

DATE ISSUED: July 25, 2001

REPORT NO. 01-155

ATTENTION: Honorable Mayor & City Council

SUBJECT: Bid & Contract Opportunities Web Site

SUMMARY

THIS IS AN INFORMATION ITEM ONLY. NO ACTION IS REQUIRED ON THE PART OF THE CITY COUNCIL.

BACKGROUND

In late 1998, the City's Purchasing Division took a giant step forward in automating the City's procurement processes by successfully implementing the Online Purchasing Information System (*OPIS*) and providing over 500 City employees the ability to electronically process procurement requests. Although this new system addressed many of the City's internal needs, it did not fully address the needs of current City vendors or those wishing to do business with the City.

In 2000, the Purchasing Division took another technological step to improve services to the City's current and potential vendors and City Departments. It developed and implemented the *Bid & Contract Opportunities* web site (<http://www.sandiego.gov/bids-contracts/>). This site provides an online public venue where interested parties are able to view summary information about most contracting opportunities made available by the City.

DISCUSSION

In response to vendor requests for 7/24 information availability on the internet and the City's need to establish a larger and more diverse vendor exposure, the Purchasing Division recently unveiled a significant new enhancement to the Bid & Contract Opportunities web site. It provides all City Departments the ability to electronically post RFPs (Request for Proposals), RFIs (Request for Information), RFBs (Request for Bids), etc. on the *Bid & Contract Opportunities* web page, for downloading by interested parties.

In February of this year, the Purchasing Division began pilot testing an enhancement to the site which allows Departments to not only post summary information, but to also post complete RFP, RFI, and RFB documents on the web site for downloading by vendors. The pilot test has been completed and this new feature has received enthusiastic support from the vendor community. Interested parties are able to review documents online any time of the day or night, and to print out their own copies if desired. This new approach has enabled Purchasing to better control costs associated with copying and mailing the documents to potential vendors, and equally important, has provided vendors an easier way of doing business with the City.

The Purchasing Division has now made the document uploading enhancement available to all City Departments. Designees from participating departments have been trained on use of the site and have been encouraged to use it as often as they can. There are still some limitations with regards to posting of documents such as large scale construction plans, which will continue to be

made available over the counter through the sponsoring Departments.

The Purchasing Division will continue to mail out a one-page "Notice of Bid Opportunity" to those on Purchasing's potential vendor list, informing them that a bid opportunity is available in their respective commodity or service area. The "Notice of Bid Opportunity" also notifies vendors how they can acquire the required bid documents, either by downloading from the internet, having Purchasing send them a copy via U.S. mail, or by coming to the Purchasing office and picking up a copy. There are no charges for any of these services.

It is expected that with time and the continued growth of computer availability and usage, the number of hard-copy packages provided by Purchasing will be negligible. As the Purchasing Division continues its vendor outreach efforts, information is being provided to all potential City vendors regarding our growing use of the internet, and where (e.g., Libraries and Community Service Centers) computers can be accessed at no cost to them.

Making contract opportunities available on the City's web site follows a nationwide trend, and in addition to improving internal efficiencies, provides numerous benefits to large and small vendors alike. The Purchasing Division will continue to use all resources available, and to seek out new and innovative ways to improve the level of service we provide to our customers and to ensure that the seventh largest City in the United States is a City worthy of our affection.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Baldwin, Purchasing Agent
Purchasing Division

Ernie Anderson, Director
General Services Department

Approved: George Loveland
Senior Deputy City Manager

BALDWIN/JN