



City of Tacoma
TACOMA POWER / UTILITY TECHNOLOGY SERVICES
TEMPORARY IT STAFING SERVICES
RFP Specification No. PI21-0535F

QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

All interested parties had the opportunity to submit questions in writing by email to Seth Hartz by September 17, 2021. The answers to the questions received are provided below and posted to the City's website at www.TacomaPurchasing.org. Navigate to *Current Contracting Opportunities / Services*, and then click *Questions and Answers* for this Specification. This information IS NOT considered an addendum. Respondents should consider this information when submitting their proposals.

Question 1: Please disclose the incumbents's names and if possible provide the incumbent proposals.

Answer 1: Current contract incumbents consist of MW Partners, Inc, and KRE Consulting, LLC. Please see Section H. of the Specification. Incumbents proposals may be requested through the Washington State Public Disclosure Act. Timing and response to such requests will not change the schedule for this solicitation.

Please see below link for submitting a Public Disclosure Request with the City of Tacoma: [PUBLIC RECORDS CENTER](#)

Question 2: To offer you competitive pricing, please share the incumbents cost proposals.

Answer 2: Please see response to Question #1.

Question 3: Describe how vendors under contract will receive a fair share of business without vendor rotation of job orders implemented in the procurement process.

Answer 3: Please see process for Task Assignments as outlined in Section 1.A. of the Specification.

Question 4: How many temporaries are currently working under the current contract?

Answer 4: There are currently 7 contracted personnel assigned through various engagements.

Question 5: Please describe the issues/problems that the City is facing under the current contract?

Answer 5: There are no issues/problems; the current contracts expire February 28, 2022.

Question 6: It is our understanding the provided estimate of \$12,000,000.00 is the budget for the next 5 years. Is it correct?

Answer 6: The current estimate for this contract five-year term is \$12,000,000.00.

Question 7: Refer to 2. Qualifications / Experience of Firm, do the vendors need to demonstrate their experience related to IT staffing or IT consulting?

Answer 7: Yes.

Question 8: Refer to 2. Qualifications / Experience of Firm, “What was the average time (in days) to submit proposals for subsequent Task Assignments”. It is our understanding that the vendors need to demonstrate their average time of providing the IT professional to its clients? Is it correct?

Answer 8: Yes.

Question 9: It is our understanding that the vendors need to provide three client references that cover all or some of the categories defined in the solicitation. Is it correct?

Answer 9: Yes.

Question 10: Do the vendors need to bid on all the categories defined in the solicitation?

Answer 10: It is preferable, but not mandatory.

Question 11: Do the vendors need to submit a copy of their insurance after award?

Answer 11: Insurance documents will need to be provided during contract negotiations before contract signing.

Question 12: Can vendors get 5 points of Equity in Contracting if they take a certified firm as a subcontractor?

Answer 12: That is correct, if your firm or a firm you are partnering with are certified with the State of Washington as a certified firm you will receive 5 points in the Equity in Contracting criteria in the evaluation (see Section J.7).

Question 13: Refer to “Fees and Charges / Method of Billing / Hourly Rates” is it acceptable if the vendor provides the Hourly pay rate range, mark-up percentage and hourly bill rate range?

Answer 13: Please see Pricing Proposal Form in Appendix A included in Addendum 01 to this solicitation.

Question 14: Does the City have a pre-defined cost sheet covering all the positions under each category?

Answer 14: Please see response to Question #13.

Question 15: Do we need a City of Tacoma Business License to be eligible to participate in bidding?

Answer 15: No, a City of Tacoma business license is not required at time of submitting your proposal.

Question 16: Do we need references from Utility companies for past performance?

Answer 16: It is preferable, but not mandatory.

Question 17: Is there a preference for MBE/DBE businesses?

Answer 17: See response for Question #12.

Question 18: If applicable, who is the incumbent for these services and for how long have they served City of Tacoma in this capacity?

Answer 18: Current contract incumbents consist of MW Partners, Inc. and KRE Consulting, LLC. Effective date of current contracts are June 2017.

Question 19: Can we submit bid electronically?

Answer 19: Yes, electronic submittals can be submitted via email to bids@cityoftacoma.org.

Question 20: What is City of Tacoma's historical usage and yearly spend for this contract during the past three (3) years?

Answer 20: Yearly spend for the total contract period are Year 1: \$2.0M; Year 2: \$2.9M; Year 3: \$4.1M; Year 4: \$2.3M; and Year 5 (to current): \$351K.

Question 21: Will the positions be remote?

Answer 21: It depends on the needs of the organization and initiative. It is anticipated that most roles will be remote, yet there may be a need for some roles to be performed onsite.

Question 22: How many awards does City of Tacoma anticipate making?

Answer 22: It depends on the number of responses that best suit the needs of the City.

Question 23: When does City of Tacoma anticipate completing its evaluation and notifying respondents of its recommended awardee(s)?

Answer 23: Please see Section 1.D for the calendar of events.

Question 24: Are respondents required to bid on all positions in order to be deemed responsive?

Answer 24: It is preferable, but not mandatory.

Question 25: If not all-or nothing, will bidding on only select positions negatively impact respondents' evaluation score?

Answer 25: It is the City's preference to award to companies that can provide a wider-breadth of resource solutions, but not mandatory. Per Section Q. of the Specification, the City may award one or more contracts.

Question 26: Will City of Tacoma provide detailed job descriptions for the positions listed in the solicitation?

Answer 26: The roles and responsibilities along with competencies and experience will be outlined in the Task Assignments.

Question 27: What specific background checks and/or drug screens are required of the temporary staff?

Answer 27: The City conducts a comprehensive review of a candidate's background causing a consumer report and/or an investigative consumer report to be generated for employment purposes.

Question 28: To ensure FCRA compliance, it is our company's policy to provide clients with an attestation of completion of background check pursuant to client's requirements, but not the actual results. Will City of Tacoma accept letters of attestation in lieu of actual background check results?

Answer 28: The City will conduct background checks of all selected candidates. Attestation of background checks performed by entities outside of the City's own resources will not be accepted.

Question 29: Will there be any additional background checks required?

Answer 29: No.

Question 30: Will respondents be disqualified or adversely impacted during the evaluation process if they were to submit exceptions to City of Tacoma?

Answer 30: Please see Section 1.08 Alterations Not Allowed of the Standard Terms and Conditions in the specification.

Question 31: With respect to Affordable Care Act (ACA) costs, would City of Tacoma prefer these charges as a separate line item on the invoices, or instead incorporated directly into each respondent's proposed rates? Please clarify.

Answer 31: All proposed rates should be inclusive of all fees. Please see response to Question #13.

Question 32: If government-mandated costs or expenses are enacted during the contract term, will respondents be allowed to request rate increases to cover these higher rates?

Answer 32: Please reference Section J.4. of the Specification and also see Section 1.35 Contract Pricing of the Standard Terms and Conditions.

Question 33: Where will the positions be serviced?

Answer 33: Tacoma, WA located in Pierce County is the place of performance for onsite engagements.

Question 34: If this is not a new requirement, who are the vendors that are currently providing these services?

Answer 34: Please see response to Question #1.

Question 35: What has the City spent on these services over the past three years?

Answer 35: Please see response for Question #20.

Question 36: What are the current hourly bill rates or mark-up percentage that the City spends for each position?

Answer 36: Marked-up percentage information is not available. Please see response to Question #1 to obtain information relating to current hourly bill rates.

Question 37: How many positions has the City requested in the last 3 years?

Answer 37: There have been 31 task assignments.

Question 38: What has been the average or typical duration (in days, months, or hours) for positions requested in the past?

Answer 38: Durations depend on the initiative and requested role. Duration can be anywhere from several years to a couple months.

Question 39: What percentage of temporary personnel has the City converted to full time employees in the past?

Answer 39: 7%

Question 40: What is the required response time from when the City makes a request for a temporary contractor to when a vendor is expected provide candidates?

Answer 40: Expected timeframe is estimated to be ten (10) business days; there may be times when a request may be expedited for a quicker turn-around time.

Question 41: How will the City choose a candidate from one the awarded vendors? Since, vendors will have different rates and candidates with different skills and experience.

Answer 41: Please see the Task Assignment process as outlined in Section 1.A. of the Specification.

Question 42: We are 100% women owned -- will our national WBENC certification suffice for the equity points?

Answer 42: The WBENC certification will not suffice. Please see response to Question #12.

Question 43: What is the City's current COVID-19 Vaccination policy?

Answer 43: Safety is a top priority in our organization. The City aligns closely to the guidance of Pierce County Health Department.

Question 44: How much of the work do you anticipate will be required to be done onsite in Tacoma?

Answer 44: It is anticipated that most work can be performed remotely; however, the requirement for onsite or remote will be identified in the Task Assignment.

Question 45: Based on our analysis of the RFP, we presume the submission is by e-mail. Kindly confirm.

Answer 45: Please see response to Question #19.

Question 46: Is it a mandatory requirement to have a physical presence in the Puget Sound/Pacific Northwest region?

Answer 46: No.

Question 47: Should resumes of the identified Candidates under the various categories be part of the response?

Answer 47: There is no requirement to submit representative resumes of potential candidates. Please see Section J.3. of the specification.

Question 48: We are incorporated in California, and do not have the Washington State Business License Number. Are we qualified to bid for this RFP?

Answer 48: Respondents are not required to have a Washington State Business License at the time of their submittal, but will be required to before contract signing.

Question 49: Is this a new contract or renewal to an existing contract? If existing, please share the number and list of incumbents.

Answer 49: There are existing contracts in place to provide these services which expire February 2022. Contract award(s) as a result of this solicitation will be considered new contract(s).

Question 50: How many vendors are you planning to select as a result of this RFP process?

Answer 50: Please see response to Question #22.

Question 51: What was City's last year expenditure for similar services?

Answer 51: Please see response to Question #20.

Question 52: How many Task Assignment requests were made by the City in the past years?

Answer 52: Please see response to Question #37.

Question 53: What is the anticipated number of Task Assignment requests that would be released under this contract?

Answer 53: It is not yet known. It depends upon the needs of the organization. Please see response to Question #97 for historical usage.

Question 54: What would be the minimum length of such projects for which City would require resources?

Answer 54: It depends upon the needs of the engagement and initiatives.

Question 55: Can we provide an Hourly/Bill Rate range for both Onsite & Offsite option depending on different experience level or can we only provide a single or maximum rate for each Title/role?

Answer 55: Please see response to Question #13. It is anticipated that candidates with less experience and skills would fall under the low end of a rate range, while more experienced candidates would fall under the higher end of a rate range.

Question 56: Please specify the category-wise budget and spend details.

Answer 56: Budget and spend information by category is not known.

Question 57: Referring Section J Point 3 (Qualification/Experience of Key Personnel) What does City mean by Key personnel? We assume that we need to provide qualifications of our Account Manager, other Account Management Team and Recruiters etc. who would be dedicated to this contract, not the technology SMEs. Please confirm.

Answer 57: Confirmed.

Question 58: If we are required to submit the resume of technology SMEs, we assume these would be representative resumes as actual candidates will be presented later when actual Task Assignments will come. Please confirm

Answer 58: Please see response to Question #47.

Question 59: Will the Task Assignment requests that might come in during this contract term be on Time & Material basis, Fixed cost or both?

Answer 59: It is anticipated that Task Assignments will be time based. All expenses will be inclusive of rate. If there is a need for a fixed-cost engagement, those engagements will be negotiated.

Question 60: Will reporting any exceptions to the Service Agreement affect our scoring in evaluation?

Answer 60: Exceptions to the terms and conditions of the Professional Service Agreement, will not affect scoring; however, submitted responses with exceptions to the terms and conditions of the Professional Service Agreement may be rejected as being non-responsive. Please see response to Question #30.

Question 61: Can the City provide us a sample form for the references to be provided?

Answer 61: Please see attached References Data Sheet located in Addendum 01 to this solicitation. This form is an example and does not require respondents to utilize this form.

Question 62: Can the City provide clarification on the roles that we need to provide the pricing for? For example, are we required to provide the pricing for the sample roles mentioned within each classification description such as Workforce Productivity: System Administrator, operators and developers?

Answer 62: Please see response to Question #13.

Question 63: Do we need to submit a separate proposal document for each Category? Please specify.

Answer 63: No.

Question 64: Can the City confirm that if we have had an ongoing contract with a firm for e.g. since 2010 to current will that be considered as a company reference or do we need to provide information of only the contracts which began in the past 3 years?

Answer 64: Per Section J.6. of the Specification, three (3) client references within the last three (3) years are requested.

Question 65: In case we plan to utilize a subcontractor here, what all information would the city need from them?

Answer 65: The City intends to award contract(s) to the Prime Respondent. Please see Section T. of the Specification relative to partnerships. Please see response to Question #12.

Question 66: If we partner with a firm which possesses DBE or MBE certification can we claim the Equity in Contracting Points? Please Confirm.

Answer 66: Please see response to Question #12.

Question 67: In case of a subcontractor can their Company reference be shown in place of the primes References? Please confirm

Answer 67: No. Per Section T. of the Specification, contract awards will be made with the Prime Respondent. References should be representative of the Prime Respondent.

Question 68: Will you allow near shore (Colombia) or offshore work?

Answer 68: No.

Question 69: What is the place of performance?

Answer 69: Please see response to Question #33.

Question 70: Could you please share the previous spending on this contract, if any?

Answer 70: Please see response to Question #20.

Question 71: What is the total number of resources who are currently working on this project? Please let us know their position name and hourly rate?

Answer 71: There are a total of 7 resources on assignment: Project Manager (3); Test Manager (1); Project Coordinator (1); Technical Writer (1) and Business Systems Analyst (1). See response to Question #01 for process to obtain hourly rate information.

Question 72: Considering the current COVID-19 pandemic situation, if the proposed candidates are not available at the time of award, will the agency allow us to provide replacement personnel with similar or more skill sets?

Answer 72: Candidates do not need to be available by time of contract award. Please reference the Task Assignment process as outlined in Section 1.A of the Specification.

Question 73: Is it entirely onsite work or can it be done remotely to some extent / Does the services need to be delivered onsite or is there a possibility for remote operations and performance?

Answer 73: See Response to Question #21.

Question 74: Do we need to submit the actual resumes for proposed candidates or can we submit the sample resumes?

Answer 74: Please see response for Question #47.

Question 75: How many people are currently working onsite and offsite?

Answer 75: All are currently working remote.

Question 76: Could you please provide the list of holidays observed by the City of Tacoma?

Answer 76: Please see Section 1.24 Legal Holidays in the Standard Terms and Conditions.

Question 77: Are there any mandated Paid Time Off, Vacation, etc.?

Answer 77: No. Within the scope of this contract award, the City does not account for or pay for Paid Time Off, etc.

Question 78: Do you have a preference for suppliers whose corporate headquarters are in Tacoma or in the State of Washington?

Answer 78: There is not a preference where the corporate headquarters is located.

Question 79: Is the current incumbent allowed to bid for this opportunity?

Answer 79: Yes.

Question 80: Will you accept MBE certification from any source other than the State of Washington (e.g., National Minority Supplier Development Council or affiliates, California Public Utilities Commission, other state certifying agency)?

Answer 80: No, please see response to Question #12.

Question 81: I am only seeing the main City of Tacoma Temp IT Staffing RFP document on the listing, are there any other documents that go with this RFP?

Answer 81: All of the specification documents are located on our website at the following link under PI21-0535F Specification:

Question 82: Is there a specific pricing document that needs to be uploaded for this RFP or just the general fees/methods of calculation for positions?

Answer 82: Please see response to Question #13.

Question 83: Is there a specific format you want pricing information given in?

Answer 83: Please see response to Question #13.

Question 84: Are suppliers required to compensate contractors for the days off that contractors will have in reference to the holiday schedule shared in the RFP document?

Answer 84: It is not a requirement of the City.

Question 85: Can suppliers include an additional mark-up charge to account for paid leave?

Answer 85: Rates should be inclusive of all fees. Please see response to Question #13.

Question 86: Is the supplier required to have a local presence in Tacoma or Washington State as a whole to be selected for this contract?

Answer 86: No.

Question 87: Will you accept an MBE/WBE certification from the National Minority Supplier Diversity Council (NMSDC) and Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) in lieu of Washington State specific certifications?

Answer 87: No, please see response to Question #12.

Question 88: If the client will accept an Umbrella policy amount of \$2ML?

Answer 88: Please see Section 4.5 of the City of Tacoma Insurance Requirements document located in Appendix B for the insurance requirements for this solicitation.

Question 89: This RFP is titled Temporary IT Staffing on as-needed basis. Kindly confirm that personnel will be required on a continuous 40 hrs./week for a designated number of days on a term basis?

Answer 89: Duration and level of effort will be dependent upon the engagement requirements and outlined in the Task Assignment.

Question 90: Section 1-Proposal Content-Point J-Section 3.d) Resume of Key Personnel:- Is Account Executive the Key Personnel meant? Are sample resumes of any technical IT personnel required in the proposal who may service the City if we are awarded ? (like Lead developer, Architect etc.) If so, how many and for which profiles?

Answer 90: Key personnel are Prime Respondent's personnel servicing the account and are not representative of potential candidates.

Question 91: Section 1-Point K. INTERVIEWS / ORAL PRESENTATIONS: Please clarify whom the City is expecting to interview if awarded. The Account Executive or main Technical Project Manager/Lead who shall work on the roles and responsibilities?

Answer 91: Per Section K. of the Specification, interviews will be scheduled with the contact person provided on the signature page.

Question 92: Considering Covid-19 situation , can we assume remote video conferencing methods are allowed for interview process?

Answer 92: Yes.

Question 93: Are local Firms given higher preference in award and selection?

Answer 93: There is not a preference given to local firms for selection and award.

Question 94: To show hourly pricing per role from junior to senior level that we propose, are we expected to list them per role mentioned in Section 2 -PROJECT SCOPE AND DELIVERABLES - Category 1 to 8? Is this required in a Word or Excel file format?

Answer 94: Please see response to Question #13.

Question 95: When the existing contract was started, and what is the annual monetary spent value of the current contract since inception?

Answer 95: Current contracts were executed June 2017. Please see response to Question #20.

Question 96: How many resources are currently engaged in the current contract?

Answer 96: Please see response to Question #4.

Question 97: Can you please share the no. of positions served in previous years under this contract?

Answer 97: Total assigned resources equal 46.

Question 98: What will be the estimated annual budget for this project?

Answer 98: Please see response to Question #6.

Question 99: How many positions we can expect under this contract throughout the given term?

Answer 99: Please see response to Question #53; as well as response to Question #97 for historical usage.

Question 100: Can you please confirm the most commonly filled positions of this contract?

Answer 100: Project Manager is the most common role under the existing contract(s).

Question 101: What would be the estimated hours per week for given positions?

Answer 101: Depends on the needs of the organization and the initiative.

Question 102: What is the minimum guaranteed hrs per week for these positions?

Answer 102: There is no minimum guarantee.

Question 103: What is the anticipated duration of the project?

Answer 103: The contract term is a five-year term. Requested candidates will be solicited per the Task Assignment process as outlined in Section 1.A. of the Specification. The estimated duration for each engagement will be outlined in the Task Assignment.

Question 104: Project Management Office is soliciting proposals to establish one or more contracts with qualified firms to provide supplemental support and professional services on an as-needed basis for a five year period at predetermined rates. Proposals submitted and/or the selected Consultant(s) may be used for projects of similar type and scope at the sole discretion of the City for up to one year, and may be extended for longer periods depending on the needs of the engagement. There is ambiguity in above mentioned statements, please confirm the duration of the resulting contract?

Answer 104: At time of award, the duration of the contract(s) is anticipated to be a five-year period. Please see response to Question #103.

Question 105: Please confirm if there is any subcontracting goal to claim 5 points in the evaluation points?

Answer 105: Please see response to Question #12.

Question 106: Please confirm, are we eligible to claim 5 points in the evaluation of bid by merely partnering with certified Washington State specified firms irrespective of subcontracting %?

Answer 106: Please see response to Question #12.

Question 107: Unless stated otherwise, all submittals must be in SAP Ariba and submitted exactly as specified or directed, and all required form must be used. Please confirm, if the submission of the response is via email or portal?

Answer 107: Please see response to Question #19.

Question 108: Is there any travel requirement while delivering the service under the resulting contract? If yes, please specify what all travel requirements are needed so that we can accurately quote pricing for the same.

Answer 108: It is not known whether a travel requirement exists. Task Assignments will include whether the position is remote or onsite. If the selected candidate is not local and the requirement is to perform onsite; the City will not reimburse for any expenses outside of the contracted rates.

Question 109: Please confirm if we need to provide pricing in our own format as there is no pricing/cost sheet attached with the RFP document?

Answer 109: Please see response to Question #13.

Question 110: Do we need to provide fully burdened hourly rate for each position as part of the Fees and charges?

Answer 110: All rates should be inclusive of all expenses. Please see response to Question #13.

Question 111: After reviewing the project overview, we understand that this project will run for 5 years so do we need to provide pricing for 5 years at predetermined rates (Each financial year separately)?

Answer 111: No. Please see response to Question #32.

Question 112: Please confirm, if we need to provide rates for positions mentioned in section A. SCOPE OF SERVICES AND DELIVERABLES under the “service categories” list?

Answer 112: Please see response to Question #13.

Question 113: Is this a mandatory requirement to be certified with Washington State?

Answer 113: No, see response to Question #12.

Question 114: Are there terms and/or conditions in your contract which the City would consider unacceptable to not meet? If yes, can you please describe which ones and how do you wish that to be addressed?

Answer 114: Please see response to Question #30.

Question 115: Can we add roles to categories and/or bid on subsets of roles across categories, i.e., when one role is repeated across categories?

Answer 115: Please see response to Question #13. Per Section J. of the Specification, any responses with deviation to the Pricing Proposal Form may be rejected as being non-responsive. Providing rates for selected roles as subsets of categories is acceptable.

Question 116: Does Tacoma allow Green Card holders or must all candidates be US Citizens?

Answer 116: Candidate Green Card holders are acceptable. Candidates must live in the United States.

Question 117: How many candidate/resumes do you expect for each engagement?

Answer 117: It will depend on the number of candidates meeting the requirements of the Task Assignment; generally no more than five (5).

Question 118: Are you open to vendor candidates (corp to corp/C2C); 1099 vs W2 candidates?

Answer 118: The bill rate for a candidate will be the same for a independent contractor or employee.

Question 119: What is the expected volume? How many requests per week? Will it be steady or many positions at once?

Answer 119: It depends on the needs of the organization. Please see response to Question #97 for historical usage.