

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO OFFICE OF CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION

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RULES AND REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO THE SAN FRANCISCO ADMINISTRATIVE CODE, CHAPTER 21

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Table of Contents

SCOPE	4
DEFINITIONS	6
REGULATION 21.03(a): GENERAL AUTHORITY OF THE PURCHASER OF SUPPLIES: APPROVAL OF PURCHASES	8
REGULATION 21.03(e)(3): DOLLAR LIMIT FOR OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT IN VEHICLES	10
REGULATION 21.03(e)(5): DEFINITION OF SPECIALIZED VEHICLES	11
REGULATION 21.03(i): DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS	12
REGULATION 21.03(j): INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) PURCHASES	13
REGULATION 21.03(k): ANCILLARY INSTALLATION SERVICE FOR COMMODITIES.....	14
REGULATION 21.04: DIRECT PURCHASING AUTHORITY OF DEPARTMENTS	16
REGULATION 21.05(b): PROCUREMENT OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	17
REGULATION 21.05(c): CANCELLATION OF PURCHASE CONTRACTS	18
REGULATION 21.06(c): OTHER ELECTRONIC TRANSACTIONS	19
REGULATION 21.3(b): COMPETITIVE SEALED BIDDING: BID OPENING	20
REGULATION 21.3(d): CORRECTION, WITHDRAWAL, OR REJECTION OF BIDS; CANCELLATION OF AWARDS	21
REGULATION 21.3(g): ADDITIONAL PURCHASES.....	23
REGULATION 21.3(i): BID PROTESTS	25
REGULATION 21.4(d): INVITATIONS FOR COMPETITIVE PROPOSALS OR QUALIFICATIONS	26
REGULATION 21.4(e): CONTENT FOR REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS	27
REGULATION 21.4(g): PURCHASES OF SERVICES OR COMMODITIES SUBSTANTIALLY RELATED TO THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS OR QUALIFICATIONS	28
REGULATION 21.5(a): OTHER PURCHASES: COMMODITIES AND SERVICES LESS THAN THE MINIMUM COMPETITIVE AMOUNT	29
REGULATION 21.5(b): SOLE SOURCE.....	31
REGULATION 21.5(c): PERISHABLE FOODS	32
REGULATION 21.5(d): PROPRIETARY ARTICLES	33
REGULATION 21.5(e): PILOT PROJECT.....	35
REGULATION 21.6: MULTIPLE LOW OFFERS.....	36
REGULATION 21.15(c): MODIFICATION OF EXISTING AGREEMENTS.....	37
REGULATION 21.15(d): EXTENSIONS FOR CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS.....	39
REGULATION 21.16(b): USE OF COOPERATIVE PROCUREMENTS CONDUCTED BY OR	

Rules and Regulations Pertaining to the San
Francisco Administrative Code, Chapter 21
Acquisition of Commodities and Services

FOR THE BENEFIT OF OTHER PUBLIC ENTITIES..... 40
REGULATION 21.17: CONTRACTS TO BE IN WRITING..... 42
REGULATION 21.30(b): SOFTWARE LICENSING PROCUREMENTS..... 43
REGULATION 21.30(d): SOFTWARE-RELATED SOLE SOURCE 44
**REGULATION 21.30(e): ADVANCED PAYMENT IN SOFTWARE AND MAINTENANCE
AGREEMENTS..... 45**

The Office of Contract Administration (“OCA”) promulgates rules and regulations pursuant to Chapter 21 of the San Francisco Administrative Code. Each Contracting Department shall comply with the requirements of Chapter 21 and cooperate to the fullest extent with OCA in the Acquisition of Commodities and Services.

SCOPE

Chapter 21 governs the acquisition of Commodities, General Services, and Professional Services, as defined herein. Chapter 21 does not apply to: (A) contracts for public works or improvements (which are covered by Chapter 6 of the Administrative Code), (B) grants (which are covered by Chapter 21G of the Administrative Code), (C) contracts for the purchase, sale, or lease of any interest in real property (which are covered by Chapter 23 of the Administrative Code).

Although Chapter 21 sets forth detailed procedures for procurement, there are sections in Chapter 21 that require further guidelines by the Purchaser. This document sets forth the rules and regulations for the following sections in Chapter 21:

- 21.03(a): General Authority of the Purchaser of Supplies: Approval of Purchases
- 21.03(e)(3): Dollar Limit for Optional Equipment in Vehicles
- 21.03(e)(5): Definition of Specialized Vehicles
- 21.03(i): Disposal of Surplus
- 21.03(j): Information Technology (IT) Purchases
- 21.03(k): Ancillary Installation Services for Commodities
- 21.04: Direct Purchasing Authority of Departments
- 21.05(b): Procurement of Professional Services
- 21.06(c): Other Electronic Transactions
- 21.3(b): Competitive Sealed Bidding: Bid Opening
- 21.3(d): Correction, Withdrawal, or Rejection of Bids: Cancellation of Awards
- 21.3(g): Additional Purchases
- 21.3(h): Substantially Related Purchases
- 21.3(i): Bid Protests
- 21.4: Invitations for Competitive Proposals or Qualifications
- 21.4(e): Content for Requests for Proposals
- 21.4(g): Purchases of Services or Commodities Substantially Related to the Requests

Rules and Regulations Pertaining to the San
Francisco Administrative Code, Chapter 21
Acquisition of Commodities and Services

for Proposals or Qualifications

- 21.5(a): Other Purchases: Commodities and Services Less than the Minimum Competitive Amount
- 21.5(b): Sole Source
- 21.5(c): Perishable Foods
- 21.5(d): Proprietary Articles
- 21.5(e): Pilot Project
- 21.6: Multiple Low Offers
- 21.15(c): Emergency Procurements: Modification of Existing Agreements
- 21.15(d): Emergency Procurement Procedures: Extensions for Continuity of Operations
- 21.16(b): Use of Cooperative Agreements and Contracts held by other Government Agencies
- 21.17: Contracts to be in Writing
- 21.30(b): Software Licensing Procurements
- 21.30(d): Software-related Sole Sources
- 21.30(e): Advanced Payment in Software and Maintenance

DEFINITIONS

Definitions set forth in Section 21.02 of Chapter 21 Acquisition of Commodities and Services are incorporated herein, and supplementary definitions are included as follows:

“**CMD**” shall mean Contract Monitoring Division of the City and County of San Francisco.

“**COIT**” shall mean the Committee on Information Technology of the City and County of San Francisco.

“**Contract**” shall mean an agreement in writing between the City and any party to provide commodities or services. Contracts encompass purchase orders.

“**Content and Data Subscriptions**” include agreements where the City is purchasing usage rights to review, download, or republish proprietary content, including but not limited to digital content, digital databases, digital media libraries, or print media. Content licensing procurements does *not* include contracts where the City provides bulk information or datasets for hosting, storage, or processing to the content provider, except that the City may share data as necessary to permit the City to access and use the licensed content such as to create a user interface or profile development, improve search functionality, and non-customized systems for record or browsing management within the content portal.

“**Delegated Department Purchasing**” refers to department heads and their designees who have complied with Regulation 21.03(a) and have been authorized by the Purchaser to buy Commodities and General Services up to \$20,000 (inclusive of taxes, delivery, installation, shipping, and all change orders) as of July 1, 2024. This is commonly as “Prop Q” authority.

“**DT**” shall mean the San Francisco Department of Technology.

“**Formal Bidding**” refers to instances where the contract value will be over the Minimum Competitive Amount and a formal solicitation is required.

“**Informal Bidding**” refers to instances where the contract amount will be less than the Minimum Competitive Amount and are subject to CMD and OCA guidelines.

“**Information Technology**” means information technology and computer-based equipment and related services designed for the storage, manipulation, and retrieval of data by electronic or mechanical means, or both.

“**Local Business Enterprise (LBE)**” shall mean a business that is certified by CMD as an LBE under Administrative Code Section 14B.3. LBEs are either Small-LBEs or Micro-LBEs, and are also either MBEs, WBEs, or OBEs.

“**OCA**” shall mean the Office of Contract Administration, also known as “Purchasing.” The

Rules and Regulations Pertaining to the San
Francisco Administrative Code, Chapter 21
Acquisition of Commodities and Services

Director of the Office of Contract Administration is the Purchaser of Commodities and Services for the City and County of San Francisco.

“Responsible” shall mean a responsible Bidder/Proposer or supplier who: (1) meets the qualifying criteria or minimum requirements required for a particular Bid/Proposal, including without limitation the expertise, experience, record of prior timely performance, license, resources, bonding and insurance capability necessary to perform the work under the contract and; (2) at all times deals in good faith with the City and shall submit bids, estimates, invoices, claims, requests for change orders, requests for contract modifications or requests of any kind in a good faith and honest manner.

“Responsive” shall mean a responsive Bidder/Proposer or supplier that complies with the requirements of the subject Solicitation without condition or qualification.

“Technology Marketplace”, previously known as “Computer Store” or “Technology Store”, shall mean the City-wide, multiple award term contracts for the procurement of certain Information Technology Commodities and Services, which are administered by OCA for the benefit of City departments.

REGULATION 21.03(a): GENERAL AUTHORITY OF THE PURCHASER OF SUPPLIES: APPROVAL OF PURCHASES

Administrative Code Section 21.03(a) empowers the Purchaser to delegate signature authority within the Purchasing Division of OCA for contracts as provided in Section 21.03. Only the Purchaser and the delegated personnel in Purchasing are authorized to purchase the Commodities or Services required by City departments and offices of the City, except as otherwise stated in the Code.

In addition to the above, the Purchaser has the authority to delegate signature and approval authority to departments (“Delegated Departmental Purchasing”) up to the dollar amount stated in regulation 21.5(a) \$20,000, inclusive of taxes, delivery, installation, shipping, and all change orders, as of July 1, 2024. To use Delegated Departmental Purchasing authority, the following requirements must be met:

1. Departments must submit a roster of employees in the department who are authorized to purchase goods and services using delegated purchasing authority.
2. The roster must list employee name, Civil Service classification, address and telephone number. OCA may restrict the delegated authority to certain Civil Service classifications as appropriate, upon a review of the information submitted.
3. All designated employees are required to attend a Purchasing training class. The roster must indicate the date training was completed.
4. All employees who exercise delegated Purchasing signature authority must adhere to the Principles and Standards of Ethical Purchasing Conduct promulgated by OCA, available on the intranet, and must sign a statement attesting thereto.
5. All designated employees shall file Form 700, Statement of Economic Interests, annually as required by the Article III, Chapter 1, of the San Francisco Campaign and Governmental Conduct Code.

The Purchaser reserves the authority to limit the items and types of services Departments can purchase under delegated Purchasing authority. Examples of restricted items include the ones listed below. This list is not exhaustive, and Departments should consult the guidance on delegated authority [on OCA’s website](#) before making any purchases.

1. Unbudgeted equipment
2. Commodities and services available for purchase on contracts established by OCA (also known as Term Contracts)
3. Equipment for lease purchase

Rules and Regulations Pertaining to the San
Francisco Administrative Code, Chapter 21
Acquisition of Commodities and Services

4. Tropical hardwoods, virgin redwood, and related wood products (See Environment Code Section 801)
5. Information Technology and related products such as video display terminals, computer equipment and supplies, cloud hosting services and telecommunication equipment and wiring
6. Cars, trucks, and vehicles
7. Gift cards
8. Professional Services
9. Sugar sweetened beverages
10. Drones
11. Firearms and ammunition
12. Gas-powered landscaping equipment
13. Goods procured from e-marketplaces. For the purpose of this exception, an e-marketplace is an online platform that processes commercial transactions in which customers purchase goods, at least some of which are sold by third-party retailers to consumers through the platform.

Order splitting and using noncompliant vendors are not allowed under any circumstances. Departments are required to follow and adhere to all other City laws, regulations, rules, ordinances, or any commission requirements of the department. Departments are encouraged to obtain at least three quotes when cost savings could be achieved in doing so and to use LBEs when practical.

Departmental purchases are generally subject to all the procurement provisions of the Code. The departmental use of this authority may be audited annually by the Controller and/or OCA.

The delegation of Purchasing authority may be rescinded at any time if a department does not meet the above requirements, or, has been found to be in violation of any of the Purchasing procedures or rules and regulations cited above.

Departments have the option to use Delegated Departmental Purchasing authority or may continue to send their requests to Purchasing.

REGULATION 21.03(e)(3): DOLLAR LIMIT FOR OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT IN VEHICLES

If a department requests optional equipment that is not part of the Purchaser's group of options and which would cost \$1,000 and below, the department must justify in writing to the Purchaser that the optional equipment is necessary in the course of the regular operation of the vehicle by the officer and/or employee using the vehicle.

If the requested item costs in excess of \$1,000, the department must satisfy the rules set forth in the Administrative Code, Section 21.03e(3)(A) or Section 21.03e(3)(B) as follows:

1. Itemize the equipment in the description of the vehicle itself when the vehicle purchase is reviewed as part of the City's annual budget process, and obtain the Board's approval of the vehicle as equipped; or
2. Obtain the approval of the Mayor's Budget Office before submitting a requisition to the Purchaser.

REGULATION 21.03(e)(5): DEFINITION OF SPECIALIZED VEHICLES

Specialized Vehicles are hereby defined as “vehicles other than passenger vehicles as described in Administrative Code Section 21.03(e)(1).” Passenger vehicles, as listed under this code, include passenger cars, passenger vans, sport utility vehicles, cargo vans and pickup trucks up to and including one ton in payload.

REGULATION 21.03(i): DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS

The City maintains several contracts with different vendors for the disposal of different types of assets in manners consistent with the principles set forth in 21.03(i). Departments that need to dispose of surplus assets should refer to OCA's website for guidance on how to access these contracts.

If a department has surplus assets that cannot be disposed through an existing contract, the department should instead submit an "Equipment Disposal Request Form" to OCA for approval, detailing what the items are, why the items cannot be disposed through an existing contract, and how the department plans to dispose of the assets. Departments must continue to follow all of 21.03(i)'s principles around maximizing the City's economic return on surplus Commodities; maximizing re-use by public entities, nonprofit organizations; and schools; and avoiding unnecessary additions to the waste stream when disposing of surplus through alternative means.

The Equipment Disposal Request Form can be found on OCA's website.

REGULATION 21.03(j): INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) PURCHASES

All Contracts for the acquisition of Information Technology Commodities or Services shall be made with approval by the Purchaser unless such authority has first been delegated by the Purchaser to a department.

In general:

1. Such purchases are subject to City's various policies related to the procurement of technology, including but not limited to, the Department of Technology's technology review policies.
2. Software license and support procurements that are not subject to the contracting requirements of the Administrative Code pursuant to Section 21.30 shall document the non-applicability of those contracting requirements in the manner prescribed by the agencies responsible for administering those requirements.
3. Agreements for the development of software must include user acceptance testing of the software. Acceptance testing must consider the City's obligation to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"), and its associated rules and regulations.

REGULATION 21.03(k): ANCILLARY INSTALLATION SERVICES FOR COMMODITIES

Section 21.03(k) is intended to allow purchases of minor installation services that would otherwise be considered a “Public Work or Improvement” and be required to be procured under Chapter 6 of the Administrative Code. Section 21.03(k) is intended to cover procurements of minor installation services that would require integration with building systems including but not limited to electrical, plumbing, or HVAC systems, or that require attachment to structural elements or integration with the design of a building or other public structure.

Prior to initiating a purchase under 21.03(k), Contracting Officers must obtain confirmation that the Services being procured meet the two conditions listed below:

1. **Services are Ancillary in nature.** “Ancillary” means that the Services may require temporary alterations to or minor integrations with public infrastructure to support the operability of a Commodity but would not result in significant changes to any underlying infrastructure in the performance of the Service or in the ongoing use of the Commodity.

If the Services are deemed complex in nature (i.e. performance of the Services would result in significant disruptions or alterations to public infrastructure), they should instead be procured through procedures established in Administrative Code Chapter 6 or be performed directly by City employees, as appropriate. Such services may trigger special considerations or pose additional risks that go beyond the purchasing purview of Chapter 21.

2. **Services are not within the City’s current authority or capacity to self-perform.** Administrative Code Sections 6.20(a) and 6.23 state that public works-related services valued at less than the Threshold Amount may be performed directly by City employees or under contract. Therefore, if the total value of the Service is less than the Threshold Amount, Contracting Officers must first confirm that the Services are not within the City’s capacity to self-perform. Additionally, Services that are deemed proprietary under 21.5(d), or Services where performance by a particular vendor is required to preserve a warranty as articulated in 21.30(d), may not be within the City’s capacity to self-perform.

To obtain confirmation of the above, Departments with Chapter 6 contracting authority may proceed with assessing both the nature of the Service and the City’s capacity to self-perform based on their staff’s professional judgement. Only Chapter 6 Department Heads and their designees may conduct these assessments.

Departments that do not have Chapter 6 Contracting authority must reach out to the

Department of Public Works for a determination on the nature of the Service and the City's capacity to self-perform. Departments should reach out to the Department of Public Works as soon as they become aware of the need for the Service and provide, at minimum, a detailed scope of work, the contact information of the Service provider, and an estimated timeframe of when the Services need to be performed.

Once confirmation of the above conditions has been obtained, Contracting Officers should upload the confirmation to the City's financial system of record and may proceed with submitting a requisition to OCA to continue the purchase.

Additional Requirements and Contract Terms

Contractor(s) or subcontractor(s) must have the construction license required under California for the subject work.

For purchases of commodities and related Ancillary Installation Services that total over \$25,000, prior to the execution of the Contract, Contracting Officers must also require the awarded Contractor to file corporate surety bonds for the faithful performance of and to guarantee the payment of wages for services engaged and of bills contracted for material, supplies, and equipment used in the performance of the Contract in accordance with Administrative Code Section 6.22(a) and California Public Contract Code 7103.

REGULATION 21.04: DIRECT PURCHASING AUTHORITY OF DEPARTMENTS

While Section 21.04(a) allows Department Heads to act in place of the Purchaser, the direct purchasing power does not supersede any other procurement laws or rules and regulations. Unless exempted by a different section of the Charter, Municipal Code or rules and regulations, Departments must still comply with all other legal and procedural requirements applicable to the purchase, including but not limited to: obtaining waiver approvals from the pertinent waiver authority; documenting any solicitation waivers that the Department Head self-approved; entering contract data into the City's workflow management systems and financial systems of record; establishing any subcontracting goals as required by Administrative Code Chapter 14B; and seeking Commission or Board of Supervisors approval when relevant.

REGULATION 21.05(b): PROCUREMENT OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Unless exempted by the Charter or Municipal Code, departments are generally responsible for managing the procurement and solicitation process for Professional Services, while OCA is responsible for the review and approval of Chapter 21 Professional Services contracts. Departments should follow OCA's required business processes using the most up-to-date templates and forms and upload all required documents into the City's financial system of record as directed by OCA.

REGULATION 21.05(c): CANCELLATION OF PURCHASE CONTRACTS

Prior to termination for convenience or cause, departments must contact the City Attorney's Office and OCA before initiating any processes. OCA may choose to issue the termination letter or may allow the department to do so.

REGULATION 21.06(c): OTHER ELECTRONIC TRANSACTIONS

The Purchaser supports the use of technology to reduce the cost of procuring Commodities and Services and to streamline the procurement process.

All departments must obtain Purchasing approval prior to implementing any system that uses technology or electronic methods to procure Commodities or Services.

The Purchaser may allow appropriate business-to-business systems that meet citywide information technology standards as promulgated by COIT and DT.

The Purchaser may require independent verification that the applications meet citywide standards.

The use of electronic methods to procure Commodities or Services does not excuse the department from meeting City contracting requirements that would normally be in effect if the procurement was made by traditional methods. The department must continue to adhere to City contracting requirements with any technology solution or electronic procurement that is implemented, including but not limited to:

- Article 111 (Minimum Compensation Ordinance (MCO)),
- Article 121 (Health Care Accountability Ordinance (HCAO)),
- Article 131 (Nondiscrimination in Contracts),
- Article 142 (Consideration of Criminal History in Hiring),
- Chapter 12G (Prohibition on Use of Public Funds for Political Activity by Recipients of City Contracts, Grants, and Loans),
- Article 151 (Sweatfree Contracting),
- Chapter 14B (Local Business Enterprise Utilization),
- Chapter 21 (Acquisition of Commodities and Services), and
- Chapter 83 (First Source Hiring Program).

REGULATION 21.3(b): COMPETITIVE SEALED BIDDING: BID OPENING

For Commodities and General Services in excess of the Minimum Competitive Amount, pursuant to Administrative Code Section 21.3(b), the Contracting Officer shall open Bids publicly at the time and place designated in the Invitation for Bids in the presence of all Bidders and interested members of the public who attend. Additionally, it shall be the Purchaser's regulation that all bids must be manually or electronically dated and time stamped upon receipt. The Contracting Officer shall publicly open bids, which were received on or before the submittal deadline, at the time and place designated in the Invitation for Bids, in the presence of all bidders and other interested parties who attend. Bids that are received after the submittal deadline shall be marked as "Late" and shall not be opened at the bid opening and shall not be considered for award. The Contracting Officer shall record the following information at the bid opening, either manually or electronically:

- Date/time of opening*
- Bid number (if available)
- Bid title
- Bidder names
- Other bid document requirements as appropriate (i.e., Bid Security, 14B, date and time bid received, etc.)
- Name of City employees who opened the bids.

In reviewing contract awards and potential contract amendments, OCA will review the procurement to ensure there is a reasonable relationship between the anticipated and actual final contracts.

* Those bids delivered outside of an electronic ("e Procurement") system will be dated and time-stamped manually. All other bids will be electronically dated and time-stamped.

REGULATION 21.3(d): CORRECTION, WITHDRAWAL, OR REJECTION OF BIDS; CANCELLATION OF AWARDS

Correction or withdrawal of inadvertently erroneous bids before or after award, or cancellation of awards or contracts based on such bid mistakes, under Administrative Code Section 21.3(d), shall be permitted in accordance with the following regulations:

General

The Contracting Officer shall maintain complete and sufficient written records of bid corrections, withdrawals, or rejections and cancellations of award to ensure that there is no abuse of the bidding process. All such written records shall be retained in the bid file. The Purchaser may reject any and all bids at any time prior to award.

Every bid subject to award shall be carefully examined to ensure compliance with the written specifications and confirm submission of all required documents. Any bid that materially deviates from the bid requirements shall be rejected.

Correction of a bid before bid opening

The Contracting Officer shall allow any bidder to amend its bid before the submission deadline by submitting an amended bid on or before the bid submission deadline.

Correction to a bid before award

The Contracting Officer may waive any immaterial irregularity, defect or technicality in any bid received. A bid variation that has either no effect, or only a trivial effect, on price, quantity, quality or delivery is immaterial. Failure to furnish the requested number of copies of bid, corrections of typographical errors and grammatical mistakes, the omission of or mistakes in unit price extension, transposition errors, and mathematical mistakes are common examples of trivial or immaterial bid variations. Any bid variation that affects price, quantity, quality or delivery in any manner that is more than trivial, is material and cannot be waived.

Withdrawal of a bid before award

The City may allow the withdrawal of a bid prior to award upon written request of the bidder. The written request must include the circumstances and the reasons for the request. The City must evaluate the bidder's reasons for withdrawal, the requirements of the bid, and the impact of such withdrawal to the City. Withdrawal of a bid, if properly justified, should not unreasonably be denied.

Correction of a bid after contract award

The Contracting Officer may allow post award bid correction by a contract modification if correcting the mistake is in the best interests of the City and does not change the essential requirements of the bid specifications, or compromise the integrity of the initial bidding process.

Cancellation of the award or contract at the request of the bidder based on bid mistakes

If a contractor requests the cancellation of the contract after award, the contractor must submit a written justification with the reasons and circumstances for cancellation. The City may review the request and make a decision in the best interests of the City.

REGULATION 21.3(g): ADDITIONAL PURCHASES

Where a solicitation and/or awarded contract does not anticipate purchases of same or like Commodities or General Services beyond what was advertised and/or negotiated for the contract term, it shall be the Purchaser's regulation for Administrative Code Section 21.3(g) that additional purchases of the same or like Commodities or General Services provided under the original contract are allowed under the following circumstances:

(1) Inadequate Quantity (Same Items)

1. Additional purchases at the current price or a comparable price may be added by mutual agreement of the parties.
2. All requests to make additional purchases must be submitted by City Departments in writing to Purchasing for approval.
3. All additional purchases shall be memorialized in a written contract modification or a purchase order. The contract modification or purchase order must reference a previous competitive bid and cite Administrative Code Section 21.3(g) as the authority.

(2) Unavailable, Obsolete or Discontinued Items (Like Purchases)

1. If the original Commodities or Services are unavailable, obsolete or discontinued, purchases of like items that function as substitutes to the originally purchased items may be added by mutual agreement of all parties at the award price or a lower price.
2. All requests to make substitute, like purchases must be submitted by City Departments in writing to Purchasing for approval.
3. All substitute, like purchases shall be memorialized in a written contract modification or a purchase order. The contract modification or purchase order must reference a previous competitive bid and cite Administrative Code Section 21.3(g) as the authority.

REGULATION 21.3(h): SUBSTANTIALLY RELATED PURCHASES

A Contracting Officer may purchase Services or Commodities that were not explicitly included in the original scope of a solicitation provided that the Contracting Officer can document and justify the following:

1. **The Services or Commodities to be added to the contract are substantially related to the original contract scope.** “Substantially related” means that the additional Services or Commodities are of a similar type, function, or purpose to those originally procured, and that the additional Services or Commodities are necessary to fulfill the original objectives or intent of the contract.

Section 21.3(h) shall not be invoked for new scopes, projects, or purposes that go beyond the original procurement’s intent. Adding Services or Commodities that constitute a material change to the original contract scope may be construed as compromising the integrity of the original solicitation process or as an attempt to circumvent further competitive processes.

Additionally, Section 21.3(h) shall not be invoked for the sole purposes of extending the duration or increasing the value of a contract. Such modifications should instead be conducted pursuant to the terms of the original solicitation and in line with Regulations 21.4(e) for Services or 21.3(b) for Commodities. However, in limited circumstances, the contract amount may be increased commensurately in line with additions to scope and as strictly necessary.

2. **All additional purchases must be memorialized in a written contract modification, executed by both the City and Contractor.** The contract modification must reference a previous competitive bid and cite Administrative Code Section 21.3(h) as the authority.

Contract Value Restrictions

Additionally, if the original contract was procured through an informal solicitation process or issued as a Micro LBE Set-Aside under Administrative Code 14B, the contract amount cannot be amended to exceed the Minimum Competitive Amount. Unless waived or exempted by another section of the Administrative Code, contracts above the Minimum Competitive Amount typically require formal competitive solicitation processes. Administrative Code Section 21.4(h) should not be used to circumvent formal solicitations.

Documentation Requirements

The Contracting Officer shall maintain sufficient documentation to justify and ensure a reasonable relationship between the additional purchase and original contract intent for auditing purposes.

REGULATION 21.3(j): BID PROTESTS

Bid protests of contracts awarded under Section 21.3 of the Administrative Code for purchases of Commodities or General Services in excess of the Minimum Competitive Amount shall be submitted and responded to in accordance with the following requirements:

General Requirements

All protests shall be in writing, dated, and state in detail each and every ground asserted for the protest. Each protest must cite the law, rule, local ordinance, procedure or bid provision on which the protest is based. To expedite the handling of protests, the envelope or email containing the protest shall be marked "PROTEST." Failure to file a protest within three (3) business days shall waive all rights to protest. Protests shall be made to the Contracting Officer. The Contracting Officer shall notify the protester in writing of the decision regarding the protest.

Protest of Bid Requirements

Protests based on the bid specifications or requirements must be received by the Contracting Officer requesting the bids within three (3) business days prior to the deadline for submission of bids. Bidders who fail to protest by the deadline shall waive all rights to protest the bid based on specifications or requirements.

Protest of Non-responsive and Non-responsible Bidders

If the Contracting Officer determines that the apparent lowest bidder is either non-responsive or non-responsible, the Contracting Officer shall reject the bid. The Contracting Officer shall notify the bidder in writing that the bid has been rejected, and state the basis for the rejection. The bidder may protest the Contracting Officer's decision. The protest must be in writing and received by the Contracting Officer within three (3) business days of the issuance of the notice of Non-responsiveness and/or Non-responsibility. If a bid and a subsequent protest are rejected for non-responsibility, the Contracting Officer must inform the bidder that they shall have an opportunity for a hearing on the issue of non-responsibility if requested. There is no appeal on the denial of a protest based on a non-responsive bid.

Protest of Award

A bidder may protest the Contracting Officer's award of a contract to an apparent lowest responsive and responsible bidder. The protest must be in writing and received by the Contracting Officer within three (3) business days of issuance of a notice of intent to award the contract. The Contracting Officer will review the protest and respond in a timely manner.

REGULATION 21.4(d): INVITATIONS FOR COMPETITIVE PROPOSALS OR QUALIFICATIONS

Panelist Selection

Panelist selection for the evaluation of responses to Requests for Proposals or Requests for Qualifications should be based on an individual's capacity to serve as a fair and impartial subject matter expert on the Commodity or Service procured to minimize the potential for conflicts of interest.

Evaluation of Objective Criteria

Involvement in developing and administering solicitation does not, by itself, prohibit an individual from engaging in subsequent objective determinations, such as evaluating a proposers' Minimum Qualifications or price.

Extending The Useful Life of Pre-Qualified Lists

A prequalified list may be extended up to four years if the original two-year list is reopened to new qualified vendors by reissuing the same RFQ within two years and evaluated by the same panel of evaluators. Deviating from the exact criteria or same evaluators could result in an unfair process.

Reissuance of the RFQ should occur as close to the expiration of the prequalified list's two-year validity period as possible unless extenuating circumstances give rise to the need to reissue the RFQ sooner. Examples of extenuating circumstances include but are not limited to impending retirement of an evaluator who served on the panel to create the prequalified list or an insufficient number of prequalified vendors to meet the City's needs. Additionally, if the original list was created using a scored evaluation methodology, a revised rank-ordered list should be generated to include any new qualified vendors. Vendors on the initial prequalified list are not required to re-submit their qualifications but may choose to do so if they wish to be re-scored for the potential of an updated ranking.

A revised rank-ordered list need not be generated if the original list was created using a pass/fail evaluation methodology.

REGULATION 21.4(e): CONTENT FOR REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS

To maximize fair and open procurement, Requests for Proposals should give all potential proposers a chance to understand the specific Services the City requires, the anticipated duration of the business opportunity, and the expected compensation.

In general, RFPs should provide estimates of contract duration and expected and possible maximum dollar value. In reviewing contract awards and potential contract amendments, OCA will review the procurement to ensure there is a reasonable relationship between the anticipated and actual final contracts.

Departments should consult with their designated City Attorney regarding RFP content prior to issuance.

The guidance given for this regulation regarding RFPs may also be applied to the development of an RFQ.

REGULATION 21.4(g): PURCHASES OF SERVICES OR COMMODITIES SUBSTANTIALLY RELATED TO THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS OR QUALIFICATIONS

A Contracting Officer may purchase Services or Commodities that were not explicitly included in the original scope of a solicitation provided that the Contracting Officer can document and justify the following:

1. **The Services or Commodities to be added to the contract are substantially related to the original contract scope.** “Substantially related” means that the additional Services or Commodities are of a similar type, function, or purpose to those originally procured, and that the additional Services or Commodities are necessary to fulfill the original objectives or intent of the contract.

Section 21.4(g) shall not be invoked for new scopes, projects, or purposes that go beyond the original procurement’s intent. Adding Services or Commodities that constitute a material change to the original contract scope may be construed as compromising the integrity of the original solicitation process or as an attempt to circumvent further competitive processes.

Additionally, Section 21.4(g) shall not be invoked for the sole purposes of extending the duration or increasing the value of a contract. Such modifications should instead be conducted pursuant to the terms of the original solicitation and in line with Regulations 21.4(e) for Services or 21.3(b) for Commodities. However, in limited circumstances, the contract amount may be increased commensurately in line with additions to scope and as strictly necessary.

2. **All additional purchases must be memorialized in a written contract modification, executed by both the City and Contractor.**

Contract Value Restrictions

Additionally, if the original contract was procured through an informal solicitation process or issued as a Micro LBE Set-Aside under Administrative Code 14B, the contract amount cannot be amended to exceed the Minimum Competitive Amount. Unless waived or exempted by another section of the Administrative Code, contracts above the Minimum Competitive Amount typically require formal competitive solicitation processes. Administrative Code Section 21.4(g) should not be used to circumvent formal solicitations.

Documentation Requirements

The Contracting Officer shall maintain sufficient documentation to justify and ensure a reasonable relationship between the additional purchase and original contract intent for auditing purposes.

REGULATION 21.5(a): OTHER PURCHASES: COMMODITIES AND SERVICES LESS THAN THE MINIMUM COMPETITIVE AMOUNT

In reference to Administrative Code Section 21.5(a), the following regulations shall apply to the acquisition of Commodities, General Services and Professional Services where the total amount of the transaction is less than the Minimum Competitive Amount.

Department heads and their designees who have complied with Regulation 21.03(a) and have been delegated by the Purchaser may purchase Commodities and General Services up to \$20,000 (inclusive of taxes, delivery, installation, shipping, and all change orders) as of July 1, 2024. (The threshold was \$10,000 through June 30, 2024.)

Commodities

- \$0 - \$20,000 – Where practical, departments are strongly encouraged to solicit three (3) written bids or written price quotations, especially from LBEs, and select the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. Departments may reference Administrative Code and Chapter 14B rules and regulations or [OCA's website](#) on delegated authority for additional information on the City's Micro LBE set-aside and SF First programs.
- For procurement of Commodities over \$20,000 but less than the Minimum Competitive Amount, departments must submit a requisition to OCA. Purchasing approval is required to authorize purchases; and transactions for these amounts are covered by regulations delegating signature authority to Purchasing staff.
- Formal competitive bidding is required for any amount over the Minimum Competitive Amount, unless otherwise exempted under Chapter 21.

General Services

General Services are those services that are not Professional Services. Examples of General Services per Administrative Code Section 21.02 include: janitorial, security guard, pest control, parking lot attendants and landscaping services.

- \$0 - \$20,000 – Where practical, departments are strongly encouraged to solicit three (3) written bids or written price quotations, especially from LBEs; and select the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. Departments may reference Administrative Code and Chapter 14B rules and regulations or [OCA's website](#) on delegated authority for additional information on the City's Micro LBE set-aside and SF First programs.
- Over \$20,000 but less than the Minimum Competitive Amount – Purchasing conducts informal bidding in accordance with Purchasing and CMD requirements.

- The Minimum Competitive Amount or more – Purchasing conducts formal bidding in accordance with Purchasing and CMD requirement.

Professional Services

Professional Services are those services which require extended analysis, the exercise of discretion and independent judgment in their performance, and/or the application of an advanced, specialized type of knowledge, expertise, or training customarily acquired either by a prolonged course of study or equivalent experience in the field. Examples of professional service providers per Administrative Code Section 21.02 include architects, engineers, software developers, attorneys, consultants, physicians and dentists.

- \$0 - \$20,000 – Where practical, departments are encouraged to solicit three (3) written bids or written price quotations, especially from LBEs, and select the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. Departments may reference Administrative Code and Chapter 14B rules and regulations or [OCA's website](#) on delegated authority for additional information on the City's Micro LBE set-aside and SF First programs.
- Over \$20,000 but less than the Minimum Competitive Amount – informal solicitation is required. Departments are to follow the informal bidding rules established by CMD under the Administrative Code and Chapter 14B rules and regulations.
- The Minimum Competitive Amount or more – a formal solicitation is required. Departments are to follow the formal bidding rules established by CMD as set forth in the definition of "Good Faith Efforts" of a contract awarding authority (see Administrative Code Chapter 14B.7).

REGULATION 21.5(b): SOLE SOURCE

Administrative Code Section 21.5(b) provides that Commodities or Services available only from a sole source shall be procured in accordance with the Purchaser's regulations. It shall be the Purchaser's regulations that if a department requires a commodity or service which is unique and which is known to be provided by only one vendor/contractor, then only one price quotation is solicited from the single vendor/contractor. The requesting department must submit the "Sole Source Waiver Request" to Purchasing justifying the transaction as a sole source. From time to time, Purchasing may conduct a formal solicitation to determine the continuing validity of the sole source determination.

Sufficient Documentation

In submitting a Sole Source Waiver Request, the requesting department must provide a written memorandum and supporting documentation to justify the request. The memorandum must provide specific and comprehensive information that explains why the Sole Source Waiver should be approved. Departments are encouraged to consult with CMD prior to submitting the Waiver Request.

The Sole Source Waiver request form identifies four acceptable justifications for Sole Source contracting. In most cases, the department's justification for making a waiver request should fall within these parameters. If not, additional space has been provided for departments to submit other justification. Among the questions and concerns that must be addressed are as follows:

- Goods or Services are available from only one source – Explain why this is the only product or service that will meet the City's needs. Why is this the only vendor or contractor that can provide the product or service? Explain what efforts were made to obtain the best possible price.
- Item has design and/or performance features that are essential to the department and no other source satisfies the City's requirements – Explain why the design/performance features are essential. Have you contacted other vendors/contractors to evaluate items/services with similar features and capabilities? If no, explain why not. If yes, list the suppliers and explain why their goods or services do not meet the department's needs.
- Licensed or patented good or service – Provide proof that the license or patent limits the availability of the product or service to only one source.
- Other – Provide a justification that would substantiate a Sole Source Waiver for any other reason.

Finally, the requestor and department head, or his or her designee, must be a signatory to the request. Their signature certifies that they have reviewed the specific Sole Source Waiver Request and agree with the requestor's justification.

REGULATION 21.5(c): PERISHABLE FOODS

Administrative Code Section 21.5(c) provides that perishable foods shall be procured in accordance with the Purchaser's regulations. It shall be the Purchaser's regulations that when purchasing perishable foods, the Contracting Officer shall attempt to comply with competitive bidding requirements of this Chapter. However, when the situation arises where it is impossible or highly impractical to obtain competitive pricing because of the nature of perishable foods; i.e., freshness and spoilage of perishable items, the Purchaser may procure the items in the most expeditious manner. The Purchaser shall require the requesting department to provide a written justification of the perishable nature of the items and why competitive bidding should be waived. A copy of the justification shall be kept on file with the transaction.

REGULATION 21.5(d): PROPRIETARY ARTICLES

Administrative Code Section 21.5(d) provides that proprietary articles shall be procured in accordance with the Purchaser's regulations. It shall be the Purchaser's regulations that purchasing uses the terms "proprietary" and "no substitute" to mean purchases that are made where no alternate brand or model will be considered or accepted.

"Proprietary" purchases:

The item must be the one described in the current Proprietary List. Although an item may be considered proprietary, **it may still be subject to competitive bidding if there is more than one source of supply for that item.** If the item is put out to bid, alternate brands and models need not be considered. Purchasing periodically accepts bids for alternate brands to monitor the appropriateness of continuing to consider certain purchases proprietary.

All proprietary purchases must be justified with documentation on department letterhead from the requesting department and must be approved by the Purchaser within his/her approval limits. The documentation must clearly state why only one make or model will meet the department's needs. Proprietary purchases should also include documentation that clearly explains the nature of the proprietary rights involved.

Below is a list of approved proprietary articles and their corresponding descriptions. Purchasing may revise the list from time to time as requirements change.

Proprietary (PROP) Number	Descriptions
1	Charts, globes and maps.
2	Books, magazines, pamphlets, periodicals, online content agreements and streaming services containing proprietary content.
3	Specialized equipment, materials and supplies for instructional purposes. Specialized educational tests and testing services.
4	Fine arts; music; plays; works of art; films; audio and video cassettes; etc.
5	Medicines and drugs.
6	Medical, surgical and dental equipment; instruments; prosthetic devices, special supplies
10	Animals.
12	Maintenance and repairs for equipment, including service and parts when repairs must be done by the manufacturer, the installer of equipment or system, or when repairs by others would void the warranty.

Rules and Regulations Pertaining to the San
Francisco Administrative Code, Chapter 21
Acquisition of Commodities and Services

“No substitute” purchases:

All “no substitute” purchases must be justified with documentation on department letterhead and signed by the head of the requesting department. The documentation must clearly state why only one make or model will meet the department’s needs.

REGULATION 21.5(e): PILOT PROJECT

Administrative Code Section 21.5(e) provides that contracts involving a pilot project with a term not to exceed two years shall be procured in accordance with the Purchaser's regulations.

Some business problems offer unique challenges where the use of competitive bidding requirements of this Chapter may not be appropriate. For instance: the department may not know what the final outcome of the procurement will look like, and there is a need to engage in an experimental exploration process.

A different procurement method is allowed for a pilot project. A department may initiate a pilot project procurement by making a request to the Purchaser specifying the problem to be solved and the reason why a competitive process is not being used. The request must also specify how competition, fairness, and compliance with other OCA requirements for bidding will be achieved, and how the pilot will allow the department to develop evaluation criteria for a competitive solicitation in the future. The Purchaser will evaluate the request and shall either approve or deny the request. At the end of the pilot term, within 90 days, the requesting department must submit a report stating the results of the project with recommendations for future procurement. If the pilot includes the creation of any work that may be copyrighted or patented, the Purchaser, in cooperation with the requesting department, shall determine if it is advantageous to obtain the rights of ownership or rights to use the work. Any further procurement beyond the pilot project phase shall be subject to all applicable competitive procurement requirements.

If the service or product can practicably be acquired through a competitive process, it should be procured in this manner regardless of the department's intent to utilize the service or product only on a pilot basis. Pilot Projects should not be used to circumvent the competitive solicitation process.

REGULATION 21.6: MULTIPLE LOW OFFERS

Pursuant to Administrative Code Section 21.6, if two or more bids received are for the same amount or unit price and such bids are the lowest bids from responsive and responsible bidders, then the Contracting Officer may award a contract to either of the lowest responsive and responsible bidders.

It shall be the Purchaser's regulations that to resolve tie bids, the following criteria shall be applied in sequence until a tie bid is resolved:

1. If there is any doubt as to quality, performance or functionality, a specified item receives consideration over an alternative.
2. A San Francisco bidder receives consideration over an out-of-town bidder.
3. Delivery time – Any significant difference, e.g., 3 days vs. 3 weeks.
4. Tie bid items should be aggregated with the items that are being awarded to one of the bidders. For example, if a bidder is low on several items and is in a tie on one item, do not award the tied item to another vendor if the result will add an additional vendor to the contract.
5. A California bidder receives consideration over an out-of-state bidder.
6. The Contracting Officer and the user department, at their sole discretion, may divide the award subject to the mutual agreement of the tied bidders.
7. As a final resort, the Contracting Officer may roll a die. The tied bidders must be notified and invited to attend the tiebreaker event. The highest rolled number will indicate the successful bidder. A second representative of the awarding department must be present to witness the event. Adequate documentation of the award must be maintained in the file.

REGULATION 21.15(c): MODIFICATION OF EXISTING AGREEMENTS

When the Purchaser or department head exercises their emergency procurement authority, as defined in Section 21.15(a), the Purchaser or department head may temporarily modify a contract's commercial terms to respond to the emergency regardless of originally advertised and executed terms. Commercial terms include but are not limited to contract scope and specifications, price, quantity, delivery provisions, duration, and not-to-exceed amount.

If permitted by the circumstances of the emergency, Departments shall comply with the following contract modification guidelines:

Due Diligence and Controls

- The Contracting Officer must conduct due diligence to the extent reasonably practicable under the circumstances before agreeing to any contract modifications to ensure the renegotiated terms are justified and to prevent suppliers from exploiting the emergency situation. Due diligence may include, but is not limited to:
 - Market research on pricing and product availability;
 - Consideration of alternative suppliers and products, including obtaining quotes from additional suppliers;
 - Requiring sufficient documentation from the current supplier justifying in detail any requested change to commercial terms.
- The Contracting Officer must attempt to secure the most favorable commercial terms available under the circumstances.
- The Contracting Officer must reject any price adjustments for goods or services already delivered, unless a retroactive price adjustment is justified by the supplier and documented by the Contracting Officer.
- Department Contracting Officers may not agree to, or renegotiate, commercial terms on OCA contracts or POs issued by OCA without express approval from the Purchaser or the Purchaser's designee.

Reasonable & Appropriate Duration

Modified contract terms must be limited to a duration that is reasonable and appropriate for the emergency response, i.e., the minimum duration necessary to maintain continuity of operations during the emergency. Once operational needs are consistently met, or market conditions permit a viable competitive process, the Contracting Officer must either:

- a) revert to the original contract terms if allowed per its terms; or
- b) initiate a new procurement and award a replacement contract.

It is recommended that modifications include a clause that requires a reversion to the original contract terms. Sample language is available in OCA guidance documents.

Documentation

The Contracting Officer shall retain records of communication, documentation, and analysis relevant to the renegotiated commercial terms in the department's contract file and in the City's financial system of record, including the written documentation invoking the emergency, which may be:

- an Emergency Declaration issued by the Mayor pursuant to 21.15(a)(4), or
- the Purchaser or department head's written authorization invoking an emergency and authorizing the contract modification pursuant to 21.15(c).

Scope

Modifications must directly address the emergency as set forth in Section 21.15(a).

Contract modifications must not be used to indefinitely alter a contract's commercial terms or avoid standard competitive procurement requirements beyond the emergency.

REGULATION 21.15(d): EXTENSIONS FOR CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS

If an active contract for mission-critical for goods or services is set to lapse and a department's response to an emergency, as defined in Section 21.15(a), prevents timely completion of a new solicitation or execution of a new agreement to replace that contract, the Purchaser or department head may authorize a temporary extension of the contract duration and amount commensurate with that extended duration under the following conditions:

Reasonable & Appropriate Duration

Extensions must be limited to the minimum duration necessary to maintain continuity of operations during the emergency.

If the goods or services are still needed by the department once the department's operational capacity has stabilized, the Department must follow standard procurement requirements, including conducting a competitive solicitation, if required, and award a new contract as soon as feasible.

Documentation

The Contracting Officer shall retain documentation relevant to the contract extension in the department's contract file and in the City's financial system of record justifying the need to invoke this authority. This documentation must include:

- the Purchaser or department head's written statement when invoking 21.15(a)(1), 21.15(a)(2), or 21.15(a)(3);
- the Emergency Declaration under 21.15(a)(4) if it exists.

Scope

Contract extensions under 21.15(d) must be the result of an emergency (as defined in 21.15(a)) that has limited the Department's capacity to conduct a competitive solicitation, if required, and enter into a new contract.

Extensions to operationally critical contracts under 21.15(d) are not to be used to avoid standard procurement requirements beyond the emergency.

Under 21.15(d) departments may not modify other commercial terms including but not limited to scope of work and price.

REGULATION 21.16(b): USE OF COOPERATIVE PROCUREMENTS CONDUCTED BY OR FOR THE BENEFIT OF OTHER PUBLIC ENTITIES

City departments may use competitive solicitations conducted by or for the benefit of other public agencies through a process commonly known as cooperative purchasing or “piggybacking.”

Piggybacking may be permitted if a department wishes to buy the same Commodities or Services detailed in another agency’s solicitation and submits a request to OCA following the process outlined below.

General Services are appropriate for a piggyback purchase. Professional Services, on the other hand, require a degree of discretion that may render a procurement unique and may not be readily transferrable to another public entity. As such, piggybacking off of another procurement is generally not appropriate for Professional Services. Nevertheless, if a department wishes to proceed with piggybacking for Professional Services, as part of submitting a request to OCA based on the process outlined below, it must demonstrate that the Professional Services described in the other entity’s solicitation are sufficiently similar to those required by the department that they are therefore readily transferable to meet the department’s needs.

Process for Requesting Purchaser Approval

Departments seeking to invoke Administrative Code Section 21.16(b) must submit the following information and documentation to OCA:

- Copies of the solicitation, evidence of advertisement, evaluation(s), contract pricing, vendor quotes to verify pricing, and awarded contract(s).
- A summation of any administrative fees or other related fees that must be paid by the City to the entity making the cooperative solicitation available for use by others.
- An assessment as to whether the pricing offered under the cooperative solicitation is better than what the City could otherwise obtain, taking into account any administrative or other fees that must be paid and the benefits to the City of using the solicitation’s results, particularly as they may pertain to the availability and use of City staffing and/or other City resources.
- An assessment of whether use of the other entity’s solicitation will materially hinder the City’s ability to meet its LBE participation goals.
- A description of due diligence undertaken prior to seeking approval to piggyback, including but not limited to:

- **Market Research:** Comparing the cooperative solicitations available for the required product or service, conducting market research, and evaluating whether the use of another agency's solicitation is in the best interest of the City.
- **Solicitation:** Reviewing the solicitation for conformance with applicable laws and best practices regarding public procurement.
- **Scope:** Ensuring the contract to be awarded by the City is for Commodities or Services consistent with what was advertised in the other entity's solicitation. If Services are being proposed to be procured, the department must demonstrate that the Services in the other entity's solicitation are sufficiently similar to those required by the department and are therefore readily transferable to the meet the department's needs.
- **Duration and window within which a cooperative solicitation may be used:** The City's proposed contract duration must fall between the start date of the first awarded contract and the end of the solicitation's advertised maximum duration, provided that the other entity's solicitation does not prohibit the City from utilizing the full potential advertised duration. In other words, the department's contract term cannot exceed the remainder of the maximum allowable term as measured from the first awarded contract's start date. For example, if the solicitation specified an anticipated 3-year term with the option to extend for an additional 2 years, for a maximum allowable term of 5 years, the department could use the solicitation in year 3 of 5 of the primary awarded contract's start date and enter into a 2-year contract. The department will get the maximum allowable term from the solicitation and the term's start date from the primary awarded contract.
- **Not to Exceed Amount:** The not to exceed amount of the contract or purchase order to be awarded by the City shall not exceed the not to exceed amount of the solicitation, if any such limit is prescribed in the solicitation.

Selecting Awardees When Cooperative Entity Does Not Mandate Rank Selection or Provide Selection Guidance

In cases where the other entity's solicitation resulted in the award of multiple contracts, departments should select the awardee(s) based on any guidance outlined in the solicitation. If the solicitation does not provide such guidance, departments may select the awardee(s) whose proposal(s) best meet(s) the department's needs. The department must document the basis of the selection, such as the department's needs and how the awardee best meets them; whether the awardee provides the best price among eligible awardees; any cost-savings the awardee could bring to bear; or whether a needed product or service cannot be provided by a different eligible awardee.

REGULATION 21.17: CONTRACTS TO BE IN WRITING

Contracts must be in a form approved or pre-approved by the Purchaser and City Attorney. Agreements without the proper approval shall be null and void. Examples of unapproved contracts include but are not limited to: Click-wrap or click through license agreements, end user license agreements, and/or generally contracts agreed to by personnel not authorized to bind the City to obligations.

REGULATION 21.30(b): SOFTWARE LICENSING PROCUREMENTS

Software licensing procurements shall include all forms of software licenses, whether hosted and accessed by City locally on its own hardware and computer systems (on premise), through the internet on servers and computer systems owned by third parties (cloud), or by any other technological means that may be developed in the future.

For the purpose of this subsection (b), support services shall include both:

1. Standard support through which the manufacturer of a proprietary software ensures the operability and basic usability of its software and which only the manufacturer of the software is authorized to perform. Software licenses and standard support shall be deemed a Commodity for the purpose of Chapter 21; and
2. Proprietary services that go beyond such standard support such as, but not limited to, customization, implementation, and integration services which only the manufacturer of the software is authorized to perform. Services beyond standard support shall be deemed a Professional Service for the purpose of Chapter 21.

Software licenses, standard support, and services that go beyond standard support shall be subject to requirements established by the Purchaser under Section 21.03(j).

REGULATION 21.30(d): SOFTWARE-RELATED SOLE SOURCE

For the purpose of this subsection (d), if a vendor that has proprietary rights to the software or hardware purchased by the City, including any support related to such software or hardware, designates either directly or through a competitive solicitation process a single entity, including itself or a third party to contract with City on behalf of the vendor for such support, the designated entity shall also be treated as a sole source for the purposes of any contract requirements included in the Municipal Code .

REGULATION 21.30(e): ADVANCED PAYMENT IN SOFTWARE AND MAINTENANCE AGREEMENTS

Advance payments for software license fees, software support, and equipment maintenance may be made in intervals and for durations that City determines is in the best interest of City based on the totality of facts and circumstances related to a particular procurement.

Advanced payments shall be made in accordance with the Controller's policies.