

## Doing Business with the City

The purpose of the section is to acquaint you, and other representatives who sell to the City, with the procedures followed by the Finance Department in carrying out the purchasing activities for the City of Wilson. Familiarity with the purchasing procedures will aid you materially in presenting your product to the City. It will also promote pleasant and business-like relationship with the City Purchasing personnel.

This section is intended as a general guide and as such may not answer all questions which you may have. If you have any questions not answered here, please telephone or come by.

## Purchasing Policies

In an average year, purchasing issues about 5,500 purchase orders with a value of approximately 17 million dollars. Because of the substantial amount of public money involved, Purchasing is guided in its purchasing procedures by several established policies are:

1. To conduct all purchasing in accordance with North Carolina Laws, city Charter and City of Wilson Code.
2. To obtain the quantity and quality of materials at the right price and when they are needed.
3. To stimulate competitive bidding in order to obtain materials and services at the lowest possible cost and to offer their products to the city.
4. To treat all vendors fairly.

## Introducing Your Product

The City of Wilson engages in a number of varied activities while providing municipal services for its residents. These services include police and fire protection, water production and distribution, electrical distribution, street maintenance, garbage and trash collection, and disposal, sewage disposal, parks and recreation facilities, vehicle maintenance, planning and inspection services. A great variety of equipment, supplies and services must be purchased for the departments and divisions performing these services. These purchases are processed through Purchasing.

While it is beyond the scope of this booklet to list all the products and services which the City buys, Purchasing is interested in your product if it is needed by the City. Therefore, it is important to both you and the City that your product or service be introduced in the most efficient and effective manner possible. In accordance with the City of Wilson's

moral and legal obligations to rectify economic and social inequities, recognition is given the need for a concerted effort to be put forth to assure that minority and small business enterprises are afforded equal business opportunity to participate in all phases of its operation.

The following paragraphs will provide information which will help you to introduce your product or service.

### Where the City Buys

The City of Wilson has a centralized purchasing function. Purchasing is the authority for all purchase transactions. Vendors shall not make sales to City employees without a purchase order unless approval is give by Purchasing. Employees outside Purchasing or Finance Department do not have the authority to commit City funds unless Purchasing acts as liaison between vendor and City employee.

### How the City Buys

All purchase of supplies, equipment and contractual services except professional services, where the cost exceeds \$90,000 are purchased on the basis of formal competitive sealed bids.

Purchases less than \$90,000 are made on an informal bid basis. Whenever possible these purchases are based on at least three informal quotations. Quotations may be solicited by mail, telephone, or personal visits by salesmen.

In case of emergency, and with the consent of the Director of finance, the Purchasing Manager, Department Heads or their designee may purchase necessary supplies, material, or equipment. This may be done only when it is essential that such purchases be made in order to safe-guard City property or to provide services when virtually affect the life, health or convenience for the Citizens of Wilson.

Informal bids are allowed by fax.

Formal bids are not allowed by fax.

### Bidding Procedures

Specific bidding procedures have been established by the City to conform with the requirements established by law and to provide for uniform treatment of all vendors. Small business and minority business enterprises are encouraged to participate in the bidding procedures outlined below.

It is important that each vendor be familiar with these requirements and follows then. The purchasing procedures, including these requirements, are discussed in the following sections of this Webpage.

### Notice of Invitation to Bid

The process of purchasing by formal competitive bids is initiated by the City of Wilson. A notice to bid is published in the legal notices of the “official” newspaper of the City. Any minority or small business enterprise pursuant to any invitation to bid, advertisement or solicitation, will be given full opportunity to submit bids and/or proposals and will not be discriminated against on the basis or race, color, sex, physical handicap, or national origin in consideration of an award.

Notice of call for bids are also mailed to vendors whose names are maintained on a Bidder’s List”. This list is maintained in Purchasing for each class of commodity and service which is regularly purchased by the City. The names and addresses of vendors who can furnish the required products or services and who have expressed an interest in being contracted when the City purchases such items are maintained on a current basis in Purchasing.

### Application for Placement on Bidders List

Vendors applying for placement on Bidder List are requested to come by in person to Purchasing at the City of Wilson Operations Center, 1800 Herring Avenue between the hours of 8:00 to 5:00 p.m. Vendors, who cannot do this, are requested to apply by filing out a Vendor Information Form online.

### Specifications

One of the most important factors in determining what the City buys is the quality requirement of the using department or division. This quality requirement is not necessarily the best nor the cheapest of a particular commodity. The City determines quality by need, that is, the items that are both economically and best suited for the particular use to which they will be put.

The quality required of an item or service is stipulated in a specification. Frequently, these specifications become quite technical, in other circumstances a “brand name” may be used. In either case, the specification is an expression of the quality and not a preference for a particular brand name. Vendors with products meeting or exceeding the quality requirements are invited to bid even though the brand name of their product may not be mentioned in the specifications. Specifications are usually mailed with Notices for Invitation to Bid. A request in person, by telephone, or by mail will bring a copy of the specifications to you by return mail.

The purchasing department welcomes at any time vendor’s suggestions for improving either specifications or purchasing procedures.

### Proposals

Proposals should be submitted on the proposal form furnished by the City. Completion of the proposal form constitutes the most convenient method for both the vendor and the City. If a vendor cannot bid on all items he should mark the items on which he is not bidding with the word "No Bid"