

CITY OF KINGSTON  
PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Brian J. Woltman  
Purchasing Agent

## FAQ's

**Q:** Does the City of Kingston accept bids electronically?

**A:** At the current time the City does not accept bids electronically.

**Q:** Are there any other sites which distribute City of Kingston bidding documents?

**A:** Other sites, which often charge fees for bid information, will supply documents to companies. However, copies of bid documents obtained from any source other than directly from the City of Kingston are not considered official copies. Only those bidders who obtain bidding documents from the City of Kingston Purchasing Department or the Empire State Purchasing Group website are guaranteed to receive addendum information if issued. It is recommended vendors always obtain an official copy.

**Q:** How can bids documents be obtained?

**A:** The City of Kingston posts its bids and quotes on the Empire State Purchasing Group website.

**Q:** Are there exceptions to bidding?

**A:** Yes. The following are permitted by New York State law as exceptions to competitive bidding. Purchases from State Contract Purchases from contracts let by the United States of America or any agency thereof, any state or any other county if it is let in a manner that constitutes competitive bidding consistent with New York State law. Purchases through NYS designated Preferred Sources. Emergencies as designated by the Mayor when and wherein the delay caused by soliciting bids or quotes would endanger the health, welfare or property of the City or its citizens. Sole Source: In cases where a reasonably exhaustive and documented search discloses that a good or service is available from only one vendor.

**Q:** What are the differences between a bid, quote and RFP?

**A:** Bids are formal documents governed by NYS municipal law. Quotes have lower dollar thresholds, are less formal and are regulated by city purchasing procedures. RFPs (Requests for Proposals) are a formal invitation from the city to provide a solution to a problem or need of the city. RFPs are used to obtain professional services. An award is made based on a committee determination using weighted criteria as stated in the specification document which usually includes experience, qualifications, proposed plan to provide service and price/fee.

**Q:** Where are legal notices published for the City of Kingston?

**A:** The official newspaper for the City in 2016 is the Daily Freeman, which is where all Legal Notices for Bids and RFP's shall be published. Public Works projects may also be advertised in the NYS Contract Reporter.

**Q:** Can someone obtain past bid results?

**A:** Yes, any prior Bid results can be obtained by contacting the Purchasing Office.

**Q:** Do municipalities have to purchase off State Contracts?

**A:** No. The City and other municipalities by law have the option to buy off State Contracts as well as other government or municipal bids if permitted by the originator's specifications.

**Q:** Does a quote always go to the lowest bidder?

**A:** No. There are criteria such as delivery date, quantity discounts, insurance provisions, which could affect the award of the quote.

**Q:** What are the current bid limits for purchases?

**A:** \$20,000.00 for the purchase of commodities and \$35,000.00 for public works projects.

**Q:** Can a bid submission be faxed?

**A:** No, faxed bids cannot be accepted. Bids must be received from the bidder in a sealed envelope marked with the bid information in accordance with the bid specifications.

**Q:** Must quotes be advertised?

**A:** Quotes for items or services which fall below the bid threshold do not have to be advertised by law, but they may if the Purchasing Agent feels it will bring in more vendors.

**Q:** Will Purchasing accept bids submitted after the advertised deadline for receipt?

**A:** Bids not received by the time and at the place advertised are designated as late bids. Late bids cannot be accepted and are returned to the vendor unopened.

**Q:** If only one bid is received, is it an automatic award?

**A:** No. The Purchasing Agent has the right to reject any and all bids; to rebid; to revise the bid specifications and reissue the bid; or in some cases, award the bid to the single bid vendor; whichever is in the best interest of the City.

**Q:** Are site visits mandatory?

**A:** If the nature of the bid is such that you cannot be fully informed without a site visit, we will deem it mandatory. If it is incidental to the bid, it is not.

**Q:** Can a bidder change a bid after it is opened?

**A:** No. If the submitted bid is deemed the lowest, responsive, responsible bid the City may award to the bidder. The City is permitted to negotiate only with the vendor submitting the lowest price to further LOWER the pricing, but in no instance can a vendor be permitted to RAISE a submitted bid price once the bids are open.

**Q:** Are all bid openings public?

**A:** Yes by law, all bid opening meetings are open to the public. All submitted bids are opened at the time and place designated in the bid advertisement, publicly read and all bidders disclosed. A written record is made of the names of all witnesses, attendees and bids received.

**Q:** How are bids for governments different from the private sectors?

**A:** Government's bids are strictly governed by the state they are in and the laws and rules set up for purchasing.