



City of Tacoma

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

On-Call Technology Services RFP Specification No. PI24-0283F

All interested parties had the opportunity to submit questions in writing by email to Brandon Snow, Senior Buyer by date questions were due. 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 Solicitations](#), 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.

CONSOLIDATED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Questions regarding incumbent contracts and current pricing:

Answer: This is a new requirement. There are no incumbent contractors to name or proposals/pricing to release.

2. Questions regarding the intent of the specification:

Answer: It is the intent of the specification to solicit and form on-call contracts for the rapid execution of individual, small-dollar, small-scale projects. ***This is not a staffing contract.***

Proposers should submit proposals outlining their qualification to work in one or more of the defined work areas in which they maintain in-house expertise.

Awards will be made to firms based on their proven experience in providing the defined services. Subcontracting out Task Orders will not be allowed; all services will be performed by in-house staff.

3. Questions regarding past performance and references:

Answers: Proposers may submit current and past performance examples for work of a similar complexity and scale performed outside the utility sector (commercial, state/local, federal) but we are highly interested in your experience working with and within the compliance frameworks applicable to utilities.

You may propose references from current or past projects. References will be checked.

4. Questions regarding the qualifications of key personnel and resume submission:

Answer: Proposers should submit short-bio/resumes that are sufficient to demonstrate expertise in the work-area(s) you are proposing. Extensive resumes are not required or desired.

Resumes will be used in award evaluation, but key personnel assigned to each Task Order may vary from those submitted with the proposal. Key personnel will be finalized on a Task Order basis post award.



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5. Questions regarding selection, award, and contract formation:

Answer: As stated, it is the intent of the City to award up-to ten (10) total contracts as the result of this solicitation. Contracts will be executed for not-more-than \$500,000 in total cumulative value. Contracts will be structured on an on-call, task order basis.

Individual Task Orders will not exceed \$100,000 in value. Contracts will not be amended to exceed \$500,000 in cumulative value.

6. Questions regarding IT infrastructure and nature of the work:

Answer: We will not be providing details regarding the composition of the Utility's IT infrastructure at this time. We seek qualified firms that can provide the services defined in this RFP on an on-call basis.

Should an awarded firm be selected for a Task Order award, they will be briefed on the IT environments to be worked on during Task Order negotiations and dependent on passing any/all required security reviews.

7. Questions regarding price proposals:

Answer: Please propose your customary range of rates and positions/titles related to each work area you intend to propose in accordance with the specification. All rates should be expressed as fully burdened rates.

Rates will be used to assess price reasonable-ness. Pricing on individual Task Orders will be negotiated at the Task Order level and may be compensated on a Time & Materials, Firm Fixed Price, or other compensation plan as agreed.

8. Questions regarding performance location:

Answer: The nature of each Task Order will drive the performance location. We are open to off-shore, near-shore, US based, and local providers. Please propose your expertise areas and include where you can perform and deliver the work.

9. Questions regarding the Signature Page (Appendix A):

Answer: Digital signatures will be allowed. A contractor's license is not required as Public Works projects are outside the scope of this procurement.

The Signature Page (Appendix A) is the only City required form that needs to be submitted with your proposal.

Please do not forget to acknowledge all issued addenda on the Signature Page.



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10. Questions regarding Appendix D:

Answer: This standard document was not conformed to the specification. Consider references to the “price proposal” as pertaining to awarded Task Orders.

Regarding Section 4 – Provide sufficient narrative to demonstrate your firm’s ability to conduct billing and invoicing as outlined in the section.

Regarding Section 5 - Provide sufficient narrative to demonstrate your firm’s ability to conduct reporting as outlined in the Section.

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SUBMITTED VENDOR QUESTIONS

- 1. Question: If we will be awarded a contract, will we be assigned immediately to activities, or will the work assignment be dynamic depending on ongoing projects and requirements?**

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 2 and 5

- 2. Question: If an assigned task requires a different skill set from another member of the Team, can we add that new team member to the Task Order? Or do we need secure a different (additional) task order?**

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 4.

- 3. Question: As new requirements are identified, can new team members with specific expertise capable to handle the new requirements be added to the contract already awarded?**

Answer: See Consolidated Questions No. 2 and 4.

- 4. Question: Please provide an estimated number of applications and related servers.**

Answer: No. Work on applications, servers, any form of hardware, software or public works is allowed under the contract. Only technology services are permitted.

- 5. Question: Please clarify if the applications and systems to be worked on are on-premises, in the Cloud, or both**

Answer: Any form of technology services that the City anticipates needing is permitted.

- 6. Question: We are a Team of 4 independent consultants, operating as one integrated team under a single Business Entity (ERP-FAST CONSULTING LLC) and therefore with one single contract with the City of Tacoma, and our team has successfully supported other utilities customers in that fashion – will this team structure meet the requirements of the RFP?**

Answer: The entity that signs the contract is responsible and accountable for direct technology services. We are not allowing subcontracting under this arrangement. If these 4 consultants are operating as one entity and are all equally responsible and accountable for the performance of the technology services, it is permitted.

- 7. Question: Would adding new consultants with additional skill sets required a modification to the awarded contract?**

Answer: Potentially, yes. You wouldn't know however unless the City requests the skill set.

- 8. Question: Does the city define profiles on technology service areas as key personnel and we need to provide the profiles for them in the response under the response for section 10.6, or does it talk about vendor's account management team and the members responsible for working under the project as key personnel?**



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Answer: See Consolidated Questions No. 2 and 4.

9. Question: Does the resume include in the page count?

Answer: Resumes are excluded from the page count. See Addendum No. 2

10. Question: Please provide what all sections are not included in the page count.

Answer: Only resumes are excluded from the page count. See Addendum No. 2

11. Question: In the Signature Page, we need to provide the State Contractor's License Number. Since, we are IT Service provider and not product-based company, we do not acquire this number. Please confirm if we can leave it blank. If not, please suggest an alternative.

Answer: The contractor's license line can be left blank. No public works and improvements will be performed on this contract.

12. Question: Is this a new contract? If not, please provide the list of incumbents?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No.1.

13. Question: Please confirm if this is a Consulting service project or the agency expect us to provide staffing services?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 2.

14. Question: Can you provide examples of the types of projects expected under this contract, along with any priority areas or high-demand services?

Answer: We prefer to hear what your company already provides as its technology expertise based on our list of skills. We don't want it tailored to what the Utility historically has needed.

15. Question: Are there any upcoming technology initiatives or projects that may influence the scope or focus of on-call services?

Answer: We cannot say for sure. It could, but also may not. It all depends on the current and future needs of the Utility Technology.

16. Question: What performance metrics or KPIs will the City use to evaluate the success of a project?

Answer: Each task authorization will outline any required metrics or KPIs for a successful deliverable.

17. Question: What are the most common challenges or pain points you hope to address with on-call consulting support?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 2.



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18. Question: Which technologies, platforms, and systems are currently in use or planned for use within the City of Tacoma that consultants should be familiar with?

Answer: Award will be based on the Utilities current and future needs. It may not be based on current technologies or platforms, or even systems. We are interested in the supplier's technology expertise and standard offerings within the skillset addressed in this RFP.

See Consolidated Question No. 6.

19. Question: What database systems (e.g., Oracle, MySQL, SQL Server) are currently in use or expected to be used?

Answer: All of the above and more. See Consolidated Question No. 6.

20. Question: What tools or software does the City prefer or currently use for technical writing?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 2.

21. Question: Are there any existing architectural frameworks or standards that architects need to follow?

Answer: Please offer the technology services you are expert in. The utility will determine the need and provide further context if there is a fit.

See Consolidated Question No. 6

22. Question: Are there specific performance or security challenges that the DBA will need to address?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 6.

23. Question: What are the primary systems and infrastructure components that engineers will be responsible for?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 6.

24. Question: What are the expectations for on-call services, including hours, full-time or part-time roles, typical engagement lengths, and turn-around time from project request to start date?

Answer: It all depends on each individual task authorization which will outline those details. If the business approaches you with a need, the supplier will provide the response to meet the need and it can be anyone of the above conditions.

25. Question: How often do you anticipate needing on-call services, and what is the expected volume of requests?

Answer: It is unknown currently; thus we are seeking on-call contracts.



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26. Question: Are consultants brought in for specific project-based work or as embedded consultants?

Answer: It will likely vary depending on the Utilities' needs.

27. Question: What will the on-call requirements be for System Engineers, and what types of incidents are typically encountered?

Answer: Please propose your experience and solutions to on-call requirements and incident response as in-regards to the services you offer.

28. Question: Do the services need to be local to Tacoma and are there any in-office requirements?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 8.

29. Question: What is the typical expectation for response time from project request to start date?

Answer: The purpose of the on-call contracting program is to shorten the timeframe between project task authorization and start date. The Utilities will work with each contracted supplier to deliver services as quickly as possible.

30. Question: How is the review and approval process for technical documents managed?

Answer: It would be outlined in each individual task authorization depending on the work and the needs of the Utility. It will depend.

31. Question: Could the City please confirm if vendors can select to send the proposal electronically or in person?

Answer: Please see the Request for Proposals page for specification delivery instructions.

32. Question: How many firms is the City looking to award?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 5.

33. Question: In Project Scope section states: "The on-call technology services may include: Consulting, DBA Services, Maintenance and Support Services, and other such on-going Ad hoc technology services." Could the City please confirm if firms can select which services to bid on?

Answer: Yes, you can offer the technology services you are able to provide on an on-call basis.

34. Question: Could the City please clarify if firms must have experience providing technology services in all the areas enlisted under section 2. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS (General Roles, Cybersecurity, Systems Administration, Voice and Security & Networks) to power and water utilities?



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Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 8.

35. Question: Does the City prefer onsite resources for this contract?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No.8.

36. Question: Does the City accept remote resources for this engagement?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 8.

37. Question: Does the City accept offshore resources for this engagement?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 8

38. Question: Does the City accept onshore resources that have the willingness to relocate?

Answer: Relocation will likely not be necessary.

39. Question: Is the City looking for in-house personnel to provide the requested services under this solicitation or for firms to recruit personnel to perform the requested services?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 2.

40. Question: Can firms demonstrate the required experience by providing the requested experience information providing similar services to commercial/private sectors?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 3.

41. Question: Are electronic signatures allowed?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 9.

42. Question: In Project Scope section states: “The on-call technology services may include: Consulting, DBA Services, Maintenance and Support Services, and other such on-going Ad hoc technology services.” Can firms submit a proposal for Data Consulting Services?

Answer: Yes, please be specific concerning what data you consult on.

43. Question: In Project Scope section states: “The on-call technology services may include: Consulting, DBA Services, Maintenance and Support Services, and other such on-going Ad hoc technology services.” Can firms submit a proposal only for Database Administration Services (DBA Services)?

Answer: Yes.



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44. Question: Can firms provide references from ongoing contracts/projects?

Answer: Yes. See Consolidated Question No. 3.

45. Question: Can firms provide commercial references?

Answer: Yes. See Consolidated Question No. 3.

46. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.1 Qualifications/Experience of Firm, the following is requested: “your company's ability to provide the services outlined in Section 2.” Could the City please clarify how firms can demonstrate this point (case studies, examples of personnel placed, etc)?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 2.

47. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.1 Qualifications/Experience of Firm, the following is requested: “your company's ability to provide the services outlined in Section 2.” Are firms requested to provide their available resources to provide the requested services under this solicitation? If not, could the City please elaborate further on what information vendors must provide to suffice this point?

Answer: See Consolidated Questions No. 2 and 4.

48. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.2 Examples of Projects – 10 points, the following is requested: “Describe three projects similar in scope and complexity to this project's scope of work.” Could the City please confirm if firms can provide examples from ongoing projects or if firms must provide examples from only completed projects?

Answer: Both are permitted.

49. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.2 Examples of Projects – 10 points, the following is requested: “Describe three projects similar in scope and complexity to this project's scope of work.” Could the City please confirm if firms can provide examples from other government agencies besides power and water utilities?

Answer: Yes. See Consolidated Question No. 3.

50. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.2 Examples of Projects – 10 points, the following is requested: “Describe three projects similar in scope and complexity to this project's scope of work.” Could the City please confirm if firms must provide examples only from projects developed for power and water utilities?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 3.



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51. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED: in point 10.1 Qualifications/Experience of Firm, the following information is requested: "Describe the technology services you provide and your company's ability to provide the services outlined in Section 2." Could the City please clarify if firms can select which technology areas bid on from the ones enlisted under section 2 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS (General Roles, Cybersecurity, Systems Administration, Voice and Security & Networks)?

Answer: Yes you may.

52. Question: Could the City please clarify if, by key personnel, they mean the personnel who will manage the execution of this contract or the personnel who will perform the services requested under this solicitation?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 4.

53. Question: Is this a new initiative? If not, could the City please provide the incumbent information?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 1.

54. Question: Are firms required to pay Holidays, PTO apart from the Paid Sick Leave required to the consultants placed?

Answer: To clarify we are not seeking a staffing contract. Personnel should already be on staff with your company. Additionally, all suppliers will need to be compliant with the employment requirements applicable to the jurisdiction where the work is being performed.

55. Question: Could the City please confirm if firms must provide health benefits to the consultants placed?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 2.

56. Question: Could the City please confirm if firms must pay extra hours to the consultants placed? If yes, will the City reimburse the vendors for those extra hours?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 2.

57. Questions: If the firms' key personnel is the actual personnel that will perform the services, can these be replaced by equally qualified personnel if they are no longer available at the time of contract award?

Answer: That can be determined by upon formulating a new task authorization against the contract.

58. Question: Can firms provide hourly rate ranges?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 7.



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59. Question: Are the rates requested all-inclusive rates (including payroll costs, profit, sick leave, taxes, etc.)?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 7.

60. Question: How many hours are the consultants expected to work? Will there be any overtime involved?

Answer: No overtime. The work is dependent on the on-call task authorization.

61. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.5 Fees and Charges / Method of Billing / Hourly Rates, states: "Provide a fee structure for your company's proposed services (flat-rate, hourly, etc.)." Could the City please clarify if firms must provide their consulting pricing catalog or if firms must include a fee for all the positions enlisted under the technology areas mentioned under section 2 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 7.

62. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.5 Fees and Charges / Method of Billing / Hourly Rates, states: "Provide a fee structure for your company's proposed services (flat-rate, hourly, etc.)." Could the City please clarify if they have a preferred format for the pricing?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 7.

63. Question: Is it mandatory for firms to be an EnviroStars-recognized business to be able to bid on this solicitation?

Answer: No.

64. Question: Will the City disqualify those firms that are not EnviroStars-recognized businesses?

Answer: No.

65. Question: Under section 2. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS, states: "Supplier must demonstrate to have three or more years experience in working with power and water utilities." Could the City please elaborate further on what information vendors must provide to demonstrate the requested experience?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 3.

66. Question: Are firms required to provide consultants for all the positions enlisted under every technology service area listed under section 2. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS? Can firms select which positions to offer independently of the technology service area?

Answer: Please offer the services that your firm is expert in providing.



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67. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.5 Fees and Charges / Method of Billing / Hourly Rates, states: “Describe your company’s ability to comply with Section 4 of Appendix D.” Some of the items enlisted under Section 4 of Appendix D are informative. Could the City please confirm whether a statement acknowledging those points is enough to satisfy this requirement?

Answer: Please provide a short narrative demonstrating your ability to comply with Appendix D, Section 4.

68. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.6 Qualifications / Experience of Key Personnel, states: “A list of key roles is provided in this RFP. See Section 2 above.” Could the City please confirm if the key personnel are the personnel who will be placed for every key role mentioned in Section 2 of the RFP?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 4,

69. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.6 Qualifications / Experience of Key Personnel, states: “Include a brief bio or resume outlining the experience of the key personnel that will be involved.” Is there a page limit for the requested resumes?

Answer: See Addendum No. 2

70. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.6 Qualifications / Experience of Key Personnel, states: “Include a brief bio or resume outlining the experience of the key personnel that will be involved.” Are the requested resumes sample resumes or actual resumes?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 4.

71. Question: Could the City please confirm if vendors have the option to choose between submitting their response via email or physical delivery?

Answer: Yes. Please see the Request for Proposals page for instructions on submittal delivery.

72. Question: Are electronic signatures allowed?

Answer: Yes. See Consolidated Question No. 9.

73. Question: Is the certificate of Insurance required with the response?

Answer: No. COIs will be collected prior to contract execution.

74. Question: Could the City please grant an extension on the due date?

Answer: Yes. Submission has been extended to September 10, 2024



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75. Question: Is the estimated budget meant for all the vendors collectively? If so, what is the allocated budget for each vendor?

Answer: See Consolidated Questions No. 2 and 5.

76. Question: If a vendor exhausts their assigned budget, can the purchase order (PO) be extended with additional funds?

Answer: No.

77. Question: Are the vendors allowed to subcontract at the Task Order Level?

Answer: No. See Consolidated Question No. 3 and Section 3 of the RFP.

78. Question: Could the City please confirm if vendors are required to submit only one form, which is Appendix A, within the proposal?

Answer: Yes. The signature page is the only required form.

79. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.5 Fees and Charges / Method of Billing / Hourly Rates – 20 points, states: “Describe your company’s ability to comply with Section 4 of Appendix D.” Could the City please confirm if firms must address each item enlisted under Section 4 of Appendix D separately or if firms must provide a general description of how they will comply with this section?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 10.

80. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.5 Fees and Charges / Method of Billing / Hourly Rates – 20 points, states: “Describe your company’s ability to comply with Section 4 of Appendix D.” could the City please elaborate further on what information vendors must provide to demonstrate the requested ability information under this instruction?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 10.

81. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.5 Fees and Charges / Method of Billing / Hourly Rates – 20 points, states: “Describe your company’s ability to comply with Section 4 of Appendix D.” The points enlisted under Section 4 of Appendix D are informative. Could the City please clarify if a statement acknowledging those points and confirming that firms will comply with them is enough to suffice this requirement?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 10.

82. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.5 Fees and Charges / Method of Billing / Hourly Rates – 20 points, states: “Describe your company’s ability to comply with Section 4 of Appendix D.” Could the City please confirm if firms must include their invoicing process to suffice this requirement?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 10.



83. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.3 Reporting Capabilities – 5 points, states: “Describe your companies reporting capabilities in reference to the requirements outlined in Appendix D.” Could the City please elaborate further on what information vendors must provide to demonstrate their reporting capabilities?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 10. Each task authorization will outline details beyond those outlined in Appendix D. These are the minimum requirements. We cannot accept vague reporting in the deliverables.

84. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.3 Reporting Capabilities – 5 points, states: “Describe your companies reporting capabilities in reference to the requirements outlined in Appendix D.” Under section 5. Reporting Capabilities of Appendix D states that the City may request reports of invoiced services provided by the supplier during the term of this contract. We understand that this information will be requested to the awardees, during the execution of this engagement. Could the City please clarify if firms are requested to provide their reporting process to suffice the requested information under this instruction? If not, could the city please elaborate further on what information vendors must provide to suffice this point?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 10. Each task authorization will outline details beyond those outlined in Appendix D. These are the minimum requirements. We cannot accept vague reporting in the deliverables.

85. Question: Under section 10. CONTENT TO BE SUBMITTED, in point 10.3 Reporting Capabilities – 5 points, states: “Describe your companies reporting capabilities in reference to the requirements outlined in Appendix D.” The requirements enlisted under section 5. Reporting Capabilities of Appendix D are informative, and they refer to documentation that may be requested by the City after the award. Could the City please clarify if a statement acknowledging those points and confirming that firms will comply with them is enough to suffice this requirement?

Answer: Appendix D is clear what is required to report following the deliverables outlined in a Task Authorization. Deliverables are outlined within each task authorization that the supplier will report on. The utility will reach out with a request to propose on work you offer in this RFP to be listed on a task authorization.

86. Question: Does the City define On-Call to mean a response SLA for a target resource is requested, or rather does the City define it as in ad-hoc/not project based work?

Answer: It is defined as Ad-Hoc work where the Utility can select which supplier can best meet the specific work needed at the time. It may or may not be project work or a gap in expertise or resource need for a particular purpose.

87. Question: If the City defines On-Call to mean a response SLA for a target resource is requested, please share the response SLA terms.

Answer: See #86.



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88. Question: For each of these areas and roles in Section 2, are there specific technologies or vendors that you want to make sure the selected respondents can support?

Answer: We will select from a list of vendors that provide the expertise we need now and into the future. We are not seeking for the vendors to tailor response to a specific Utility need; we want to know what the supplier's expertise is in technology services.

89. Question: Please clarify which listed roles in Section 2 require in person support.

Answer: Not definable currently. Please offer what you provide.

90. Question: Please clarify which listed roles in Section 2 require virtual/remote support.

Answer: Not definable currently. Please offer what you provide.

91. Question: Please clarify what the City is referring to as the Price Proposal Form in the sections Appendix D Sections 1.2, 4, and 5 as no price proposal form was provided.

Answer: See Consolidated Questions No. 10.

92. Question: In order to submit a fully customized response according to the requirements of the RFP, we request an extension from the current due date of 9/3/24 to 9/15/24.

Answer: See Addendum No. 1

93. Question: In which type of environment are these databases hosted? (eg. Oracle, SQL server, Azure, Snowflake etc.)

Answer: See Consolidated Questions No. 2 and 6.

94. Question: For each environment listed above please provide the following information about the databases in scope of the requested service(s): Number of databases, Size of the databases, Type of database, and Location (on-prem, cloud)

Answer: See Consolidated Questions No. 2 and 6.

95. Question: Please provide the name or nature of the applications on the databases in scope.

Answer: See Consolidated Questions No. 2 and 6.

96. Question: Please list the applications that are business critical and provide requirements such as the SLAs.

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 6.

97. Question: Are you seeking ad hoc support for 24x7x365?

Answer: Ad Hoc support, yes. 24/7/365, no.



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98. Question: If 24x7x365 ad hoc support is not required, please provide required duration. Specifically, if holidays, weekends, and/or after business hours support is required.

Answer: Duration of Task Orders will vary. Work will be conducted during standard business hours.

99. Question: What is the estimated # of ad hoc call expected per week? (a range is acceptable)

Answer: Not determinable. No range. Strictly as the Utility will have need.

100. Question: Please provide an example of an ad hoc call that you are seeking support services for.

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 2.

101. Question: How many of the ad hoc calls are anticipated to involve incidents classified as Severity 1 or Severity 2 within an average month timeframe?

Answer: Not determinable. Please provide/offer your technology services based on what you are experts in.

102. Question: What are the response times required?

Answer: Please provide/offer your technology services based on what you are experts in.

103. Question: What support systems are in place to notify service partners that on-call support for your databases is needed?

Answer: The utility business owners will reach out to discuss details of the work needed. It is determined at that time; and if the services fit the need, a task authorization will be drafted. Please provide/offer your technology services based on what you are experts in.

104. Question: Are there multiple support systems in place to notify service partners that on-call support for your databases is needed?

Answer: The utility business owners will reach out to discuss details of the work needed. It is determined at that time; and if the services fit the need, a task authorization will be drafted. Please provide/offer your technology services based on what you are experts in.

105. Question: Please also include additional details about administrative processes currently in place for post-incident documentation or system logging.

Answer: It will be determined at the time services (task authorization) are requested. We have detailed and specific processes that can be discussed based on the work requested in a task authorization. Please provide an offer for technology services you are experts in.



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- 106. Question: (As Applicable) Are database and application monitoring activities in scope? If so, what monitoring systems are in-place?**

Answer: Likely. Will be discussed if services meet the need. Please provide an offer for the technology services you are experts in.

- 107. Question: Are DBA(s) required to perform services onsite for ad hoc support?**

Answer: Not determinable. It depends. Please offer the services you provide.

- 108. Question: Is partial offshore support for after-hours acceptable?**

Answer: Not determinable. It depends on the need. Please offer the services you provide.

- 109. Question: Would you like to know more about how we can provide managed services support in conjunction with ad hoc support?**

Answer: Please offer what you provide. The business will determine the need and help provide further details if you are selected.

- 110. Question: If managed services are already being supported, please provide direction on how you envision the requested ad hoc support services working with your existing managed services support.**

Answer: Specifics are not available. Please offer the support services you are expert in. The utility will determine the need and provide further context if there is a fit.

- 111. Question: Please provide any specific skillsets you would prefer for the roles listed in Section 2, including Database Administrator, Network Engineer, Forensics Analyst, and Enterprise Architect.**

Answer: Please offer the support services you are expert in. The utility will determine the need and provide further context if there is a fit.

- 112. Question: Please provide any additional requirements you would like noted.**

Answer: Please offer the technology services you are expert in. The utility will determine the need and provide further context if there is a fit.

- 113. Question: We are not certified with Washington State for any of the categories specified in the section "10.8 Equity in Contracting – 5 points (Scored Pass/Fail)". Please confirm if this is mandatory to bid this opportunity.**

Answer: It is not mandatory.

- 114. Question: Is this a new contract? If not, would you please let us know the incumbent's details?**

Answer See Consolidated Question No. 1.



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115. Question: Please provide the level of experience required for each role.

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 2 and Section 2 of the RFP.

116. Question: Do we need to submit the actual or sample resumes?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 4.

117. Question: How many resumes need to be submitted for each role?

Answer: See Consolidated Questions No. 2 and 4.

118. Question: Are the services expected to be performed onsite, remotely, or in a hybrid model?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 8.

119. Question: If remote work is allowed, can the resources be from any country, such as India or Canada?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 8.

120. Question: Can you provide more specific examples or case studies of past projects that would align with the types of services expected under this contract?

Answer: No. Not the purpose of this RFP. Please offer the Technology services you are expert in. The utility will determine the need and provide further context if there is a fit.

121. Question: Are there any particular technologies, platforms, or systems currently in use that we should be familiar with? This question pertains especially to the Maintenance & Support services sought - it would be helpful for us to know what kind of systems/applications we may be dealing with.

Answer: Please offer the technology services you are expert in. The utility will determine the need and provide further context if there is a fit.

122. Question: Which areas are expected to require the most frequent support among the listed services (e.g., cybersecurity, systems administration, networks)?

Answer: All are frequent needs. Please offer the technology services you are expert in. The utility will determine the need and provide further context if there is a fit.

123. Question: Are there any critical upcoming projects or initiatives we should know about?

Answer: No.



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- 124. Question: Could you clarify how the evaluation criteria will be weighted, particularly the importance of past project examples compared to cost or hourly rates?**

Answer: Please see Section 9 of the RFP for Evaluation Criteria and Addendum No. 2.

- 125. Question: How will client references be used in the evaluation process?**

Answer: We will call on them to get confirmation of expertise.

- 126. Question: Can you elaborate on the process for initiating task authorizations? What lead times should be expected between task approval and project commencement?**

Answer: Will be determined at the time of the task authorization. The business requesting the services under a task authorization will provide context and the two together will determine appropriate times. Task authorizations are mutual arrangements. Both parties have the right to accept or reject the work proposed.

- 127. Question: Is there a preferred method or platform for submitting and tracking task authorizations?**

Answer: It will be shared if you are selected. See Consolidated Question No. 6.

- 128. Question: What key performance indicators (KPIs) or metrics will be used to evaluate our performance during the contract term?**

Answer: To be determined based on the work.

- 129. Question: Could you provide more details on the potential one-year extension option? What factors would influence the decision to extend the contract?**

Answer: Many things. Value of performance, accuracy of costs, frequency of utilization, vendor relationship, shared goals, criticalness of the services provided, etc.

- 130. Question: How does the City prefer to manage project communications and updates? Is there a specific project management tool or platform you use?**

Answer: There is. It will depend on the services requested by the Utility.

- 131. Question: What are the expectations regarding regular reporting and status updates for ongoing projects?**

Answer: Will be determined at the time a task authorization is agreed upon

- 132. Question: Can you provide examples of how previous contractors have successfully addressed the sustainability and equity in contracting requirements ?**

Answer: Please utilize the respondents guide linked in 10.7 for responses regarding sustainability. The Equity requirements are a simple yes/no response.



- 133. Question: Are there specific sustainability goals or equity metrics the City of Tacoma aims to achieve with this RFP?**

Answer: No.

- 134. Question: Is the \$500,000 per contract cap flexible depending on the scope of the task authorizations, or is this a firm limit?**

Answer: Yes, it is a firm limit. Anything higher requires the approval of the Public Utility Board. The RFP is intended to address smaller, Ad-hoc work not to exceed \$100,000 within each task authorization. We anticipate most task authorization work to average \$50k.

- 135. Question: How should we structure our pricing to align with your billing preferences (e.g., hourly rates, fixed-price contracts)?**

Answer: Each task authorization will outline how it is to be priced. Both are done. Some are hourly rates, but there will be a “not to exceed” limit for T&M so the work must be well priced. It will impact quality of deliverables if prices are always changing (scope/price creep).

- 136. Question: Are there any specific cybersecurity protocols or compliance standards that we must adhere to while providing services?**

Answer: Absolutely, the RFP outlines those requirements.

- 137. Question: What are the City’s expectations for handling and securing sensitive data during the execution of tasks?**

Answer: Data security requirements will be addressed at the Task Order level and will vary by the needs of the project.

- 138. Question: Is there any flexibility for subcontracting certain specialized services, or must all services be provided directly by our firm?**

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 2 and Section 3 of the RFP.

- 139. Question: How should we handle resource allocation if multiple task authorizations are issued simultaneously? Is there a preference or currently existing process guideline from the City for management of such cases or Is it something City would be open to us to review and propose a framework that we typically use in such situations?**

Answer: This seldom happens and there will be deep engagement and communication to ensure there is a balance of resource allocation. The work will be exclusive to the Utility Technology Department of the Utility which handles all technology activities for the utility. All task authorization activity is centralized.



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- 140. Question: Under Section 1.2 of the Appendix D, labelled "Remote Location", the following is stated: "See Appendix A for more information on remote locations". However, Appendix A includes the Proposal Signature format and no information around the remote locations. Can you clarify this for us please? Additionally, we assume all resources will be on-shore resources only, and that offshore resources are out of the scope of this RFP. Can you verify this?**

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 10.

- 141. Question: Are there standard experience levels for the roles mentioned? For instance, we typically understand "Senior" to correspond to about 6-8 years of experience, whereas "Architect" would be 10+ years of experience. Is this a fair understanding?**

Answer: That is a fair understanding.

- 142. Question: What is the timeline to kick off the engagement from the time the Utility Board provides approval?**

Answer: There is no utility board approval requirement for contracts up to \$500,000. We are not flexible to exceed that price at this time. Contract execution takes roughly 2 to 3 months to sign if there is Ariba registration requirements and insurance certificates. Contract negotiations are not permitted with this RFP.

- 143. Question: Are there requirements for US citizenship, residence, or visas for the deployed resources?**

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 8.

- 144. Question: Are resources from nearshore and offshore countries allowed? Is there a preference for US-based?**

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 8.

- 145. Question: Is there a requirement for any of the deployed resources to be onsite at a City of Tacoma facility?**

Answer: It will depend on the work. See Consolidated Question No. 8.

- 146. Question: What are the expected support hours? for example, is 24/7 the requirement?**

Answer: Standard business hours.

- 147. Question: Are subcontractors allowed?**

Answer: No. See Consolidated Question No. 2 and Section 3 of the RFP.



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- 148. Question: Are there specific certifications the partner must have (business level) to be selected?**

Answer: Please offer the technology services you are expert in. The utility will determine the need and provide further context if there is a fit.

- 149. Question: What is the preference for billing terms? Time and Materials, Fixed price per month, etc.?**

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 7.

- 150. Question: If opting not to bid on a subcategory of services (e.g., Voice and Security), does that automatically disqualify the vendor?**

Answer: Not at all. Please offer the technology services you are expert in. The utility will determine the need and provide further context if there is a fit.

- 151. Question: Are there certifications required for the deployed resources?**

Answer: It will depend on the work. Please offer the technology services you are expert in. The utility will determine the need and provide further context if there is a fit.

- 152. Question: Please share the incumbent vendors and their pricing.**

Answer: See Consolidated Questions No. 1 and 2.

- 153. Question: Please share the Bid Tabulation of the previous bid for these services.**

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 1.

- 154. Question: Is there any challenge fulfilling the needs with the existing contracts for related services or any specific improvements you are looking for?**

Answer: No.

- 155. Question: Is there any preference for the local vendor?**

Answer: No.

- 156. Question: What is the exact work location and the working hours?**

Answer: It depends on the work, typically standard business hours.

- 157. Question: Please share the type of background check and drug test required.**

Answer: It depends on the work. Those requirements are typically mandated by the vendor company, not Tacoma.

- 158. Question: Will there be a kick-off meeting once the contract is awarded?**

Answer: No.



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159. Question: How many resources/candidates are currently active at this time under incumbent contracts? Please provide the breakdown of numbers under each incumbent vendor.

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 1.

160. Question: What is the spending to date against each of the incumbent vendors?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 1.

161. Question: Will active candidates under the incumbent vendors be transitioned to the new vendors if the same incumbent vendors are not awarded the contract this time?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 1.

162. Question: Is this a re-compete RFP?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 1.

163. Question: Could you please share the name of Current Suppliers (who are currently providing services to Agency)?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 1.

164. Question: Could you please share current Supplier's pricing and Proposals?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 1.

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

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 1.

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

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 1.

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

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 1 and 2.

168. Question: Can you please share the amount of business each vendor did under this contract in previous years?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 1.



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169. Question: Is there any local preference for this contract?

Answer: No. See Consolidated Question No. 8.

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

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 5.

171. Question: Would you be accepting references from public as well as commercial entities?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 3.

172. Question: Is sub-contracting required for this contract?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 2 and Section 3 of the specification.

173. Question: How many vendors agency is planning to select?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 5 and Section 1 of the RFP.

174. Question: Is there any Performance Bond for this contract?

Answer: No. public works is not permitted.

175. Question: Is this a newly initiated project, or is it a continuation of an existing one?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 1.

176. Question: If it is ongoing, kindly provide the names of the current service providers/incumbent vendors?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 1.

177. Question: Could you provide details on the previous expenditure associated with this contract?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 1.

178. Question: Could you confirm if it is possible to obtain the proposals or pricing details of the incumbent vendors?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 1.

179. Question: Are there any specific challenges or issues currently being faced with the existing vendors?

Answer: No.



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180. Question: Can you clarify the expected number of awards for this solicitation?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 5 and Section 1 of the RFP.

181. Question: Is there any preference or priority given to local vendors for this contract?

Answer: No.

182. Question: Is the IT infrastructure on the Cloud, or On-Prem, or Hybrid?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 6.

183. Question: What software and network systems are currently in use?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 6.

184. Question: Can we submit an additional supplemental document with the RFP submittal for our resource BIOS (They are 3 pages each), and not have these resource Bios count as part of the 20-page limit??

Answer: Please see Section 10 for page counts and exemptions.

185. Question: Are you looking for your vendor to provide recommendations on how to enhance/modernize your experience as part of the consulting/support we can provide?

Answer: The utility needs are varied. Please provide the technology services you provide as an expert.

186. Question: For the Signature Page for Append A (PI24-0183F), we currently don't know our State Contractor's License Number, but we have our UBI# 603407932. Is there a place we can look up our State Contractor's License Number for Washington State?

Answer: You should be able to obtain your License number from the Department of Labor and Industries. A contractor's license is not required for this work as Public Works and Improvements services is not allowable on these contracts.

187. Question: Are you currently on an on-premise, hybrid, or cloud environment? If so, which is your main cloud provider?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 6.

188. Question: Are we required to submit resumes along with our proposal? If so, should these be actual resumes or sample ones?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 4.



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189. Question: Is pricing required to be submitted along with our response? If yes, could you please provide guidance on the format in which the pricing should be presented?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 7.

190. Question: What was the annual spend for the previous year on this Project?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 1.

191. Question: If this is a new Contract, what is the annual Budget for this?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 5.

192. Question: Are you open to a hybrid delivery model with a mix of offshore and onshore resources?

Answer: See Consolidated Question No. 8.