
City of Cambridge How to do Business with the City of Cambridge Workshop

October 2021





Agenda

- Introduction to City Departments
- How to register as a vendor with the City
- Quick overview of solicitation of quotes and invitation for bids
- How to find current bid opportunities
- Tips on responding to bids
- Question & Answer period



City Departments and Programs



Community Development Department

CDD offers the following programs that are targeted to support local women and historically socioeconomically disadvantaged business owners through the following efforts:

Technical Assistance Programs:

- Business Development Workshops
- Small Business Coaching
- 10-Week Business Planning Class
- Food Business Incubator Program
- One-on-One Meetings

Small Business Grant Programs:

- Small Business Enhancement Program
- Storefront Improvement Program
- Retail Interior Accessibility Program



Department of Equity and Inclusion

- The Department of Equity and Inclusion ensures that the City's commitment to equal opportunity extends to minority business owners through rigorous enforcement of the requirements of the City of Cambridge's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Program, which went into effect in June of 1983.
- Under this program, general contractors must subcontract at least 10% of the total bid price of a qualifying construction project to a minority business. Alternatively, they may purchase materials from a qualified MBE.
- Only MBE firms approved by the Supplier Diversity Office (SDO), which maintains a list of currently certified businesses, are accepted. Failure to meet these requirements may result in automatic disqualification of the successful bidder.
- In cases, where due to special circumstances and following exhaustive and demonstrated efforts, a general contractor is unable to secure the MBE, the Department may direct the general contractor to subcontract with women-owned businesses or waive the requirement.



Purchasing Department

- Purchasing works with the Department of Equity and Inclusion to ensure that the City's MBE program is applied to city construction projects.
- Purchasing staff participates in CDD's annual local vendor fairs to provide information and assistance to M/WBEs and other local small businesses on becoming a city vendor.
- Purchasing considers M/WBE status as an element in determining "best value" when procuring goods and services through statewide contracts established by the Operational Services Division.



City Procurement Requirements

- Procurement of SUPPLIES and SERVICES is governed by M.G.L. c. 30B.
- Chapter 30B procurement requirements are threshold driven:
 - under \$10,000 – sound business practices
 - \$10,000 to \$50,000 – solicitation of written quotes
 - over \$50,000 – formal Invitation for Bids or Request for Proposals
- Other means of compliance include:
 - statewide contracts – contracts procured by the Office of Supplier Diversity
 - cooperative contracts – only supplies, not services



Vendor Registry




Signing Up a Vendor with the City*

Sign up online at:

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/Departments/Purchasing/vendorregistryform>

What you need to apply:

- Business Contact Information
- Email address
- Website
- A brief description of the commodities or services your business provides

*When you register at the City's Purchasing website, you are registering as a vendor for all city departments, including the School Department.



What Happens Next?

Once your business is registered...

- City may reach out to you and ask for you to provide a quote or respond to a BID.
- You can also be proactive and check the city's Purchasing website for information on current BIDs. <https://www.cambridgema.gov/Departments/Purchasing>
- Become familiar with different bid opportunities that the city offers:
 - Commodities Bids (Good & Services)
 - Construction Bids
 - Design Request for Qualifications (RFQ)
 - Request for Proposals (RFP)



Overview of solicitation of quotes and invitation for bids



City Procurement Processes

Solicitation of Quotes

If the estimated value of the contract is \$10,000 to \$50,000....

The City must solicit quotes from at least three (3) vendors who customarily provide the supply or perform the service that the City seeks

City Procurement Processes

Invitation for bids (IFB)

If the estimated value of the contract is greater than \$50,000...

- The City advertises the bid opportunity two weeks prior to due date in the Cambridge Chronicle, on the Purchasing Department website at <https://www.cambridgema.gov/Departments/Purchasing> and in COMMBUYS
- Additionally, the City advertises in the *Goods and Services Bulletin* if the estimated contract value is \$100,000 or more

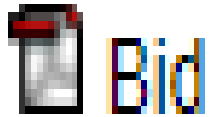


How to Find Bid Opportunities

- Step 1: Go to:
www.cambridgema.gov/departments/purchasing
- Step 2: Under “Current Bid Opportunities” you can view:
 - “Invitation for Bids”
 - “Construction Bids”
 - “Design RFQs”
 - “Regular RFPs”

How to Find Bid Opportunities cont.

- **Step 3:** Look for the “**Bid #**” (often referred to “File No.”)
- **Step 4:** Download the “**Bid Documents**” by clicking on:





Required Documents for All Bids

- Tax Compliance and Anti-Collusion Statement
 - Includes American with Disabilities Act; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and Debarment Statement
- Wage Theft Prevention Certification
- CORI Compliance Form
- Living Wage Ordinance
- Articles of Agreement



Tips on Responding to Bids

- Review your bid submission
 - Did you sign all the necessary forms
 - Is your price sheet complete
 - Check your math
- Minimum Quality Requirements
 - A “No” response, other qualifier or failure to respond results in rejection

Tips on Responding to Bids cont.

- Public records request for prior bid submissions or current contract
 - If not enough time, then submit as question
- Question and Answer Period
 - Don't assume – if you have questions **ASK** during the Q and A period
 - Deadline for questions is stated in the bid document
 - Questions must be submitted in writing
- Check the website frequently
 - Answers to questions, changes to specifications, delay or cancellation of bid submission date

Questions?



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are common goods and services that the city buys?

2. I already registered as a vendor on the city's website but did not get a confirmation. How do I know I am a vendor?

Answer: You will not get a confirmation, but if you are concerned your form did not go through, please contact the Purchasing Department at purchasing@cambridgema.gov or 617-349-4310.