



How to Do Business with the City of Midland

Comprehensive, Step-by-Step Guide for First-Time and Returning Bidders

1. Welcome & Purchasing Philosophy

The City of Midland’s Purchasing Division is responsible for spending public funds in a manner that maximizes value to residents while ensuring fair, transparent, and competitive procurement. We actively seek qualified suppliers of every size and background—including Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUB), Minority- and Woman-Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBE), Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses, and local Midland-Odessa firms.

Our processes comply with:

- **Texas Local Government Code, Chapters 252 & 271**
- **City of Midland Purchasing Policy Manual (2023 Edition)**
- Best-practice standards from NIGP, ISM, and the Institute for Supply Management.

Key takeaway: All formal solicitations \geq \$50,000 are issued exclusively through the Bonfire e-procurement portal. Paper, email, or fax submissions are *not* accepted.

2. Understand the Solicitation Types

Abbrev.	Description	Typical Use Cases
RFB	<i>Request for Bid</i> (sealed, unit-price or lump-sum)	Commodities, construction, vehicles
RFP	<i>Request for Proposal</i> (weighted criteria)	Professional services, technology solutions
RFQ	<i>Request for Qualifications</i> (two-step)	Engineering, architecture
ITB	<i>Invitation to Bid</i> (informal <\$50k)	Small equipment, maintenance

Solicitations clearly indicate whether award will be made on lowest responsible bid or best-value factors (e.g., quality, experience, sustainability). Review Section 3 of each document for the exact evaluation methodology.



3. Before You Bid – Preparation Checklist

✓ Task	Where	Why it Matters
Create / update <i>supplier profile</i>	Bonfire https://midlandtexas.bonfirehub.com	Enables document download, Q&A participation, bid upload
Subscribe to <i>commodity codes</i>	Bonfire → <i>Vendor Registration</i>	Automatic email alerts for matching opportunities
Download entire solicitation package	Bonfire → <i>Documents</i> tab	Scope, drawings, sample contract, insurance & bond forms
Read all addenda	Posted under same tab	Changes are binding; unanswered addenda may disqualify your bid
Submit <i>clarification questions</i>	Bonfire → <i>Messages/Q&A</i>	Deadline listed on the cover sheet (typically 5 days before close)
Attend pre-bid / pre-proposal conference (if scheduled)	In person or MS Teams	Site visits, networking, firsthand explanations
Plan your upload	Internal	Large files >400 MB require extra time—start 60 min before close

Tip: Keep mandatory documents (pricing sheet, bid bond, conflict-of-interest form) in a dedicated folder so you can reuse them across solicitations and avoid last-minute scrambling.

4. Submitting Your Bid / Proposal (Electronic Only)

1. **Compile documents** – follow the checklist in Section 5 of the RFP/RFB. Use *electronic signatures* that comply with the Texas Uniform Electronic Transactions Act.
2. **File naming convention** –
<SolicitationNumber>_<CompanyName>_<DocumentType>.pdf (e.g., RFB24-005_AcmeSupply_PriceSheet.pdf).
3. **Upload Sequence** – Upload principal file first (price or proposal) *then* supporting documents. Bonfire encrypts each file and issues a receipt timestamp—save the confirmation email as proof.
4. **Version Control** – You may replace a file anytime before the deadline. After closing, the portal locks and late files cannot be accepted under State law.



Common Submission Errors (and How to Avoid Them)

- Missing signature on the Bid Form → *Use DocuSign or freshly signed PDF.*
- Insurance limits below the stated minimums → *Ask your agent early for updated certificates.*
- Uploading an *editable* spreadsheet instead of a locked PDF → *Convert to PDF to preserve formatting.*

5. What Happens After Bid Closing

1. **Public Opening (Bids only)** – Respondent names and base prices are displayed in Bonfire.
2. **Compliance Review** – Purchasing verifies bonds, addenda acknowledgment, and required forms.
3. **Evaluation Committee (Proposals/Qualifications)** – Evaluation criteria may include but is not limited to qualifications, experience, cost, methodology and references. Short-listed vendors may be invited for interviews or Best-and-Final Offers (BAFO).
4. **Recommendation & Approval** – Awards <\$100k are approved administratively; amounts ≥\$100k go to City Council, usually within 14-45 calendar days.
5. **Notice of Intent / Award** – Emailed via Bonfire; unsuccessful vendors also receive notice and may request a debrief within 10 days.

6. Onboarding: Vendor Self Service (VSS)

After award, complete onboarding **within 5 business days** so that the City can issue a Purchase Order (PO) and schedule payment.

Step	Action	Helpful Hint
1	Access VSS https://comapps.midlandtexas.gov/mss	Use Chrome or Edge for best results
2	Register entity → <i>New Vendor</i>	EIN/SSN must match IRS W-9
3	Upload forms	W-9, ACH authorization, COI/endorsements, performance/payment bonds (if required)
4	Verify remit-to address & contact	Ensures correct PO routing
5	Receive official PO by email	Ship goods / begin work only <i>after</i> PO is issued

Reminder: You do not need a VSS account to *bid*. Register only after notice of award.



7. Performance, Delivery & Getting Paid

- **Delivery & Acceptance** – Ship to the F.O.B. point listed on the PO. The City’s end-user signs a receiving report that authorizes Accounts Payable (A/P) to process invoices.
- **Invoice Requirements** – Must reference the PO/Contract number, itemize charges, and be emailed as a single PDF to accountspayable2@midlandtexas.gov.
- **Payment Terms** – Net 30 via ACH, following receipt of undisputed invoice and proof of delivery/performance. Early-payment discounts are welcomed—note them on your bid form.
- **Vendor Performance Scorecard** – Quality, timeliness, and responsiveness are tracked. Consistently high performers may receive preference for informal quotes (<\$50k) under Local Government Code 252.043(b).

8. Special Programs & Resources

- **HUB / M/WBE Outreach** – Quarterly matchmaking sessions with prime contractors and City project managers. Register in Bonfire to receive invitations.
- **Sustainability & Green Procurement** – The City encourages recycled content, Energy Star, and water-efficient products. Include certifications or sustainability statements in your proposal.
- **Cooperative Contracts** – If your company holds a contract with BuyBoard, Omnia Partners, or Sourcewell, email Purchasing for piggyback approval guidelines.

9. Key Contacts & Office Information

Need	Contact	Email / Link	Phone
General Purchasing Inquiries	Purchasing Division (City Hall – Room 220)	purchasing@midlandtexas.gov	432-685-7234
Bonfire Technical Help	Bonfire Support	support@bonfirehub.com	1-800-354-8010
Vendor Self Service / Payments	Accounts Payable, Finance Dept.	vendorsupport@midlandtexas.gov	432-685-7474



Physical Address	300 N. Loraine St., Midland TX 79701	Office Hours: M-F 8 a.m.–5 p.m.	432-685-7100
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10. Quick-Reference Glossary

- **Addendum** – Formal written change to a solicitation issued *before* the bid due date.
 - **BAFO** – *Best and Final Offer*; opportunity to refine price or scope after evaluations.
 - **Bonfire** – City’s secure e-procurement portal (free for vendors).
 - **Bond (Bid, Performance, Payment)** – Surety guaranteeing bid commitment or contract performance.
 - **Best-Value** – Award based on factors beyond price, as defined in Texas LGC 252.043.
 - **COI** – Certificate of Insurance naming the City as additional insured.
 - **VSS** – Vendor Self Service portal used *after* award for vendor onboarding and payment.
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11. Need More Help?

Call us, email us, visit us, or enroll in the next free “Doing Business with Midland” workshop for live demonstrations of Bonfire and VSS. We’re here to support your success and grow Midland’s supplier community.

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Questions?

Email: purchasing@midlandtexas.gov

Visit: <https://midlandtexas.gov/purchasing>

Call: 432-685-7234