



TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

May 2025

Felicia Ansley
Assistant Director,
Contracts and Purchasing Division

I'm happy to answer any administrative requirement questions before your proposal is due.

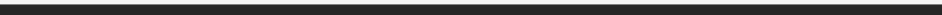
If you submit your proposal's administrative documents **one or two days early**, I may have time to go through them and advise you about any administrative deficiencies.

On the day the proposal is due, I will not have time for this courtesy review!

If any RFP administrative requirements are not met, your proposal will be deemed non-responsive and will not be forwarded to the evaluation committee for review.



The following tips are to help proposers avoid common administrative mistakes when submitting a proposal for personal services to the Harbor Department.



Proposal Submission Timing



Due to the size of our organization, e-mail takes time to travel through several servers and processes, especially those with attachments.

Do not wait until just before the 3:00 p.m. deadline to hit "send" on your e-mail submission.

You are responsible for making sure your proposal is *delivered* before 3:00 p.m., and waiting until the last minute to send it puts that delivery time in unnecessary jeopardy. For example, if you wait until 2:58 p.m. to hit "send", it may not be *delivered* to my in-box until 3:01 p.m. It **will** be considered late, and I will not accept it!

Read the Checklist carefully



- Make sure that you refer to the Proposal Submission Checklist in the Request for Proposals (RFP) document, so that all of the required documents and/or areas are addressed.
- Do not assume that an administrative form does not apply to your firm.
- It is the proposer's responsibility to review their proposal before submission to ensure that all required administrative documents are included, and complete.
- Do not submit administrative documents that are not specifically requested in the RFP. The "Opportunity Forms" link on the RAMP has several forms that do not apply to Harbor Department opportunities.

Small Business Enterprise Program Requirement



- This project has a **mandatory** 25% Small Business Enterprise (SBE) participation requirement, which *includes* a 5% Very Small Business Enterprise (VSBE) participation requirement.
- The SBE Program was created to provide additional opportunities for small businesses to participate in professional service and construction contracts.
- The VSBE percentage is inclusive, not additive (the total participation requirement is not "30%").
- By definition, a VSBE is *also* an SBE:



Small Business Enterprise Program Requirement



- On the Regional Alliance Marketplace for Procurement (RAMP, www.rampla.org), the Harbor Department has a unique certification called **SBE(Proprietary)**. This is different than the certification called "SBE(Los Angeles)".
- The Harbor Department also has a unique certification called **VSBE(Harbor)**. This is an equivalent certification to an Emerging Business Enterprise, or EBE, on the RAMP. If you are a certified EBE on the RAMP, you will automatically also receive a VSBE(Harbor) certification on your profile.

For simplicity, for the rest of this document "SBE(Proprietary)" will be referred to as "SBE", and "VSBE(Harbor)" will be referred to as "VSBE".

Small Business Enterprise Program Requirement



- If the Prime consultant is both a certified SBE and a VSBE **on the RAMP** (www.rampla.org), the mandatory SBE and VSBE participation requirement will be deemed as met. You must indicate your firm's SBE and VSBE status on both the Affidavit of Company Status and on the Consultant Description Form.
- If the Prime consultant is not a certified SBE and VSBE, the participation requirement must be met through the use of subconsultants. Primes must use the RAMP, which is an industry specific contractor directory, to identify potential subconsultants who are certified SBEs and/or VSBEs.

Small Business Program Enterprise Requirement



Important note:

If your firm is a certified SBE but is not **also** a certified VSBE, you must utilize the RAMP to find a certified VSBE subconsultant firm. Complete the requested information for that firm on your Consultant Description Form.

Again...

If your SBE firm is not a certified VSBE, you must award 5% of the project to a certified VSBE firm in order to meet the VSBE participation requirement.

Small Business Enterprise Program Requirement



- If a subconsultant is both a certified SBE and VSBE, the utilization of that singular subconsultant meets the mandatory SBE and VSBE participation requirement.
- However, the Consultant Description Form must indicate that 25% of the project will be awarded to that subconsultant. Indicate "25%" on the "Award Total" line.
- The participation requirement may also be met by utilizing several subconsultants with SBE/VSBE certification (for example, 5 different certified SBE subconsultant firms can be awarded 5% each, as long as one of them is also a certified VSBE).

Small Business Enterprise Program Requirement



All firms, Prime and subconsultants, must be certified on the RAMP **at the time the proposals are due** in order to receive credit for meeting the mandatory SBE and VSBE participation requirement.

Again...

Firms will **not** receive SBE or VSBE credit if they are not shown as certified on the RAMP, with "**Verified**" status!

Don't wait until the last minute to create a profile, or update/verify your firm's RAMP status!

Small Business Enterprise Program Requirement



- Do **not** submit a completed Proprietary SBE Application (Exhibit C) with your proposal. It will not be reviewed by Harbor Department staff, nor will it be forwarded to the Bureau of Contract Administration for processing.
- You are **not** required to apply for SBE certification for your firm; however, you will be required to use the RAMP to identify a certified SBE and/or VSBE firm that will be used as a subconsultant for this opportunity.

Small Business Enterprise Program Requirement



- The “Roadmap for Applicants” has a listing of partner agencies that have certifications which are accepted by the City of Los Angeles.
- You need to make sure that if you are certified by one of the partner agencies that you add SBE(Proprietary) to your RAMP profile. Refer to the [Support section of the RAMP](#) for instructions.

ROADMAP FOR APPLICANTS

Should I apply?

If your firm is currently certified with any of the following agencies, you do **NOT** need to submit the SBE (Proprietary) Application:

- Federal Small Business Administration (SBA) - 8(a) Business Development Program
- State of California Department of General Services (DGS) – Small Business (SB), Micro Business (MB) and Public Works (PW)
- California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS)- Small Minority/Women Business Enterprise (SMBE/SWBE)
- L.A. County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (METRO) – Small Business Enterprise (SBE)
- US Women’s Chamber of Commerce (USWCC) - Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB) & Economically Disadvantaged Women-owned Business (EDWOSB)
- National Women Business Owners Corporation (NWBOC) - Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB) & Economically Disadvantaged Women-owned Business (EDWOSB)
- City of Los Angeles – Local Small Business (LSB)
- Los Angeles County – Local Small Business Enterprise (LSBE)
- California Unified Certification Program (CUCP) – Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)

CUCP Agencies include:

- California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS)
- L.A. County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (METRO)
- San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART)
- San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA)
- Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)
- City of Fresno
- City of Los Angeles
- San Diego County Regional Airport Authority (SAN)
- San Francisco International Airport (SFO)
- San Mateo County Transit District (SAMTRANS)

Small Business Program Enterprise Requirement



- If you do wish to apply for SBE certification, follow the instructions in the application (Exhibit C).
- **Please start the application process as soon as possible before the proposal is due!** You do not get credit for simply having sent in the application or having “Pending” status on the RAMP.

Small Business Program Enterprise Requirement



Do not submit copies of your firm's certificates in your proposal (from DGS, Metro, Caltrans, etc.).

The only thing that matters is what's reflected on your firm's RAMP profile!

You also don't need to print out screenshots of your RAMP profile and submit them in your proposal. The Contract Administrator will verify compliance directly from the RAMP system.

Affidavit of Company Status form



- Ownership status verification for your firm will be done on www.rampla.org. The certifications that you list on your Affidavit of Company Status form should **match** what is on your RAMP profile.
- If your firm's RAMP profile is missing a certification, it is strongly advised that you log in and update it well in advance of the proposal's due date.
- Submit only **one** Affidavit of Company Status form with your proposal, completed for your firm (Prime). Do **not** submit Affidavit forms for your subconsultants.
- Don't assume that if your firm doesn't hold any certifications, the Affidavit form is not required in your proposal...**it is!** Please refer to the definition of an "OBE".
- Make sure both pages of the form have been completed, including the name of your firm near the top of the first page.

Consultant Description Form



- Ensure that **all fields** on your form are completed, for both your firm (Prime) and your subconsultants. If completed manually, you should ensure that the handwritten information is **legible**.
- If you are selected for award, this form will become part of your written agreement with the Harbor Department. Make sure that the correct address and contact person is listed. The information on this form will also be used by the Contract Administrator to communicate with your firm about this RFP, so using “generic” or unmonitored e-mail addresses is not recommended.
- SBE and VSBE certification status for all subconsultants will be verified using the RAMP. Please make sure that what you complete on this form for your sub’s certifications matches their RAMP profile. Your subs should be strongly encouraged not to wait until the last minute to create/update their profiles or apply for certifications!

Consultant Description Form



- When asked to provide a "Company RAMP ID#", **do not** provide the RAMP ID number of the opportunity, which is shown on the cover page of the RFP document. You must provide the ID number of *your company's* profile that is shown on the RAMP system. If you have duplicate accounts, you should make an effort to eliminate or consolidate them (contact RAMP Support at <https://snow.lacity.org/rampla> for assistance with this).
- Codes to use when asked for "Owner's Ethnicity":

AA: African American	APA: Asian Pacific American
C: Caucasian	HA: Hispanic American
NA: Native American American	SAA: Subcontinent Asian

Local Business Preference Program



- If applicable for the contract opportunity, proposers may receive an additional 8% on their score for being a Local Business Enterprise (LBE), or up to an additional 5% for utilizing LBE subconsultants.

In order to qualify for the 8% LBE preference, your firm must meet one of the following criteria:

1. Business is headquartered within Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino or Ventura County

OR

2. Business has at least 50 full-time employees, or 25 full-time employees for specialty marine contracting firms, working in the five Counties listed above.

CEC Form 50



For most proposers, it is appropriate to check “Original Filing” at the top of CEC Form 50.

Please contact the Ethics Commission for questions about this form:

<https://ethics.lacity.gov/contact/>

Make sure the entire form is complete.

CEC Form 55



For most proposers, it is appropriate to check “Original Filing” at the top of CEC Form 55.

Please refer to the Ethics Commission’s website for when it is appropriate to mark “Amendment”, and for other detailed instructions for completing this form:

[Form 55 Instructions](#)

Do not forget to put the date for “Date Bid Submitted”!

CEC Form 55 #1



Make sure the Schedule Summary section is fully completed.

Many firms fail this requirement!

- For number one, either “Yes” or “No” must be checked. If “Yes” is checked for number one, you must also submit a completed Schedule A.
- If the boxes for number one in the Schedule Summary are left blank, or if “N/A” is written, the form will be deemed non-responsive!
- Most proposers are entities, so it is strongly advised that you check “Yes”. Refer to the definitions in the instructions:

[Form 55 Instructions](#)

CEC Form 55 #2



- For number two, either “Yes” or “No” must be checked.
- If “Yes” is checked for number two, you must submit a completed Schedule B.
- If “No” is checked for number two, do not submit a Schedule B in your proposal that says N/A on it, or is blank. It is already implied by the “No” response that Schedule B is not applicable.
- If the boxes for number two in the Schedule Summary are left blank, or if “N/A” is written, the form will be deemed non-responsive!

CEC

Form 55

#3



For number three, indicate the **total number of pages** of CEC Form 55 that you are submitting, including the first page and any additional Schedule A and/or Schedule B pages.

Do **not** put the total of number of pages of your entire proposal!

Insurance Verification Letter Requirement



Your proposal must include a letter from your firm, signed and dated, which includes the title of the RFP.

Your firm must review the entire Section 5 of the RFP. **It is strongly recommended that you also share that portion of the RFP with your insurance carrier or broker.**

The insurance verification letter's purpose is for you to attest in writing that either:

Your firm currently meets all those insurance requirements

OR

Your firm will meet all those insurance requirements if you're selected for contract award.

That's it! Keep it simple!

Do not include more information in your letter than that (such as a line item description of your current coverage).

Insurance Verification Letter Requirement



- Do **NOT** submit an ACORD® Certificate of Liability Insurance sheet by itself
- Do **NOT** submit a quote from your insurance carrier or broker
- Do **NOT** submit a copy of your current insurance policy
- Do **NOT** submit a copy of your policy renewal documents

Insurance Verification Letter Requirement



Do not submit any insurance documents on KwikComply (<http://kwikcomply.org>) at the proposal stage.

ONLY the firm selected for contract award will be required to submit proof of insurance documents through KwikComply.

Copies of automated "approval" e-mails received through KwikComply will not be accepted in lieu of an insurance verification letter.

Standard Provisions Letter Requirement



Submit a letter, signed by an authorized principal of your firm, attesting that your firm accepts all of the Harbor Department's Standard Contract Provisions exactly as set forth in Section 4 of the RFP. The letter should also confirm that if selected for award, your firm will comply with the demographic reporting requirements of Executive Directive 35.

If your firm cannot agree to the Standard Contract Provisions, exactly as set forth, please do not submit a proposal.

Once again...

I'm here to answer your administrative form questions! If you submit your proposal **very early**, I may have time to go through it and advise you about anything that needs fixing. As long as I receive a corrected proposal before 3:00 p.m. on the proposal due date, you're okay!

On the day the proposal is due, **I will not have time to do a courtesy administrative review**, and therefore you will not have a chance to correct any mistakes which make your proposal non-responsive...I will only acknowledge receipt of your e-mailed submission.



Felicia Ansley, Assistant Director
Contracts and Purchasing Division
fansley@portla.org