

City of Bethel



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Accounting/Finance Services List of Eligible Firms

**RFP Number: 15-10-53-649
Date of Issue: October 29, 2015**

Proposals Due: November 19, 2015 at 4:00 p.m.

Introduction

General Information

The City of Bethel is requesting proposals from qualified firms, individual CPAs, or a group of individuals working as a team (hereafter firms and individuals called, “Accountant”) to provide accounting services typically performed for a municipal government, including, but not limited to work in the following areas: journal entries, accounts payable, payroll, bank reconciliations, annual audit preparation, sales tax audits, and grant reporting. All qualified proposals submitted will be scored and ranked to form a list of eligible accounting firms ready and able to serve the City, when needed. The City will request accounting services from the top-ranked firm or individual first, and only when that firm is unable or unwilling to perform the accounting services requested, will the same work be requested of the second-ranked individual, and so on down the list. All Accountants on the list must commit to provide services as they are able from the date of contract signature through a period ending June 30, 2020.

City of Bethel Background Information

The City of Bethel is a second class city that operates under a City Council-City Manager form of government and provides public services through the following departments: Fire, Police, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Port, Planning, Information Technology, Finance, and Administration.

The City of Bethel participates in the Alaska Public Employees’ Retirement System (PERS). Employee participation in the plan is mandatory for full-time employees.

The City of Bethel uses the following Caselle accounting software applications:

- General Ledger
- Payroll
- Accounts Payable/Purchase Orders
- Cash Receipting
- Utility Management
- Accounts Receivable
- Asset Management
- Human Resources
- Business License
- Business Tax Collection
- Cemetery Management
- Grant Management

The City Finance Department is responsible for preparation and management of the budget, annual audit, water and sewer service collections, accounts payable, accounts receivable, and

grant reporting. The Finance Department has the following positions open or filled at any time:

Finance Director
Assistant Finance Director
Accounting Specialist-General Ledger/Grants
Accounting Specialist-Payroll/Accounts Payable
Accounting Specialist-Sales Tax and Accounts Receivable
General nature accounting clerk positions.

Scope of Work

Accountant will be expected to complete accounting assignments as directed by the Finance Director. The duties assigned will vary month to month, depending on position vacancies, seasonal requirements (e.g., budget or audit preparation), and other demand factors. The Finance Director will be the primary point of contact.

The term of the contract will commence once signatures are affixed thereto and terminate on June 30, 2020. The City will decide on or before June 30, 2020 if it will go out to bid again for accounting services as described herein.

Accountant may be expected to work on-site for one work week at a time (40 hours), as directed by the Finance Director, and will be provided 30 days notice beforehand. Accountant will also be expected to work remotely with access provided to the City accounting system, server, and other files. All respondents to this RFP must be able to meet the remote access requirements to be determined by the City's Information Technology (IT) Director.

Duties assigned to Accountant may include one or more of the following elements depending on seasonal, departmental and project-specific needs: time requirement for completion, on-site or off-site, and not-to-exceed amount.

Rank-Ordered List

All qualified proposals will be reviewed, scored, and approved, such that a rank-ordered list of individuals or firms capable of providing municipal accounting services will result. The City will formally request services from the top-ranked individual or firm and provide an expected timeline for completion. The top-ranked individual or firm will have three days to confirm that it can and will perform the duties requested. If the top-ranked individual or firm cannot or will not perform the duties requested or cannot meet the timeline provided, then the same duties will be requested of the second-ranked individual or firm. The second-ranked individual or firm will have three days to confirm that it can and will perform the duties requested. This process will continue down the list, as needed, until one company can and will perform the work requested.

When a new set of accounting services and timeline are needed, the City will always start with the top-ranked individual or firm and follow the procedure described above.

Remote Access Requirements

Any and all data/information downloaded, transferred, or otherwise to be taken from the City for on-site or remote use must be approved in advance by the City Manager and IT Director. The Accountant must present a plan to the Finance Director and IT Director that clearly spells out how the data/information will be handled, transmitted, stored, used, and/or deleted. All use of City data/information should be done so professionally, confidentially, and be handled by competent individuals.

Although the proposal review committee will make a recommendation based on the contents of each proposal, final approval of the Individual or firm to be able to work remotely with and for the City of Bethel in the performance of accounting services will be determined by the City Manager and IT Director.

Billing City for Work Performed

Accountant shall bill the City monthly based on hours worked by one or more individuals at the rates submitted in the proposal. Accountant should expect to be paid within 30 days of the City receiving an invoice. All invoices should be sent to: City of Bethel, Accounts Payable, P.O. Box 1388, Bethel, AK 99559.

Timeline for 2015

Event	Date
RFP Issued	October 29, 2015
Proposals Due	November 19, 2015 at 4 pm
Proposals Scored & Selection Made	November 20, 2015
Anticipated City Council Approval	December 8, 2015

Proposal Contents and Evaluation Criteria

Mandatory Elements

The following four items are mandatory for the proposal to be reviewed:

1. Valid Licenses and Certification

Accountant must have a valid business license with the State of Alaska and City of Bethel. A City of Bethel business license may be obtained after selection, but must be in-hand prior to commencing work. Lead project team leader must have a valid CPA certification. Submit a copy of Accountants Alaska Business License and project leader’s CPA certification in proposal package.

2. Cover Letter

Submit a signed cover letter (1-2 pages) on company letterhead stating the proposer's understanding of the work to be done, the commitment to perform the work within the time period, a statement about why the firm or individual believes it to be best qualified to perform the work required under the engagement, and a statement that the proposal is a firm and irrevocable offer for the five-year period.

3. Proposal

Use 8.5" x 11" white paper to prepare and submit a proposal that contains written descriptions and/or separate sheets as necessary, to address each of the evaluation criteria.

Evaluation Criteria

1. Cover Letter (10 pts.)

2. Company Experience (25 pts.)

Include a description of the company's experience in Alaska and serving rural communities in Alaska. Include company background/history, number of employees, office locations, and years in business.

3. Personnel Qualifications (25 pts.)

Identify key personnel who will provide services to the City of Bethel in Bethel or remotely. Provide descriptions of qualifications, resumes, or both. Ensure that key personnel can provide all services the City desires as described in the scope of services.

4. References (15 pts.)

Include three references of current or former clients for which the Accountant performed similar accounting services as those being requested in this RFP. References should include name, address, telephone number, email address (if possible), accounting services provided, and period over which services were provided.

5. Fees and Expenses (25 pts.)

Proposer must provide a Schedule of Professional Fees and Expenses. The Schedule for individuals or teams should include various duties and/or job class equivalents so that various duties are charged at different rates. The Schedule for accounting firms should contain hourly rates for various job classes for company employees who work in Bethel or via remote access. The City will reimburse Accountant for actual travel costs incurred (airfare and hotel), with food costs being the exception. Include a per diem schedule for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

To assist the proposal review team in determining which company provides the lowest rates in general, proposals should contain a cost for the two scenarios given below. For the scenarios, assume airfare from Anchorage to Bethel equals \$400 and a hotel stay for one person for five nights in Bethel is \$750.

- A. Accountant sends one person to Bethel for one week (40 hours) to perform General Ledger Analyst duties, including month-end bank reconciliations, journal entries, finance grant reports, and hard-copy and electronic storage of documents.
- B. Accountant flew to Bethel and stayed five nights and worked 40 hours collecting information from four local businesses in the performance of four sales tax audits. Accountant then works remotely for an additional 40 hours to complete the four sales tax audits.

Preparing and Submitting Proposal Packages

1. **Read** the Request for Proposals document. Direct any questions about the scope of work or proposal preparation and submission requirements to the Purchasing Agent, by e-mail only (hmathlaw@cityofbethel.net). At Purchasing Agent’s discretion, addendums to this RFP may be issued based on questions and comments received.

2. **Sign up.** All interested parties are encouraged, but not required, to register on an interested proposers list by submitting an email to hmathlaw@cityofbethel.net with “Accounting Services RFP” in the subject line. Please include the name, address, telephone number, and email address of the prospective proposer’s contact person.

3. **Prepare** proposal package containing:

- 1. Cover Letter
- 2. Valid licenses and certifications (copies)
- 3. Proposal
- 4. Signature and Verification page (Attachment A)
- 5. Price Sheet (Attachment B)

4. **Submit** Proposal Packages.

Hard Copy Submission

Proposal packages submitted in hard copy form must be in an envelope and marked, “Proposal for Accounting Services.” Proposal packages must be received at the Bethel City Hall on or before the Due Date and Time shown on the cover of this document.

Mail complete proposal package to:
Hansel Mathlaw, Purchasing Agent
City of Bethel
PO Box 1388
Bethel, AK 99559

Deliver proposal package to:
Hansel Mathlaw, Purchasing Agent
City Hall, 300 State Highway
Bethel, Alaska 99559

Electronic Submission

Proposals may be submitted by fax or email. Proposals submitted by email must be in either MS Word format or Adobe PDF format and sent to Purchasing Agent by email at (hmathlaw@cityofbethel.net) or by fax: 907-543-3817. In the subject line, put “Proposal for Accounting Services.” The City is not responsible for incomplete transmissions or unsuccessful

delivery by electronic means. Upon receipt of proposal, the City will send an email indicating that it was received.

General Requirements and Conditions

Proposal Packages

Proposal packages may be withdrawn or modified prior to the scheduled time for the proposal due date or before any authorized postponement thereof. Any proposal or proposal modification received after the time and date specified shall NOT be considered. No respondent may withdraw a proposal within sixty (60) days after the Due Date. Conditional proposals will NOT be accepted.

The City has a right to determine the qualifications of any respondent to provide quality professional services as specified in the proposal package.

The City reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to reject any and all proposal package submissions without prejudice to respondents, and to extend the due date for receiving proposal packages.

The City may accept one of the proposals, subject to funds legally available and lawfully appropriated for the purposes set out in this Request for Proposals document. The City will indicate its proposal selection by a written *Notice of Intent to Award* sent to the successful respondent.

Price for services shall include all costs associated with the provision of accounting services described herein. Prices paid for services must conform to rate schedules submitted as part of the proposal, including per diem rates, and actual travel costs incurred.

Prices shall include all Federal and State of Alaska taxes. This project is exempt from City sales taxes.

All proposals must be valid for a minimum of sixty (60) days from proposal due date.

The City reserves the right to accept the proposal it deems in the best interests of the City, regardless of whether the accepted proposal contains the lowest price.

This Request for Proposals and the proposal submitted in response to this RFP, will define the scope of work to be completed by the Accountant.

This proposal is eligible for local preference as defined in the Bethel Municipal Code, section 4.20.060. The Bethel Municipal Code can be found on the City's website: www.cityofbethel.org > Bethel Municipal Code.

The City reserves the right to disregard inconsequential errors or omissions in this Request for Proposals and to act on the intended purpose of hiring a qualified company or individual to provide accounting services.

Addenda and Notifications

All addenda related to this RFP will be posted on the City's website (www.cityofbethel.org) and can be found by following these links: Doing Business > Request for Proposals/Bids > Addendum. Proposers are responsible for visiting the City's website throughout the proposal period to read and respond appropriately to information contained in addenda. Per Bethel Municipal Code 4.20.050 D. "Only a bid/proposal which acknowledges receipt of all addenda may be considered responsive." Proposers must complete Attachment B, sign it, and submit it with their proposal as formal acknowledgement of addenda.

Insurance Requirement

Accountant will be required to maintain insurance coverage, as identified below, for the full term of the contract:

1. Worker's Compensation Insurance: Auditor shall maintain worker's compensation insurance as required under Alaska Statute 23.30.045, et al.
2. Commercial General Liability Insurance covering all business premises and operations used by the Auditor in the performance of this project with coverage limits not less than \$300,000 combined single limit per occurrence.
3. Comprehensive Automobile Liability: covering all vehicles used by Auditor in the performance of this project with coverage limits not less than \$100,000 per person/\$300,000 per occurrence bodily injury and \$50,000 property damage; and
4. Professional Liability Insurance: covering all errors, omissions or negligent acts of the Auditor, subcontractor or anyone directly or indirectly employed by them, made in the performance of this project which result in financial loss to the City with coverage limits not less than \$100,000 per occurrence/annual aggregate.

The successful proposer (Accountant) will be required to provide proof of the above coverage prior to any work commencing. Additionally, Accountant will be required to name the City of Bethel as an additional insured for the duration of the project.

Vendor in Good Standing and other requirements

According to the Bethel Municipal Code 4.20.070: "No procurement contract may be awarded to a person, group, organization, or entity that is delinquent in the payment or collection of sales taxes, fees, charges, penalties, interest or other amounts that are due owing, or otherwise obligated to the City which is not remedied within ten (10) business days of notice to the contractor." See Bethel Municipal Code, section 4.20 located on the City's website: (www.cityofbethel.org).

City Responsibility

City of Bethel staff will be available to assist the Accountant by providing information, documentation, and explanations.

The City of Bethel will provide the Accountant with reasonable workspace, desks, and chairs in City Hall. Access to a telephone, photocopier, and facsimile machine will also be available. City will provide a hard-wired and/or wireless access to the internet, if needed.

Eligible individuals or accounting firms must provide their own computer (e.g., laptop) to work at City Hall in Bethel. The City's Information Technology Director will allow for connection to the City network, if needed.

Protests

Protests regarding any alleged improprieties or ambiguities in this request for proposals document must be filed with the purchasing agent at least (10) business days before the due date for proposal packages. Failure to meet this timeline shall constitute a waiver of the protesting party's rights and bar any further action regarding this matter. Additional information regarding the rights and remedies available to interested parties can be found in Section 4.20.270 of the Bethel Municipal Code located on the City's website at (www.cityofbethel.org).

Attachment A

**PRICE SHEET
Audit Services**

Proposal Date: _____ Price Submitted by: _____

SIGNATURE AND VERIFICATION

Pursuant to and in compliance with the City of Bethel’s Request for Proposals, the undersigned hereby proposes to complete the scope of work described herein and in the proposal submitted for review and approval at the rates submitted for the length of the contract period.

PRICES

Submit rate sheet as specified in Evaluation Criteria Section, Fees and Expenses subsection and prices for scenarios presented.

Respondent Name (printed):	Title:
Company Name and Mailing Address:	Telephone Number: Fax Number: E-mail Address:
Signature:	

Attachment B

SIGNATURE AND VERIFICATION

By signing below, I hereby acknowledge the following:

1. Proposer, nor any of their representatives or third party mandated by Proposer, has attempted to contact City representatives or members of the selection committee for the purpose of influencing their choice, judgment or recommendation relating to the contract, or with members of the City Council to influence their decision;
2. Proposer has produced the proposal without collusion, communication, agreement or arrangement with a competitor with regards to price, methods, factors or formulas for setting prices, to the decision to submit a proposal or to present a proposal that does not comply, directly or indirectly, with specifications contained in the request for proposals;
3. Neither the proposer nor any of its representatives engaged in discrimination, intimidating measures, influence peddling or corruption or entered into any form of collusion, communication, agreement or arrangement with other suppliers or third parties relating to a contract with the City of Bethel.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF ADDENDA

1. I hereby acknowledge receipt of the following addenda (check appropriate numbers):

#1 _____ #2 _____ #3 _____ #4 _____ #5 _____

Signature Date