and/or trade journals. Services costing less than \$10,000.00 require only phone or fax quotation. Service contracts are required for all services.

Living wage: The City has a living wage program that requires certain services to be paid at a pre-determined hourly wage established by the City. Criteria for the program are:

- Contract must be for more than \$10,000 in a twelve- (12) month period.
- Employees must be full time and must be over the age of 17.
- Employees must be non-union
- Contractor must have 4 or more employees
- Contractor must have been in business for more than one year.
- Non-profit organizations are excluded.
- Must be in one of the following categories:
  - Automotive repair and maintenance
  - Facility and building maintenance
  - Janitorial and custodial
  - Landscaping
  - Laundry
  - Office & clerical
  - Parking lot management
  - Pest control services
  - Recreation
  - Resident & day shelter
  - Security services
  - Shuttle transportation
  - Street & sidewalk cleaning
  - Towing

On-Call Services: For some classes of services, the City will enter into on-call service agreements. These agreements can be used for projects less than \$50,000.00. Projects over \$50,000 are required to have a formal Request for Qualifications (RFQ) or Request

for Proposals (RFP) issued by the Purchasing Division. The number of consultants selected each year may vary and will be based on the quantity of work anticipated for each given year. Categories may be added or deleted yearly from the roster based on the quantity of work required for that year. We do not guarantee work to consultants who are accepted for the roster. Departments are encouraged to rotate through the consultants within a category although departments will always select the best-suited consultant for the work. To be included on the list, all consultants must be properly licensed and insured, including a City of Bellingham business registration.

There are two types of rosters – Architects and Engineers, and other Professional Services. Architects and Engineers rosters are renewed annually, while other Professional Services lists are maintained for two-year periods.

Architects and Engineers covers the following types of services:

- Engineers
- Civil Engineers
- Traffic Engineers
- Geotechnical Engineers
- Mechanical Engineers
- Electrical Engineers
- Structural Engineers
- Utility Engineers
- Architects
- Landscape Architects
- Land Surveyors

Other Professional Services cover the following types of services, and any additional types the City chooses to add to the list:

- Acquisitions & relocation
- Title & Escrow
- GIS
- Construction Management & Inspection
- Environmental Site Assessment
- Material Testing
- Appraisers
- Video Production Services

### **Materials, Supplies, And Equipment**

The City of Bellingham purchases a wide variety of equipment and supplies every year. Among the items purchased are:

- Vehicles-cars and trucks
- Computer hardware
- Software
- Weapons
- Ammunition
- Fire Hose
- Office Equipment
- Communications Equipment
- Furniture
- Traffic Signs
- Audio/Visual Equipment

- Lawn Maintenance Equipment
- Chemicals
- Carpet
- Window coverings
- Copiers
- Hand Tools
- Power Tools
- Law Enforcement Equipment
- Books

### **Methods of Procurement**

The following methods of purchasing are utilized:

- **Purchases under \$10,000.00**

City Departments are authorized to make purchases up to \$10,000.00 without a purchase order. No competitive bidding is required. The vendor should verify the person's employment with the City by identification card or phone call to the employee's department. Equipment and/or supplies must be picked up by the employee or delivered to a City facility or work site and employee's name and department must appear on the invoice. Please note that employees using City-issued procurement cards or using Petty Cash may make some purchases in this method.

- **Purchases between \$10,000.00 and \$20,000 require three (3) telephone quotes.**
- **Purchases between \$20,001 and \$49,999 require three (3) written quotations.**
- **Purchases over \$45,000.00 require sealed bids.** Any purchase estimated to exceed \$45,000.00 must be formally bid. Bid information is posted on the City's official website. The bids are advertised in the Bellingham Herald newspaper and, possibly, other publications. A formal bid date and time is established. The Purchasing Department conducts a public opening of the bids. City Council approves all formal bid awards.

### **Acting Without A Purchase Order Number**

All purchases over \$10,000 charged to the City require a purchase order number. If an individual calls and attempts to place an order over \$10,000, you are cautioned to request an authorized purchase order number and obtain the name and department of the individual. Invoices over \$10,000 must cite the purchase order number. A purchase order is your assurance that you will be paid.

Exception: There may be times during an emergency when an order must be placed after normal business hours or on weekends. Be assured that true emergency purchases at

such times without purchase order numbers will be approved. You must obtain the individual's name and department and request identification if the order is placed in person. Department personnel are instructed to obtain a purchase order number from the Purchasing Office the following workday. The employee who places the order will send you an authorized purchase order number as soon as possible.

### **Specifications**

Written specifications are used in the bidding process to describe the required level of quality, quantity, delivery and scope of work. A bid form will accompany the specifications outlining certain terms and conditions governing City purchases. Specifications prepared by City departments are carefully reviewed by the Purchasing Office to eliminate undue restrictions and other limitations, which unnecessarily reduce competition. The purchase will be made from the lowest responsive, responsible bidder meeting the specifications.

Vendors may expend considerable time and money presenting a product or service to an individual City department in the hopes of being awarded a contract. Remember the purchase will likely be made by competitive bid, and the cost for design, demonstrations and layouts will not guarantee an order. Any assistance a vendor offers a department in developing specifications cannot be considered when the City makes the purchase. If you are called upon to provide expensive pre-bid services, you should consider contracting separately with the department for this service.

### **Terms and Conditions**

Bids and proposals will contain detailed terms and conditions, along with special terms and conditions pertaining to the specific bid or proposal. Vendors are requested to carefully read and understand the terms and conditions.

### **Delivery and Inspections**

Shipment is to be made to the City of Bellingham Free On Board (FOB) destination. Requirements for delivery are specified on all quotes, bids and purchase orders. Failure to meet the specified date may cause cancellation of the order. Variations from the specifications may make a shipment subject to rejection.

### **Award Results**

Quote and bid results are matters of public record. Quote and bid information can be obtained by accessing the City's website.

### **Change Orders**

The purchase order is part of the City's contract with the vendor. Any changes to the purchase order are not valid unless the City approves the change in writing.

### **Billing and Payment**

The City requires invoices in duplicate for each purchase order/agreement issued. The purchase order number must appear on all invoices, shipping tags, and all correspondence relevant to the order.

Payment is made after delivery and acceptance of the equipment and/or supplies as specified on the purchase order. Unless otherwise specified on the purchase order or agreement, invoices should be submitted to the department requesting the item.

Questions regarding payment should be made to the department requesting the item. You will need to reference the purchase order and invoice numbers when calling with questions.

### **Insurance**

In all instances in which vendor personnel enter City property to repair, install, service, construct, consult, etc, the City requires a certificate of insurance verifying coverage per City insurance requirements. Whenever insurance is required, the vendor will be notified of the requirements for coverage. Contact the Legal Department if you need further information on insurance requirements.

### **City Business License**

Vendors located in the City of Bellingham, performing services within the city limits, or delivering products are required to have a City business license. Contact the Finance Department for further information at 360-778-8025.

### **Gifts and Gratuities**

The City maintains a strict policy prohibiting employees from accepting gifts and/or gratuities from any vendor or potential vendor. Vendors are requested to cooperate by not making offers of gifts and/or gratuities to employees.

### **Emergency Resource Directory (ERD)**

The Purchasing Department maintains an “Emergency Resource Directory (ERD)” that lists vendors that may be contacted in the event of a local disaster. If you believe your company may be able to provide such a resource, please check the Purchasing website to register as an emergency resource vendor.

### **Vendor Responsibilities**

- Prior to submitting a bid, carefully read all the bid/quote specifications, including the terms and conditions and instructions to bidders.
- Include everything that is required in your bid/quote package. Examples are descriptive literature or bonds.
- Mail or deliver your bid sufficiently in advance of the bid closing date and time to ensure timely receipt. Bids received after the closing date and time will not be

opened or considered. The City is not responsible for US mail, UPS, FedEx, etc. deliveries.

- If you are awarded a contract, be certain that you comply with all contract requirements.

We look forward to doing business with you. We are interested in your thoughts and concerns about the City's purchasing process. Vendor feedback is valued. Please feel free to write or call with your comments or questions. When we conduct business with you, it is our desire to conclude each transaction in a respectful, fair and professional manner. We hope this guide has helped you to better understand the City's purchasing program.

Joan Cady, Purchasing Superintendent