

January 14, 2010

Dear Prospective Vendor:

The city of Carson is requesting proposals for consulting services for Tax Compliance Services. The service will include a review of the city's utility franchises (natural gas, electric and water), cable franchise, solid waste franchise, transient occupancy tax and business license tax. The enclosed Request for Proposal (RFP) describes the duties of the consultant, required content of proposals and the methodology by which the proposals will be evaluated and other conditions and requirements.

Four copies of the proposal must be submitted to Helen Kawagoe, City Clerk, Carson City Hall, 701 E. Carson Street, Carson, CA 90745 no later than 4:00 p.m. on Monday, February 15, 2010. The proposals will be opened at that time in the office of the City Clerk and thereafter, will be submitted to the Administrative Services General Manager for review. If you have any questions about this request for proposals, please contact Trini Catbagan at (310) 952-1746 or Yuko Dunham at (310) 952-1749.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jacquelyn Acosta
Administrative Services General Manager

cc: Trini Catbagan, Finance Officer
Yuko Dunham, Revenue Manager
Sherrie Hamilton, Purchasing Manager

Enclosure: Request for Proposals for Tax Compliance Services

YD:SH:td

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Proposed Solicitation

The city of Carson, hereinafter referred to as the “city”, is soliciting proposals for consulting services for Tax Compliance Services. The service will include a review of the city’s utility franchises (natural gas, electric and water), cable franchise, solid waste franchise, transient occupancy tax and business license tax.

Qualified firms, hereinafter referred to as “Vendor(s)”, which meet the requirements set forth in this Request for Proposals are encouraged to participate.

1.2 General Information about the City

The city is part of the South Bay section of Los Angeles County, California located less than 20 miles south of downtown Los Angeles. Carson is a culturally diverse community that has a population that grew from 61,000 in 1968 to 98,159 in 2009. Three annexations have increased the city’s size to 19.2 square miles.

Carson was incorporated as a General Law city on February 20, 1968. The city operates under the Council-Manager form of government, with an elected Mayor, a Mayor Pro Tem, three Councilmembers, and an appointed City Manager. The City Council meets on the first and third Tuesdays of each month, unless otherwise scheduled. Other elected city officials include the City Clerk and City Treasurer.

The city is organized into 5 functional work areas namely, Management, Administrative Services, Economic Development, Development Services and Public Services.

The general fund budget of the city for FY 2009/10 is \$67.6 million.

1.3 Vendor’s Contacts with the City

The Vendor’s principal contact with the city will be Jacquelyn Acosta, Administrative Services General Manager. Her designees during this process are Trini Catbagan and Yuko Dunham who will coordinate assistance to be provided by the city to the Vendor. The city requires that all procedural questions relating to the RFP be directed to Trini Catbagan at (310) 952-1746 and/or Yuko Dunham at (310) 952-1749 or via e-mail: tcabaga@carson.ca.us and ydunham@carson.ca.us. When corresponding via e-mail, be sure to indicate “RFP for Tax Compliance Services” on the subject line. Any Vendors found to be soliciting other members of city staff or officials during this RFP process may be disqualified from any further consideration unless that city staff is a designated representative.

2.0 Instructions to Vendors

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to provide interested Vendors the necessary information for preparing proposals for Tax Compliance Services that will meet the city's specific needs.

2.2 Proposed Submission

Each proposal shall be delivered via US Mail, in person, or express courier to the attention of the City Clerk. Four (4) originally signed copies of the proposal shall be submitted for use by the RFP Review Team. The City Clerk shall receive proposals no later than 4:00 PM, on Monday, February 15, 2010. Submissions after this deadline will not be accepted. **Proposals will not be accepted by facsimile or electronic mail.**

The proposal shall be submitted in a sealed envelope and labeled as follows:

City of Carson
701 E. Carson Street
Carson, CA 90745
Attn: Helen Kawagoe, City Clerk
Re: Tax Compliance Services RFP No. P10-02

2.3 Examination of Proposal Documents

The submission of a proposal shall be deemed a representation and certification by the Vendors that they:

- 2.3.1 Have carefully read and fully understand the information that was provided by the city to serve as a basis for submission of this proposal.
- 2.3.2 Have the capability to successfully undertake and complete the responsibilities and obligations of the proposal being submitted.
- 2.3.3 Represent that all the information contained in the proposal is true and correct.

2.4 Withdrawal of Proposals

A Vendor may withdraw its proposal at any time before the expiration of the time for submission of proposals as provided in the RFP by delivering a written request for withdrawal signed by, or on behalf of, the Vendor.

3.0 Conditions and Requirements

3.1 *Hard Prices*

Proposals by Vendors will be firm prices during the term of the contractual agreement with the city as a result of this proposal. Vendor proposals shall include any applicable local, state and federal tax. Proposals submitted shall be valid for 90 days after proposal opening.

It is the intent of the city to establish a contract to run for one (1) year. Said contract shall be renewable at the city's discretion every year thereafter up to a maximum of two (2) additional years. Either party can cancel the contract for any reason with a 60-day written notice. Bi-annual price adjustments, if required, will be submitted to the city for approval based upon changes in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) All Urban Consumers, for the Los Angeles-Anaheim-Riverside area, as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. This information will include changes in the CPI that have occurred during the preceding calendar year.

3.2 *Evaluation Criteria*

The various significant factors that will be considered in the evaluation of proposals are summarized below. The city's final selection will not be dictated on any single factor including price. The relative importance of these factors involves judgment on the part of the city's RFP Review Team and will include both objective and subjective analysis. A Vendor may be eliminated from consideration for failure to comply with any of the requirements of the RFP.

3.2.1 *Proper Submission and Completeness of RFP:* Receipt of complete proposal by the due date and time as outlined in the proposal schedule. It must include all the required information outlined in Section 4.5 of this document. **Late submissions or delivery via facsimile will not be considered.**

3.2.2 *Comprehensiveness of Services Provided:* The Vendor must have the capability to meet the required service levels described in this RFP under "6.0 Scope of Services."

3.2.3 *Experience and References:* The Vendor's prior record of performance with other cities or governmental agencies will be assessed as well as client references. The experience of the Vendor's staff to be assigned to the project and the engagements of similar scope and complexity will likewise be evaluated.

3.2.4 *Charges for Services:* The amount of proposed charges will be considered.

3.2.5 *Adherence to Schedule:* Vendor's ability to perform the work within the time specified will be measured.

3.3 Right to Request Additional Information

During the evaluation process, the RFP Review Team and the city reserve the right, where it may serve the best interest of the city, to request additional information and clarification from Vendors. At the discretion of the RFP Review Team and the city, Vendors submitting proposals may be requested to make oral presentations as part of the evaluation process.

3.4 Right to Reject Any or All Proposals

The city reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive technicalities or formalities, and to accept any proposal deemed in the best interest of the city.

3.5 Contracts

It is recognized that the formal basis of any agreement between the city and the Vendor is a contract or agreement rather than a proposal. In submitting proposals, Vendors must indicate that they are prepared to complete a contract or agreement containing all the information submitted in their proposal. The proposal will become part of the contract or agreement between the city and the successful Vendor. If the Vendor has a specific contract that they wish to use, the Vendor must submit a sample along with the RFP.

3.6 Rights to Submitted Materials

All proposals, inquiries, responses, or correspondence related to or in reference to this RFP, and all reports, charts, displays, schedules, exhibits, and other documentation submitted by the Vendor will become property of the city and a matter of public record.

3.7 Proposal Interpretations and Addenda

Any changes to this RFP by the city will be sent to each Vendor or individual to whom an RFP has been sent. Such changes become an integral part of the RFP for incorporation into any contract awarded pursuant to the RFP.

3.8 RFP Results

As RFP's are opened they are recorded by the City Clerk on a bid register. Firms wanting to inspect a bid register may do so by contacting the Purchasing Division. The Purchasing Division will schedule a date and time on which you may visit our offices and inspect the bid register.

3.9 Protests and Appeals

Bidders wanting to protest an award of RFP may do so in accordance with the Carson Municipal Code. The Purchasing Division can provide you with information on how to file an appeal or protest.

3.10 Additional Services

Section 6.0 describes the minimum work to be accomplished. Upon final selection of the Vendor, the scope of service may be modified and refined during negotiations with the city.

3.11 Undue Influence

The Vendor declares and warrants that no undue influence or pressure is used against or in concert with any officer or employee of the city in connection with the award or terms of the contract or agreement that will be executed as a result of this RFP, including any method of coercion, confidential financial arrangement, or financial inducement. No officer or employee of the city will receive compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Vendor, or from any officer, employee or agent of the Vendor, in connection with the award of the contract or agreement or any work to be conducted as a result of the RFP. Violation of this Section shall be a material breach of the contract or agreement entitling the city to any and all remedies by law or in equity.

3.12 Non-Discrimination

The city maintains various policies related to contractual service providers. Among these is an anti-discrimination policy, which requires that our contractors not discriminate in hiring on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or medical condition. Upon acceptance of a proposal, the city may request that the selected Vendor sign a statement affirming their compliance with this policy.

3.13 Sexual Harassment

As a Vendor of the city of Carson you are expected to comply with the city's Sexual Harassment Policy. Should you have any questions regarding this policy, please contact the city's Human Resources Officer, Mr. Duane Munson, at (310) 952-1736.

4.0 Vendor Proposal Format

To assure uniformity and to assist the city in its evaluation of submitted RFP's, it is **required** that each proposal adhere to the following format:

4.1 Letter of Transmittal

In the Letter of Transmittal, the Vendor shall describe their understanding of the work to be performed and why the Vendor is the best qualified to perform the services requested. The letter must discuss the highlights, key features, and distinguishing points of the proposal. Moreover, it must state the names of the individual(s) authorized to negotiate with the city and sign contracts or agreements on behalf of the Vendor.

4.2 Vendor Summary Sheet

Submit a completed Vendor Summary Sheet (see Appendix A).

4.3 Certification of Proposals

Submit a completed Certification of Proposal (see Appendix B).

4.4 Summary of Charges

The proposal must include a summary of all charges for proposed services.

4.5 Information to be Submitted

All proposals shall address the following items in the order listed below and shall be numbered 1 through 4 in the proposal document:

4.5.1 Profile of the Proposing Firm:

This section shall include a brief description of its business including size, number of employees, number of credentialed actuaries, other business or services offered and review of any recent or contemplated changes in the ownership structure of the firm. Additionally, this section shall include a listing and disposition, as applicable, of any lawsuit or litigation whether pending or which has occurred within the last five years.

4.5.2 Qualifications of the Firm:

This section shall include a brief description of the Vendor's and, if applicable, the proposed sub-consultant's qualifications and previous experience on similar or related projects. Provide the names and brief resumes of the supervising staff member and other key personnel who will be assigned to the engagement and their contact information. Provide descriptions of experience with projects auditing and recovering taxes for other municipalities that includes a summary of the work performed, the total project cost, the percentage of work the firm was responsible for, the period over which the work was completed, and the name, title, and phone number of at least three clients to be contacted for references. Give a brief statement of the firm's adherence to the schedule and budget for those projects.

4.5.3 Work Plan or Proposal

This section shall present a well-conceived service plan and include a full description of major tasks and subtasks. This section of the proposal shall establish that the Vendor understands the city's objectives and work requirements and the Vendor's ability to satisfy those objectives and requirements. Briefly describe the proposed approach for addressing the required services and the firm's ability to meet the city's schedule.

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Tax Compliance Services

4.5.4 Proposal Costs

This section shall include the proposed costs to provide the services outlined in Section 6.0, detailing the cost and the cost of any optional consulting services not included in the scope of services. Include any other cost and price information that would be contained in a potential contract or agreement with the city. Submit a fee proposal which details hourly rates, an estimate of the number of hours needed to complete the project, an estimate of non-personnel costs, and an estimate of the total not-to-exceed project cost. No additional payment will be made for travel expenses.

PLEASE NOTE: The city of Carson will not pay for services before it receives them. Therefore, do not propose contract terms that call for upfront payments or deposits.

5.0 Proposal Schedule

Event/Activity	Date
Distribution of RFP	January 14, 2010
Final Date for Receipt of Proposals	February 15, 2010
RFP Opening	February 15, 2010
Evaluation & Review	February 22, 2010
City Council Approval	April 20, 2010
Notification to Vendors	April 27, 2010
Service Begins	May 3, 2010
Completion & Submission of Report	August 3, 2010

6.0 Scope of Services

The objective of this project is to verify that taxpayers are accurately reporting and paying taxes to the city. The tax categories to be reviewed are Utility Franchise Taxes for electric, gas and water service providers (4 utility companies), Franchise Taxes for Cable TV (2 cable companies) and Solid Waste service providers (1 solid waste service provider), Transient Occupancy Taxes (10 hotel/motels) and certain Business License Taxes (not to exceed 1,000). Specifically, the selected firm will contact the specified taxpayers and review financial records to ensure that revenues have been accurately reported and that taxes have been properly computed and remitted, as well as notify the taxpayers of underpayment findings. If warranted, the contractor will be expected to educate the taxpayers to ensure that future reporting will be completed in accordance with municipal code requirements.

7.0 Confidential Information

All data, documents, discussions or other information developed or received by or for Vendor in performance of this contract or agreement are confidential and not to be disclosed to any person except as authorized by city, or as required by law.

- 7.1 Under no circumstances will the Vendor use, publish, sell or otherwise disclose to any third parties any information or the contents of any record submitted to him by the city for processing, except as reasonably necessary to accomplish performance of contractual obligations.
- 7.2 The Vendor shall hold confidential all data, information, documents, and records given by the city. Adequate steps will be taken to guarantee the security and confidentiality of all data submitted and in the possession of the Vendor.
- 7.3 The records and information submitted to the Vendor by the city shall be protected by locked facilities when unattended. Protection of records and information shall include the prevention from unauthorized use and disclosure by the Vendor, the Vendor's personnel, or other persons.
- 7.4 No report, information data, files, or tapes furnished or prepared by the Consultant or its subcontractors, successors, or agents shall be made available to any individual or organization without the prior written approval of the City Manager, Administrative Services General Manager or City Attorney, other than to individuals or organizations necessary for the effectuation of the terms and conditions of the contract or agreement.
- 7.5 The Vendor shall not, however, be required to keep confidential any data or information which is or becomes publicly available, is already rightfully in the Vendor's possession, is independently developed by the Vendor outside the scope of the contract or agreement, or is rightfully obtained from third parties.

Appendix A

Vendor Summary Sheet

Vendor Name: _____

Vendor Parent or Ownership: _____

Vendor Address: _____

Vendor Telephone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

Vendor Website: _____

Management person to serve as direct contact with the city and responsible for the services required for this Request for Proposal (RFP):

Name: _____

Title: _____

Telephone Number: _____

EMAIL Address: _____

Person Responsible for day-to-day servicing of the account:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Telephone Number: _____

EMAIL Address: _____

Appendix B

Certification of Proposal to the City of Carson

- I. The undersigned hereby submits its proposal and, by doing so, agrees to furnish services to the city in accordance with the Request for Proposals (RFP) and to be bound by the terms and conditions of the RFP.
- II. This Vendor has carefully reviewed its proposal and understands and agrees that the city is not responsible for any errors or omissions on the part of the Vendor and that the Vendor is responsible for these.
- III. It is understood and agreed that the city reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals and to waive any informality or irregularity in any proposal received by the city.
- IV. The proposal includes all of the commentary, figures and data required by the RFP.
- V. This Vendor has carefully read and understands all of the items contained in Section 3, Conditions and Requirements.

Name of Vendor: _____

By (Authorized Signature): _____ Date: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

EMAIL Address: _____