



Municipality of Anchorage

Dave Bronson, Mayor
Purchasing Department

November 2, 2022

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP 2022P053

Accessible Voting Solutions

The Municipality of Anchorage is an equal opportunity employer.

Enclosed is pertinent information for use in preparing your proposal.

Pre-Proposal Conference: **N/A**

Site Visit: **N/A**

Questions Due: **12:00 P.M. Local Time, November 14, 2022**

Proposals Due: **5:00 P.M. Local Time, November 29, 2022**

ONE SIGNED ORIGINAL, single sided, unbound, plus five (5) complete copies of your proposal must be submitted. In addition to the copies, a flash-drive containing a PDF copy of the complete proposal, including attachments must also be provided.

If applicable, the call-in phone number for Pre-Bid Conferences is 907-343-6089. Conference lines are opened 5 minutes prior to the Pre-Bid Conference times. To attend meetings in person; you may do so at 632 W. 6th Avenue, Suite 520, Anchorage, AK 99501. FOR AUXILIARY AIDS, SERVICES, OR SPECIAL MODIFICATIONS TO PARTICIPATE PLEASE CONTACT THE PURCHASING DEPARTMENT TO REQUEST REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS AT 907-343-4590; OR wwpur@muni.org

For further information contact Purchasing at (907) 343-4590 or email wwpur@muni.org. All correspondence should include the **RFP** number and title.

The Municipality of Anchorage reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any informalities in procedures.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris Hunter".

CHRIS HUNTER
Deputy Purchasing Director

**Municipality of Anchorage
Municipal Clerk’s Office – Elections
Request for Proposals (RFP)
Provide Accessible Voting System for Vote by Mail Elections**

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1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Purpose

The Municipality of Anchorage (Municipality) Municipal Clerk’s Office – Elections (Clerk), is seeking proposals from qualified vendors to provide accessible voting systems for vote by mail elections. The goal the Clerk is seeking to achieve is to upgrade ADA accessibility over current systems, including options for voters with disabilities to vote privately and independently.

The Municipality intends to contract with the selected respondent to provide software, hardware, and implementation services and support for an accessible voting system, including training, maintenance, and warranties.

The award will be made to a single vendor. A vendor may include subcontractors in the proposal; however, the vendor is responsible for the performance of its subcontractors. The Municipality also reserves the right to approve any subcontractors.

1.2 Background

Voters with disabilities represent approximately one-sixth of the American electorate. This demographic encompasses voters with mobility, visual, communicative, physical, or cognitive impairments. The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that people with disabilities have a full and equal opportunity to vote in all elections.

The Municipality of Anchorage, with a population of more than 290,000 – and approximately 240,000 registered voters – is Alaska’s largest city. Anchorage is a home rule unified municipality, which combines the functions of what would typically be city and county governments in most Lower 48 areas.

On the first Tuesday in April every year, the Municipality holds its regular election. This election may include the following types of contests:

- Offices for which candidates are to be elected, including the offices of mayor, assembly member, school board member, or service area board member
- Propositions, including bonds, charter amendments, initiative measures, referendum measures, and service-area related measures

The Municipality may also hold runoff elections (if required, held three weeks after certification of the regular or special election) and special elections (generally with 30-75 days’ notice, depending on the purpose of the election). The Municipality does not conduct federal or state elections.

Elections typically have multiple ballot styles based on various geopolitical divisions, such as assembly districts and service areas; for example, the April 2022 election included 180 styles. Sample ballots from 2022 are available on the Municipal Clerk’s website at <https://www.muni.org/Departments/Assembly/Clerk/Elections/SampleBallots/2022%20Regular%20Sample%20Ballots.pdf>

The Municipality currently uses a vote by mail/vote at home system where ballot packages are mailed to every qualified voter at least 21 days before Election Day, and voters may return their ballots by mail, in secure drop boxes, or at one of four Anchorage Vote Centers. Voters may also vote in person at the Anchorage Vote Centers. Military and overseas ballot packages are mailed approximately 35 days before Election Day. The current process is a secure, auditable process that maintains the integrity and transparency of the election process while using a by mail format.

Specific to accessible voting systems, the Municipality currently assumes that a voter with disabilities has assistive devices, specific to their disability, which they use for similar tasks at home. We recognize that not everyone with disabilities has the assistive devices they need. Alternatively, a voter can have a personal

representative of their choosing request a Special Needs Ballot on their behalf, take it to the voter, assist the voter in voting, and return the ballot to a Vote Center. If the voter does not have someone they trust, they may call the voter hotline and request a Special Needs Ballot and, in this instance, two election officials would take the Special Needs Ballot to the voter, assist them in voting, and return the ballot to the Election Center. We recognize that the Special Needs Ballot option may not provide a voter with certain disabilities the opportunity to vote privately and independently.

1.3 Questions

Any questions regarding this proposal are to be submitted in writing to:

Municipality of Anchorage
Purchasing Department

wwpur@muni.org

For ease of identification please identify the project/title number in the subject line of any correspondence.

Purchasing Office hours of operation are: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. local time Monday through Friday, excluding Municipal holidays. Due to time constraints on this project, all questions regarding the scope of work should be received prior to the deadline indicated on the RFP cover letter.

1.4 Preparation Costs

The Municipality shall not be responsible for proposal preparation costs, nor for costs including attorney fees associated with any (administrative, judicial or otherwise) challenge to the determination of the highest ranked Proposer and/or award of contract and/or rejection of proposal. By submitting a proposal each Proposer agrees to be bound in this respect and waives all claims to such costs and fees.

2.0 RULES GOVERNING COMPETITION

2.1 Examination of Proposals

Proposers should carefully examine the entire RFP and any addenda thereto, and all related materials and data referenced in the RFP. Proposers should become fully aware of the nature of the work and the conditions likely to be encountered in performing the work.

2.2 Proposal Acceptance Period

Award of this proposal is anticipated to be announced within 60 calendar days, although all offers must be complete and irrevocable for 120 calendar days following the submission date.

2.3 Confidentiality

The content of all proposals will be kept confidential until the selection of the Contractor is publicly announced. At that time the selected proposal is open for review. After the award of the Contract, all proposals will then become public information.

2.4 Proposal Format

Proposals are to be prepared in such a way as to provide a straight forward, concise delineation of the Proposer's capabilities to satisfy the requirements of this RFP. Emphasis should be concentrated on

- 1) conformance to the RFP instructions;
- 2) responsiveness to the RFP requirements;
- 3) completeness and clarity of content.

2.5 Signature Requirements

All proposals must be signed. A proposal shall be signed: by an officer or other agent of a corporate vendor, if authorized to sign contracts on its behalf; a member of a partnership; the owner of a privately-owned vendor; or other agent if properly authorized by a power of attorney or equivalent document. Signature on the "Letter of Transmittal" (See Para 4.3.4) will meet this requirement.

Failure to sign the Proposal is grounds for rejection. The name and title of the individual(s) signing the proposal must be clearly shown immediately below the signature.

2.6 Proposal Submission Requirements

2.6.1 ONE ORIGINAL, single sided unbound, plus FIVE (5) complete copies of the proposal must be received by the Municipality prior to the date and time specified in the cover letter. Copies may be bound or enclosed in folders/binders as the Proposer chooses.

2.6.2 IN ADDITION to the copies required by paragraph 2.6.1 a flash drive containing a PDF copy of the complete proposal, including attachments, must be provided.

2.6.3 All copies of the proposals shall be submitted in a single sealed cover which should be plainly marked as a Request for Proposal Response with the Number and Title prominently displayed on the outside of the package.

2.6.4 Proposals must be delivered or mailed to:

Physical Address
Municipality of Anchorage
Purchasing Department
632 W. Sixth Avenue, Suite 520
Anchorage, AK 99501

2.7 News Releases

News releases by or on the behalf of any Proposer pertaining to the award resulting from the RFP shall not be made without prior written approval of the Municipal Purchasing Officer.

2.8 Disposition of Proposals

All materials submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of the Municipality. One copy of the submitted material shall be retained for the official files of the Purchasing Department and will become public record after award of the Contract.

2.9 Oral Change/Interpretation

No oral change or interpretation of any provision contained in this RFP is valid whether issued at a pre-proposal conference or otherwise. Written addenda will be issued when changes, clarifications, or amendments to proposal documents are deemed necessary by the Municipality.

2.10 Modification/Withdrawal of Proposals

A Proposer may withdraw a proposal at any time prior to the final submission date by sending written notification of its withdrawal, signed by an agent authorized to represent the agency. The Proposer may thereafter submit a new proposal prior to the final submission date; or submit written modification or addition to a proposal prior to the final submission date. Modifications offered in any other manner, oral or written will not be considered. A final proposal cannot be changed or withdrawn after the submission date, except for modifications requested by the Municipality after the date of receipt and following oral presentations.

2.11 Late Submissions

PROPOSALS NOT RECEIVED PRIOR TO THE DATE AND TIME SPECIFIED IN THE COVER LETTER WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED AND WILL BE RETURNED UNOPENED AFTER RECOMMENDATION OF AWARD. THE PROPOSALS MUST BE RECEIVED AT THE LOCATION SPECIFIED.

2.12 Rejection of Proposals

The Municipality reserves the right to reject any or all proposals if determined to be in the best interest of the Municipality.

2.13 Equal Employment Opportunity Contract Compliance

2.13.1 The contractor will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, or physical or mental disability. The contract will comply with all laws concerning the prohibition of discrimination including, but not limited to, Title 5 and Title 7 of the Anchorage Municipal Code.

2.13.2 Every municipal contract shall state, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees to work under the contract, that all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, or physical or mental disability.

2.14 Confidential/Proprietary Information

The content of proposals will be kept confidential until the selection of the Contractor is announced. At that time, the selected proposal is open for review to the competing proposers only (except for information properly identified as being proprietary). After the award of the contract, all submitted proposals shall become public information except for properly identified proprietary information. If a proposer wishes individual pages, which contain actual business, proprietary information to be held confidential, each page must be marked and an explanation furnished of its proprietary nature. In addition to marking individual pages, the Proposal's Cover must also be annotated with the words "THIS PROPOSAL CONTAINS PROPRIETARY INFORMATION". "Confidential and Proprietary" information is not meant to include any information which, at the time of disclosure, is generally known by the public and/or competitors. MOA's ability to treat information submitted as confidential is limited by Anchorage Municipal Code. Proposers concerned with the confidentiality of information submitted should familiarize themselves with the following Anchorage Municipal Code provisions:

AMC 3.90 Access to Public Records

AMC 3.90.010 Policy

AMC 3.90.020 Definitions

AMC 3.90.030 Information Available to the Public

AMC 3.90.040 Exemptions for Particular Records

3.0 SCOPE OF WORK

3.1 Overview

The Municipality is seeking proposals from qualified vendors to provide accessible voting systems for vote by mail elections. The successful vendor must be able to provide an accessible voting system for the following:

- Requesting a ballot – accessible ballot request options or alternative ballot options such as braille or large print versions of paper forms
 - If this solution is a device, the Municipality will need five (5) devices for use at voting centers
- Ballot marking – accessible ballot marking options
 - If this solution is a device, the Municipality will need five (5) devices for use at voting centers
- Ballot return – accessible ballot tracking options

3.2 Requirements

Accessible Voting

Alternative ballot options and accessible ballot marking options must be compatible with Dominion Voting Systems specifications such that ballots can be accurately processed using Dominion's Democracy Suite version 5.5.32.4 and ImageCast Central version 5.5.32.5 with ImageCast Adjudication version 5.5.32.1.

Accessible voting systems must:

- Be secure, and materials produced such that the integrity of the election cannot be questioned or compromised.
- Be compatible with assistive technology.
- Support accessible voting to occur in four (4) vote centers with one (1) backup unit.
- Support accessible voting on up to 200 different ballot styles.
- Support ballots of the following sizes:
 - 8-1/2 x 11 inch (letter)
 - 8-1/2 x 14 inch (legal)
 - 8-1/2 x 17 inch (super legal)
 - 8-1/2 x 18 inch
- Maximize use of commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) hardware.
- Provide the ability to record audio and to import synthesized speech, with built-in text translation and audio recording. Text translations and audio recording are done within the system; no need to use separate applications.
- Securely allow for use at early voting locations that require these units to remain open (without having to close polls daily).
- If proposing an accessible marking device, must not store any votes and must instead print a paper ballot that can be tabulated through a central count.
- Open and load for the voter in approximately one (1) minute for all options, to include an audio ballot.

Support Services

The Municipality also seeks support for the accessible voting system outlined as follows:

The Proposer selected under this RFP will be responsible for all aspects of the initial implementation of the accessible voting system. The Proposer will also be responsible for providing the necessary materials and documentation associated with the accessible voting system implementation to the Municipality such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Initial acceptance testing to ensure system components are operating correctly.
- Deliver the accessible voting system to the Municipality.
- Provide system documentation to include Use Procedures, training materials, and maintenance plans.
- Provide information on proposed maintenance plan (e.g. yearly preventative maintenance).
- Conduct approval testing to verify that all components operate properly, integrated with the Municipality's existing system, to include:
 - Conduct end-to-end testing on the accessible voting system prior to final approval.
 - Prepare the accessible voting system for being a component of logic and accuracy testing using a process approved by the Municipality.
 - Conduct functional testing to ensure all components integrate with the system currently in place in the Municipality.

Election Specific Support – Certain support elements may be based on the actual products selected so the “final agreement” will outline the exact levels of support requested, designed around the accessible voting system selected. There are known standard support items needed for all systems and the Proposer must provide quotes for the following:

- Assigning personnel to fulfill roles as technicians to support the Municipality during the election cycle to ensure all equipment and technology is operating appropriately at all vote centers and the Municipality's Election Center.
- Assigning personnel to train staff of the Municipality on the setup and operation of the system.
- Maintaining an inventory of parts for repairing equipment to remove risks that the accessible voting system or its equipment are inoperable due to a lack of spare parts.
- Assigning personnel to assist the Municipality in performing maintenance and repairs based on the maintenance plan submitted, should it be required.

3.3 Election Timeline

Regular elections are held the first Tuesday in April. Run-off elections are only possible for mayoral elections, which occur every 3 years (or by special election). If a run-off election is held, it will be in early May (unless related to a special election). Special elections can occur at any time and may be all registered voters or a subset of registered voters.

Accessible voting systems shall be delivered, installed, and acceptance testing shall be completed by February 15, 2023 to the Anchorage Election Center located at: 619 E. Ship Creek Avenue, Suite 100, Door D, Anchorage, Alaska, 99501. Hours of operations: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Alaska time. All required operational and software training shall be completed during this phase of the implementation. Technical, ballot printing, and election creation support (if needed) for the April 4, 2023 regular election, is also a requirement.

4.0 PROPOSAL AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

To achieve a uniform review process and obtain the maximum degree of comparability, it is required that the proposals be organized in the manner specified below. Proposals shall not exceed TWENTY (20) pages in length (excluding letter of transmittal, resumes, title page(s), index/table of contents, attachments, or dividers). Excess pages will be removed prior to evaluation, which could result in incomplete responses and lower scores. One page shall be interpreted as one side of a single-spaced, letter size sheet (8 ½" x 11").

4.1 Title Page

Show the RFP number and subject, the name of your organization, address, telephone number(s), name of contact person, and date.

4.2 Table of Contents

Clearly identify the materials by section and page number.

4.3 Letter of Transmittal (Limited to two (2) pages)

4.3.1 Briefly state your organization's understanding of the services to be performed as described in section 3 and make a positive commitment to provide the services as specified.

4.3.2 List your organization's contact for this RFP along with their phone number and email address on the proposal cover page.

4.3.3 Provide the name(s) of the person(s) who are authorized to make representations for your organization, their titles, address, and telephone numbers.

4.3.4 The letter of transmittal must be signed by a corporate officer or other individual who has the authority to bind the organization.

4.4 Evaluation Criteria

4.4.1 Qualifications and Experience

Detail the organization's experience in the same or similar areas of expertise, financial stability, and its adaptability to providing the required services. Experience should include providing accessible voting systems in at least three (3) federal, state, county, or local elections and where the ballots were electronically scanned for tabulation.

Organizations are encouraged to submit any information that indicates how they would provide the Municipality with services that exceed the requirements in this RFP.

Provide at least two (2) references for which your organization has provided the same or similar services. Include a point of contact, telephone number, and a brief description of the services provided.

Identify any subcontractors who will provide services and the services each will be providing. For each subcontractor, provide experience information requested in the first paragraph of this section.

4.4.2 Project Staff

Discuss the staff available for the project, including identifying the Project Manager and key individuals to be assigned from within the organization and from subcontractors.

Address the qualifications of each individual. Attach resumes, if available, for key personnel to be assigned to this project. Include in the statement of qualifications or each resume the estimated months of experience as it relates to this project. State whether each individual will be based local in Anchorage or work remotely. If you anticipate any travel, explain what travel costs and other factors may be anticipated due to travel from the individuals' normal place of business.

Discuss the organization's workload and size and ability to manage project schedules.

4.4.3 Proposal and Resources

Provide a brief synopsis of your understanding of the Municipality's needs and how you plan to meet those needs and fulfill the scope of work detailed in

Section 3. Include a statement that your organization will meet all requirements stated in Section 3.2 Requirements.

Provide information on resources available to your organization, which indicates that you have access to the services and equipment necessary to perform the work.

4.4.4 Contractor Location

Describe the organization's location where the primary services are to be provided, hours of operation and time zone. Describe where each of the services included in the scope of work will be done.

Describe the ability of key project staff to meet in person with Municipal personnel (when required) during the performance of the contract. If you anticipate any work being done outside the Municipality, identify the tools you will use to successfully work remotely with Municipality staff.

4.4.5 Cost

Complete Attachment B – Appendix B – Cost Worksheet, providing the unit price, the extended price for the stated quantities, and the total cost. Provide costs for the entire project scope (and requirements) defined in this RFP.

5.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PROCESS

5.1 Criteria

The criteria to consider during evaluations, and the associated point values, are as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. | Qualification and Experience | 30 points |
| 2. | Project Staff | 10 points |
| 3. | Proposal and Resources | 30 points |
| 4. | Contractor Location | 5 points |
| 5. | Cost | 25 points |
| Total Points Available | | 100 points |

5.2 Qualitative Rating Factor

Organizations will be ranked using the following qualitative rating factors for each technical criterion:

- 1.0 Outstanding
- .8 Excellent
- .6 Good
- .4 Fair
- .2 Poor
- 0- Unsatisfactory

The rating factor for each criteria category will be multiplied against the points available to determine the total points for that category.

EXAMPLE: For the evaluation of the experience factor, if the evaluator feels the response as provided was “Good” they would assign a “qualitative rating factor” of .6 for that criterion. The final score for that criterion would be determined by multiplying the qualitative rating factor of .6 by the maximum points available (35) and the resulting score of 21 would be assigned to the criterion. This process would be repeated for each criterion.

The total score will be determined by adding the technical score plus the score received for the cost of the audit.

FORMULA FOR COST EVALUATION

Cost Evaluation (item 4): The award of the “Cost” points will be determined by the calculation shown below. The lowest cost proposal will receive the maximum number of points awarded for the “cost” criteria:

$$\frac{\text{Lowest cost proposal} \times \text{Maximum \# points for category}}{\text{Cost of proposal being scored}}$$

5.3 Evaluation Process

A committee of individuals representing the Municipality of Anchorage will perform an evaluation of the proposal(s). The committee will rank the proposal(s) as submitted. The Municipality of Anchorage reserves the right to award a contract solely on the written proposal.

The Municipality also reserves the right to request oral interviews with the highest ranked organizations (short list). The purpose of the interviews with the highest ranked organizations is to allow expansion upon the written responses. If interviews are conducted, a maximum of two (2) organizations will be short-listed. A second score sheet will be used to score those organizations interviewed. The final selection

will be based on the total of all evaluators' scores achieved on the second rating. The same categories and point ranges will be used during the second evaluation as for the first. The highest ranked Proposer after the second scoring, if performed, may be invited to enter into final negotiations with the Municipality for the purposes of contract award.

6.0 SELECTION PROCESS

The Proposer with the highest total evaluation points may be invited to enter into contract negotiations with the Municipality of Anchorage. If an agreement cannot be reached, the second highest Proposer may be contacted for negotiations. This process may continue until successful negotiations are achieved. However, the Municipality reserves the right to terminate negotiations with any Proposer should it be in the Municipality's best interest. The Municipality of Anchorage reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted.

7.0 SAMPLE CONTRACT

In addition to carefully reading all of the information in the RFP, all Proposers must carefully read and review the attached sample contract (ATTACHMENT A). The successful Proposer shall be required to enter into a Contract with the Municipality of Anchorage, which will be substantially similar to the sample.

If a Proposer wishes to make changes to the Sample Contract, the proposed changes must be submitted with the proposal. All desired changes must be submitted in a separate document, and must be clear, legible, and conspicuous. The Proposer must also provide the rationale for all proposed changes. No changes will be considered until after the highest scored proposal(s) has been determined.

IF NO CHANGES ARE SUBMITTED WITH THE PROPOSAL, IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE SAMPLE CONTRACT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED.

8.0 ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Sample Contract

Attachment B – Appendix B - Cost Worksheet