



**CAPITOL REGION PURCHASING COUNCIL**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)  
FOR E-PROCUREMENT SYSTEM**

**Issue Date: January 14, 2019**

**Deadline for Questions: January 30, 2019**

**Response Date/Time: February 20, 2019 (2:00 p.m. Eastern)**

**Response Location: Capitol Region Purchasing Council  
241 Main Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Hartford, CT 06106**

**CAPITOL REGION PURCHASING COUNCIL**

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FOR E-PROCUREMENT SYSTEM**

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## I. Introduction

### Intent

The Capitol Region Purchasing Council (CRPC), a program of the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG), is soliciting proposals from qualified and experienced firms for an online bidding platform/e-procurement solution. The intent, but not guarantee, of this RFP is to solicit sealed proposals to establish a contract through competitive negotiation for the purchase of an online bidding platform/e-procurement solution by CRPC. In the event an award is made as a result of this RFP solicitation, the contract term would begin on April 1, 2019.

The CRPC is seeking solutions that will support the following goals: to make the CRPC procurement processes more efficient and effective; to increase the buying power of CRPC's municipal members; to provide online vendor registration, solicitation management, proposal evaluation and tabulation, reporting and audit information; to provide fair and open access to contracting opportunities for the business community; and to raise revenues for CRPC in order to expand current program offerings.

## II. Council Background

### Introduction

The CRPC is a voluntary purchasing cooperative serving over 100 municipalities, Boards of Education, and other government/quasi-government entities within the Hartford, CT Capitol Region and beyond. Operating under the auspices of the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG), the CRPC functions as a supplemental procurement office for its member municipalities. Annually, the CRPC sponsors nearly twenty competitive bids covering a wide range of products and services. A copy of the current bidding schedule, a program brochure and a map of our membership available on the Council's web page: <http://crocog.org/capitol-region-purchasing-council/>. Respondents should note that membership may expand or contract during the contract period.

The CRPC model of cooperative procurement differs from the typical "lead agency" type of cooperative procurement organizations, where one entity puts a bid out and makes an award that members of the cooperative may use. With our current procedures, the CRPC puts out a number of bids for commodities and services, CRPC staff develops the specifications, solicits members for requirements, produces and advertises the competitive bid or RFP/RFI/RFQ, and generates a tabulation package, but each member makes their own award based on which qualified vendor is the lowest responsive, responsible vendor for their particular needs.

## RFP: E-PROCUREMENT SYSTEM

The current model is vendor funded, with a small fee collected and split between the CRPC and the current e-procurement system provider.

We are primarily interested in responses that can support the model we use with the current system, but we will also accept proposals that offer creative and flexible solutions that may require some procedural changes. We are interested in solutions that provide pathways for participating members to use the system for their own competitive procurements, as well as to use the proposed system to make awards on CRPC cooperative bids that allows for individual reports, auditing info, and data collection.

### **CRPC Procurement Process Overview**

In general, the CRPC is responsible for the following procurement tasks in support of each bidding process:

- **Product/Service Research**
- **Specification Development**
- **Requirements Solicitation**
- **Advertising**
- **Sealed Bid Administration**
- **Results Tabulation & Distribution**
- **Vendor Performance Monitoring**
- **Reporting**

### **III. Statement of Needs**

The Capitol Region Purchasing Council seeks a system that will support the continued automation of the following bidding processes:

- 1. Requirements Solicitation.** Prior to each solicitation, invitations to participate are sent out to all member communities. There are three different types of requirements we solicit, some of which are currently fully automated and some which are still handled manually:
  - a. Aggregate Requirements:** For the majority of the CRPC bids, members log-in to the current e-procurement system and enter their individual quantities, and vendors will bid on the aggregate quantities when submitting their response. CRPC members are encouraged to enter their quantities before the Invitation to Bid, but they are permitted to “piggyback” and use the bid to procure products or services even if they did not submit quantities for the bid.
  - b. Individual Requirements:** For a few of the CRPC bids, notably Fuel Oil and Gasoline, members need to submit the various locations, tank

sizes and quantities for each type of fuel or gasoline, but the vendors bid on an aggregate quantity for each type of fuel or gasoline, not on each individual location within each entity. This process is still handled manually, with members submitting quantities to CRPC and the current e-procurement vendor entering them. For this bid, requirements must be submitted before the Invitation to Bid is released in order to purchase off the bid. Our goal is to fully automate this process.

- c. **Lot Requirements:** For the CRPC Treated Road Salt bid, the State is divided into six salt districts and we aggregate the quantities of salt for each district, so vendors bid on a lot and the same price applies to all members within that district. This is also currently handled manually, with members submitting their quantities to CRPC staff and the current e-procurement vendor entering them. For this bid, requirements must be submitted before the Invitation to Bid is released in order to purchase off the bid. Our goal is to fully automate this process.

2. **The Bidding Process.** Once the final Invitation to Bid is complete, it is posted to the agency's website, located at <http://crcog.org/capitol-region-purchasing-council/annual-bid-results/#1441873920660-a173daba-04569ca1-a0c5>, as are any related addenda. Vendors who have requested to be notified of a particular bid are notified through the current e-procurement system. A notice is advertised in two local newspapers, as required by State of Connecticut statute, and on the State of Connecticut's website. Encrypted bids are received electronically by the advertised closing date and time.

Our current system is most fully effective for Invitations to Bid for services and commodities, as we can post the bids, vendors can be notified and respond, and tabulations are easy to generate. It also can be used for Reverse Auctions. We are able to post RFIs, RFPs and RFQs to notify vendors, but tabulations for these methods are more difficult to capture for evaluation.

3. **Results Tabulation.** Most information submitted in response to a bid is entered by the vendor, but there are still some items which CRPC staff receives in hard copy and scans and enters into the e-procurement system at the time of tabulation, e.g., bid bonds (when required). Vendors are expected to submit responses that adhere to the appropriate units of measurement and to enter notes to explain any exceptions.
4. **Reporting.** The current system offers reporting on all bids entered by the CRPC, vendor information, and the participation of current CRPC members on a bid by bid basis. CRPC is interested in systems that may allow an expansion of existing reporting capabilities, such as historical reports on participation and pricing,

automated generation of bid savings. Of particular interest is reporting on which members awarded and purchased commodities/services any given bid, including bids in which they “piggybacked”, which is currently not being captured.

**For most bids, the CRPC does not make an award on behalf of its members.** Instead, each participating community is responsible for making an award that is deemed to be in its best interest. However, for select projects that have been sponsored by the parent agency, CRCOG has served as the sole or umbrella contracting authority (i.e., to expedite awards in volatile markets, to capture volume-based discounts, etc.). It is envisioned that some future bids may need to be restructured on the awarding/contracting front in order to properly take advantage of supporting e-procurement solutions.

#### IV. Preparing a Response

By submitting a response, respondents represent that they have thoroughly examined and become familiar with the scope of services outlined in this RFP and are capable of performing the work to achieve the objectives.

Respondents are asked to organize their responses in the order requested, in accordance with the following format:

1. **Letter of Introduction.** Provide a letter of introduction with a brief description of your firm, experience in the industry, number of years providing e-procurement services, primary client type, and a summary of the e-procurement products and services offered. Include company name, address, contact name, title, phone number, fax number, email and website address.
2. **Current Users and References.** Submit a list of at least five (5) current clients and their contact information. Please include site name and location, name of primary contact and their contact information, date of installation and size of installation (number of users by role). Government/cooperative procurement references are preferred.
3. **Product Description.** Provide a detailed description of each of the products/services your company offers that could support the work of the CRPC, along with related marketing materials. Please include information on how to access any on-line product demonstrations. Please indicate the type of database your product uses (i.e., Oracle, SQL Server, etc.) and what data storage/backup services and security guarantees you provide. Please indicate which, if any, ERP/Financial Systems you can interface with.
4. **Functionality.** Provide detailed information about the following:

- a. **Ability to accommodate CRPC's current purchasing model.** Please also include any limitations your system may have and what steps you would take to provide additional functionality to match/exceed CRPC's needs (include cost estimates, see #10 below).
  - b. **Ease of Use for CRPC Members.** Please describe how municipalities would be trained to use your system, so they can easily provide the necessary information for CRPC bids.
  - c. **Ease of Use for Vendors.** Please describe the process in which vendors register to your system and what technical support and/or training they receive (if any).
  - d. **Ease of Use for CRPC Staff.** Please include detailed information about what functions can be controlled by the bid administrator and staff.
  - e. **Communication.** Please detail any internal communication functions your software provides (i.e. polling municipal members, emailing bid participants, online question and answer, chats, etc.).
  - f. **Automation.** Please include information about any automated tasks that your software performs (i.e. template language, tabulation sheets, bid summaries).
5. **System Requirements.** Describe whether your products/services are installed on-site or are hosted on the web/Cloud. Please indicate what the minimum access requirements are (i.e. web browser, Microsoft XP, etc.). Please also indicate what system hardware would be necessary if your product would be installed and maintained on-site at CRPC.
6. **Implementation Details.** Provide an outline of your implementation approach and timetable. Be sure to indicate what information/data needs to be furnished by the CRPC and how long it typically takes to have the system/service deemed operational. Please indicate your experience at assisting with/managing the transition process. Please also include the names, qualifications and experience of personnel to be assigned to the project.
7. **Training.** Describe the degree of training required for vendors, municipal staff and agency staff to ensure a smooth implementation. Note if training is provided on-site or online, and if reference materials are provided.
8. **Support Services.** Provide a description of the ancillary services offered by your firm, for both CRPC administrators and end users. Include maintenance (if applicable) and technical support during work hours (8:30am to 4:30pm Eastern).
9. **Upgrades and Maintenance.** Describe how your system is updated and how often. Provide information on what maintenance and upgrades are included.

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Include details of additional training provided or costs incurred with increased functionality (if any).

10. **Estimated Costs.** Describe your pricing models and indicate who pays for the use of the system/services (i.e. agencies, vendors in the database, vendors receiving awards, etc.). Please include the programming costs of any additional functionality that would need to be added to accommodate the needs of CRPC (see III. Statement of Needs), as well as any user license fees, if any, limits on number of users, and tiered costs. Please also include any hourly staff costs associated with implementation, training and support services.
11. **Cost Savings/Revenue Generation.** Provide documentation demonstrating how agencies have achieved cost savings and/or generated revenue through the implementation of your system.
12. **Response Page.** See ATTACHMENT A.
13. **Signed Non-Collusion Statement.** See ATTACHMENT B.

Responses should be sealed must be received no later than **2:00 p.m. Eastern, February 20, 2019.** Responses should be clearly marked: **E-PROCUREMENT SYSTEM RFP RESPONSE**, and delivered to:

Maureen Goulet, Principal Program Manager  
Capitol Region Purchasing Council  
241 Main Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Hartford, CT 06106

**Any responses received after this date and time will not be considered.**

**Please include one original signed copy and one complete electronic (e.g., flash drive, CD) copy of your proposal.**

## V. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

### **Questions**

Questions shall be submitted **via e-mail only** to Maureen Goulet at [mgoulet@crcog.org](mailto:mgoulet@crcog.org) by **3:00 p.m. Eastern, January 30, 2019.** No oral interpretations shall be provided. Responses shall be posted as addenda on the CRCOG website. It is the respondent's responsibility to check the website for addenda prior to submission of any proposal.



**Acceptance or Rejection by the Capitol Region Council of Governments**

The CRCOG reserves the right to accept and or reject any or all proposals submitted for consideration or to negotiate separately in any manner necessary to serve the best interests of the CRCOG and its members. Respondents whose proposals are not accepted shall be notified in writing.

**Ownership of Proposals**

All proposals submitted in response to this RFP are to be the sole property of CRCOG and shall be subject to the provisions of Section 1-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes (re: Freedom of Information).

**Changes to Proposals**

No additions or changes to the original proposal will be allowed after submittal.

**Contract Requirements**

A formal contractual arrangement will be entered into with the consultant, selected as per the CRCOG standard form of agreement. The contents of the proposal submitted by the successful respondent and the RFP will become part of any Contract award.

**Amending or Canceling Request**

CRCOG reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFP, prior to the due date and time, if it is deemed to be in its best interest to do so.

**Waiver of Informalities**

The Capitol Region Council of Governments reserves the right to accept or reject any and all responses to this Request for Proposals, or any part thereof, and to waive any informalities and/or technicalities that are deemed to be in its best interest.

**Collusion**

By responding, the firm implicitly states: that his/her proposal has not been made in connection with any other competing firm submitting a separate response to this RFP; is in all respects fair; and has been submitted without collusion or fraud. It is further implied that the firm did not participate in the RFP development process, had no knowledge of the specific contents of the RFP before its issuance, and that no employee of CRCOG either directly or indirectly assisted in the vendor's proposal preparation.

**Assigning/ Transferring of Agreement**

Any successful firm is prohibited from assigning, transferring, conveying, subletting or otherwise disposing of the resulting agreement or its rights, title, or interest therein or its power to execute such an agreement to any other person, company or corporation without prior consent and approval in writing from CRCOG.

**Termination**

CRCOG may terminate any contract(s) or any part of any contracts resulting from this process at any time for: cause, default or negligence on the part of the vendor; or if the vendor fails, in the opinion of the Agency, to meet the general terms and conditions of any resulting contract or to provide a level of service that is deemed to be in the best interest of the Agency.

**Severability**

If any terms or provisions of this Request for Proposal shall be found to be illegal or unenforceable, then such term or provision shall be deemed stricken and the remaining portions of this document shall remain in full force and effect.

**Affirmative Action**

The Towns participating in this RFP are equal opportunity employers and require an affirmative action policy from all contractors and vendors as a condition of doing business with the towns, as per Federal Order 11246. By signing the proposal sheet for this bid, all vendors and contractor agree to this condition of doing business with the towns and should the towns choose to audit their compliance, the vendor agrees to cooperate fully.

**Insurance Requirements**

The Respondent shall, at its own expense and cost, obtain and keep in force during the entire transition and contract period the following insurance coverages covering the Respondent and all its agents, employees and sub-contractors and other providers of services, and shall name the Capitol Region Council of Governments and its employees and agents as an Additional Insured on a primary and non-contributory basis to the Respondent's Commercial General Liability and Automobile Liability policies. These requirements shall be clearly stated in the remarks section on the Respondent's Certificate of Insurance. In addition:

- A. All policy forms shall be on the occurrence form.
- B. Acceptable evidence of coverage will be on the ACORD form or a form with the same format.
- C. All renewal certificates shall be furnished at least 10 days prior to policy expiration.
- D. Each certificate shall contain a 30 day notice of cancellation.
- E. Insurance shall be issued by an insurance company licensed to conduct business in the State of Connecticut which has at least an "A-" policy holders rating according to Best Publications latest edition Key Rating Guide.

Required insurance coverage:

- A. **Professional Liability Insurance** with limits up to \$2,000,000 aggregate limit issued on claims made basis for the term of the contract and continuing for two

years following the completion of the contract at the Vendor’s cost.

- B. **Comprehensive General Liability, including Contractual Liability, Products/Completed Operations Insurance**, as applicable, with limits not less than \$2,000,000 for all damages because of bodily injury sustained by each person as the result of any occurrence and \$1,000,000 bodily injury aggregate per policy year and limits of \$1,000,000 for all property damage sustained by each person as a result of any one occurrence and \$1,000,000 property damage aggregate per policy year or a combined single limit of \$1,000,000. All, if any, deductibles are the sole responsibility of the Vendor to pay and/or indemnify.
- C. **Automobile Liability Insurance** including non-owned and hired vehicles in the same limits as indicated above.
- D. **Workers' Compensation Insurance** at the Connecticut statutory limit including Employers' Liability with limits of \$100,000 each accident, \$500,000 for each disease/policy limit, and \$100,000 for disease for each employee.
- E. **Excess Liability Umbrella Form** over sections B, C, and D-Employers' Liability with limits up to \$4,000,000.

**Hold Harmless and Indemnification**

In addition to its obligation to provide insurance as specified above, the Vendor, its subcontractors, agents and assigns shall indemnify and hold harmless the Capitol Region Council of Governments and its member municipalities, including but not limited to, its elected officials, and its officers, from any and all claims made against the CROCG, including but not limited to, damages, awards, costs and reasonable attorney’s fees, to the extent any such claim directly and proximately results from the negligent acts, errors, or omissions in performance of services by the Vendor during the Vendor's performance of this Agreement or any other Agreements of the Vendor entered into by reason thereof. CROCG agrees to give the Vendor prompt notice of any such claim and absent a conflict of interest, an opportunity to control the defense thereof.

**VI. Evaluation and Award Criteria**

Proposals shall be evaluated by the Capitol Region Purchasing Council using the following criteria:

Element	Weighting (out of 100 points)
Suitability of system to CRPC’s purchasing model (what level of customization is necessary)	35
Cost (costs incurred, savings/revenue generated)	15
Functionality (ease of use, level of automation, internal communication functions)	15

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Ability to Execute (respondent has experience, expertise and financial stability to execute this project)	10
Overall Completeness (proposal is complete and submitted in the specified format)	5

Selection shall be made of one or more respondents deemed to be fully qualified and best suited among those submitting proposals on the basis of the evaluation factors included in the Request for Proposals. Negotiations shall be conducted with the respondent(s) so selected. After negotiations have been conducted with the respondent so selected, the Capitol Region Purchasing Council shall select the respondent which, in its opinion, has made the best proposal, and shall award the contract to that respondent if it so chooses.

Should CRPC determine in its sole discretion that only one respondent is fully qualified, or that one respondent is clearly more highly qualified than the others under consideration, a contract may be negotiated and awarded to that respondent. The award document will be a contract incorporating by reference all the requirements, terms and conditions of the solicitation and the contractor's proposal as negotiated.

**ATTACHMENT A**

**RESPONSE PAGE**

**Capitol Region Purchasing Council  
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

**DATE ADVERTISED:**  
January 14, 2019

**DATE / TIME DUE:**

**February 20, 2019  
By 2:00 p.m.**

**NAME OF PROPOSAL**

**E-Procurement System Request for Proposal**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Type or Print Name of Individual**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Doing Business as (Trade Name)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Individual**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Street Address**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Title**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**City, State, Zip Code**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Telephone Number / Fax Number**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**E-mail Address/Website**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**SS # or TIN#**

**ATTACHMENT B**

**CAPITOL REGION PURCHASING COUNCIL**

**NON-COLLUSION STATEMENT**

The company responding to this Request for Proposal certifies that it is being submitted without any collusion, communication or agreement as to any matter relating to it with any other respondent or competitor. We understand that this response must be signed by an authorized agent of our company to constitute a valid response.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title of Agent \_\_\_\_\_

By (SIGNATURE): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_