



2016 Prequalification of General Contractors for Various Projects FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

Public Building Commission of Chicago | Richard J. Daley Center | 50 West Washington Street, Room 200 | Chicago, Illinois 60602 | (312) 744-3090 | pbcchicago.com

1. Who is the Public Building Commission?

The Public Building Commission of Chicago (PBC) is a full service public developer that manages construction and renovation projects for the City of Chicago and its Sister Agencies. The PBC provides services from pre-planning through vertical construction for its clients.

2. What kind of projects do you complete?

Typical projects include new public schools, school additions, libraries, renovations to existing public buildings, demolition, and site improvement.

3. What does becoming a prequalified General Contractor (GC) with the PBC mean?

Becoming a prequalified GC with the PBC means your company has been deemed a firm that has the experience, personnel, and financial capacity to complete a project with the PBC (within your firm's licensing limits). When the PBC has an opportunity available for which your firm is eligible to bid, the PBC will issue a PBC Alert via its website and an email the contact named by your firm. Your firm may be required to submit updated documents (license, insurance, bonding information etc.) along with all requirements as outlined in the bid documents.

4. I only hold a trade contractor license (plumbing, electrical, HVAC etc.). Can I still be prequalified under this RFQ?

At this time, the PBC is only prequalifying General Contractors. If your firm does not currently hold a GC license can demonstrate experience acting as a GC in the last three years, your firm should not submit to this prequalification.

5. I need help putting together my response. What should I do?

Attend the Contractor Workshop directly following the Pre-Submission Conference on March 30, 2016. If you still have questions following the Workshop, please email the Contract Officer, Patricia Montenegro at patricia.montenegro@cityofchicago.org. Additionally, there a number of Assist Agencies available to help firms prepare their submission response to this RFQ. Please review the list Assist Agencies provided at the Pre-Submission meeting.

6. My General Contractor's license with the City of Chicago has expired. Can I still be prequalified to do work with the PBC?

No. In order to be prequalified with the PBC, firms must have an active City of Chicago GC License at the time of submission.

7. How do I know what GC Classification type my firm has?

That information should be on the face of your GC license as issued by the City of Chicago. Page 4 of 43 of the RFQ explains the project size limits of the City of Chicago's GC Classifications.

8. Where can I find key information regarding this solicitation?

The Request for Qualifications (RFQ) holds all identifying information regarding the selection process, procurement timeline, evaluation criteria, requisite information, number of copies required, and form of the submission. Please consult the RFQ beginning on page 5 of 43.

9. I have insurance but my coverages are lower than outlined in Exhibit A Insurance Requirements. Should I still submit?

The Insurance Requirements as stated in Exhibit A of the RFQ are the *minimum* requirements a general contracting firm must have to be pre-qualified with the PBC. Every project will have project-specific insurance requirements that the lowest responsive, responsible bidder will have to meet. It is important that your firm demonstrate the ability to attain the coverages as outlined in the RFQ for consideration of prequalification.

10. Is my firm required to demonstrate current bonding capacity?

Yes. Your firm must submit a letter from your current surety/bonding company illustrating your firm's current bonding capacity in order to be considered for prequalification under this solicitation.

11. My company does not have a Safety Program Manual, what should I submit to explain my company's approach to performing construction safely?

If your firm is licensed as a Class A, B, or C contractor, your firm is required to complete Form H in the RFQ and submit a copy of your Safety Manual's Table of Contents. However, if you are a Class D or E contractor, your firm should submit a statement explaining your firm's approach to applying industry-accepted safety precautions. You may also include regular safety meetings or any training/certifications your personnel may hold regarding safety.

12. My company does not have a Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) program, what should I submit to explain my company's approach to QA/QC?

If your firm is licensed as a Class A, B, or C contractor, your firm is required submit its QA/QC plan. However, if you are a Class D or E contractor, your firm should submit a statement explaining your firm's approach to quality assurance and quality control. You may also include any training/certifications your personnel may hold regarding quality assurance and control.

13. I am a small company and require a portion of the agreed price upfront. Does the PBC pre-pay for services?

No, the PBC unable to pay for services prior to commencement of work. All successful firms will be required to expend necessary funds to get a project started. However, the PBC commits to working with GCs to ensure regular and timely pay applications are submitted to alleviate lengthy waiting times with the processing of payments.

- 14. I do not have audited financial statements for my company. What should I provide to show the financial capacity of my company?**
If you do not have audited financial statements, you should tender all documents that you use when you are completing accounting for your business. That may include, but not be limited to: statement of assets and liabilities; statement of cash flows; statement of income; and/or personal tax returns (with all schedules).
- 15. Do I have to be a certified Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) or Woman Business Enterprise (WBE) to respond to this RFQ?**
No. All GC firms may submit and be prequalified under this RFQ. However, if you are a certified MBE or WBE firm, please ensure to include a copy of your firm's certification letter from the City of Chicago or Cook County with Form D – Licensing and General Information of the RFQ. It is important to note, when the PBC issues a project for bid, there are MBE and WBE requirements. More information can be found on page 6 of 43 of the RFQ regarding current MBE and WBE requirements.
- 16. How will my submission be evaluated?**
Section IV – Evaluation Criteria, beginning on page 10 of 43, explains how your firm will be evaluated. It is important to provide all of the information, in the format requested, in the RFQ. Firms will be evaluated on their technical competence and past performance; qualifications and relevant experience of key personnel; and financial capacity.
- 17. What if my firm does not have 5 projects to share?**
The submission requirements indicate firms should demonstrate 5 projects in the last 3 years as representative of their experience as a General Contractor. Firms should look to their experience to identify their participation in projects to demonstrate the requisite number of projects within the required timeframe.
- 18. How many Key Personnel forms do we need to provide?**
The number of Key Personnel forms your firm is required to submit directly corresponds to your firm's GC Classification. Please consult RFQ page 19 of 43 for the requirements of each class.
- 19. May I submit Key Personnel credentials (i.e. OSHA Certification, Abatement certificate etc.)?**
Yes, front and back copies of all credentials and certifications of Key Personnel should be attached to the Key Personnel's resume.
- 20. I have never worked with a government agency before; therefore, I do not have any MBE, WBE, or EEO numbers to report. What should I do?**
The PBC will accept MBE, WBE, and EEO numbers on public and private projects. If your firm has never had to adhere to those goals or requirements, you should submit a statement regarding your understanding of the goals of MBE, WBE, and EEO participation that reflects your firm's commitment to adhering to the goals and requirements.
- 21. Can I submit as my firm and as a partner of a Joint Venture (JV)?**
Yes, firms may submit separately and as a partner of a JV so long as each submission separately meets all the submission requirements.
- 22. Does each JV partner have to submit financial information?**
Yes, each JV partner must submit documentation that explains each partner's financial capacity as explained on RFQ page 11 of 43.
- 23. Can I form JV after the prequalification has been issued?**
Yes, after bid issuance, a prequalified firm may submit the request, in writing to the Contract Officer, to include a JV partner. The PBC reserves the right to approve such requests prior to the bid's due date.
- 24. Would the PBC drop a GC from a higher classification to a lower classification?**
No. Firms must submit to the classification class to which they are licensed. The PBC will only consider your firm for the class for which the City of Chicago has issued a GC license.
- 25. The RFQ requests information on projects completed within the last 3 years. Our firm has not done a project for the PBC or other city agency in the last 3 years. Can we still be prequalified?**
Yes, so long as your firm can demonstrate experience with at least 5 projects, public or private, completed in the last 3 years.
- 26. We recently completed a large project that had DBE participation. Can we use that for MBE/WBE participation?**
No. The PBC only recognizes MBE and WBE participation. Please see the answer to number 20 herein if your firm does not have any other relevant MBE/WBE participation numbers to report. Your explanation may include information related to federally funded projects.
- 27. While the RFQ notes that a general contractor may employ a scheduling consultant, does it allow consultants to be employed in the Safety, QA/QC and Sustainability roles or must these functions be performed by direct employees? We employ a safety consultant to perform all our site investigations and employee training. Likewise, on past LEED projects, we have employed a consultant to handle the LEED aspects of the project.**
The PBC does not require all functions be performed by direct employees of the firm. If Consultants are employed by your firm to handle certain tasks, please provide the requested resumes, plans, and table of contents as requested.