



OFFICE OF THE CLERK/TREASURER

**City of Burlington**

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City Hall, Room 20, 149 Church Street, Burlington, VT 05401

**REQUEST FOR QUOTE: PURCHASE CARD AND VENDOR CARDS FOR ACCOUNTS PAYABLE  
CITY OF BURLINGTON, VERMONT  
DECEMBER 31, 2019**

**INTRODUCTION**

The City of Burlington (“the City”) currently employs both Vendor Cards and Purchase Cards for purchases made by employees and central purchasing. The City plans to grow its existing revenue stream by \$100,000 to \$150,000 over the next two years using both purchasing and virtual cards through a combination of negotiating a higher return for its volume, and increasing the number of vendors currently participating in the program.

The City currently utilizes a purchasing card (PCard); a form of charge card that allows goods and services to be procured without using a Purchase Order yet ensures the City’s purchasing policies are strictly adhered to. Pcards provide a means for streamlining the procure-to-pay process, allowing the City to procure goods and services in a timely manner, reduce transaction costs, track expenses, and reduce staff time that support our purchasing and accounts payable team. Our current Pcard program leverages the State of Vermont’s contract whose pricing helps state and local government agencies, public schools and municipalities grow their card programs and earn rebates on their annual Transaction Volume by aggregating spend. In addition – we utilize virtual cards (Vcards) issued by Key Bank; ghost cards that are issued to our vendors to facilitate payments. These single use virtual credit card numbers can be used only once thus protecting the vendor from credit card fraud. The Vcard generates revenue for the City. The City’s total accounts payable spend for the first three quarters of 2019 is \$36.1 million and of this amount \$3.2 million was on the Vcard.

We are requesting quotes for a purchase card program that includes a vendor ghost card platform to pay vendors to take advantage of the associated process savings and improvements.

**REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROPOSAL**

Written responses are due January 31, 2020. The City expects to notify the responder of its decision by February 14, 2020.

Proposals shall be limited to no more than 10 pages plus any appendices and must include the following:

1. List names, titles, phone numbers, email addresses and brief biographies of proposer contact personnel.
2. Three clients for whom you have performed similar services as outlined in Scope of Services. Please give reference information for a contact for each client.
3. Fees for the services as described in Scope of Services, provide implementation costs, annual fees, and transaction fees. Pricing proposals must make it clear which costs are one-time, which are annual, and which, if any, are variable.
4. A projection of the operational and transaction savings the City can expect should it choose to implement your solution.

## **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

### **Purchase Cards**

1. What card platform(s) does your program employ (e.g., MasterCard, Visa, American Express or other)? If more than one is used, which would you recommend for the City and why?
2. Provide a brief overview of software/web based card program management system that supports the Firm's purchasing card program.
3. Is the software/web-based card program management system wholly owned by your Firm? If not, specify the owner of the software/web-based card program management system.
4. Describe the card controls and usage restrictions supported by the Firm's program.
5. Do any third-party partners perform other functions, such as systems support or customer service? If so, explain.

### **Vendor Cards**

1. Discuss your approach in recruiting vendors on the City's behalf to your Firm's electronic payables platform.
2. What are the steps for signing up a vendor?
3. Who makes outbound phone calls to vendors (i.e. employees of your bank or a third-party)?
4. Is the vendor outreach team empowered to sign up the vendor or is it handed off to another department?
5. Do you offer a Buyer Initiated Payment (push pay) Program? If so, provide an explanation of how this service would operate.

## **SCHEDULE OF FEES AND REBATES**

1. Provide a price schedule for all fees for this service include all one-time and ongoing fees, related to this RFQ.
2. Please provide a rebate schedule for card activity at various levels and include details. Please describe any other factors that will affect the rebate amount paid.
3. Does the program provide the option of customizing the card with a logo or embossed tax exempt number? If so, is there a charge?

4. What are the liabilities of the City and employees in the event of fraud, abuse or loss of card? Do you provide fraud insurance? If so, what are the stipulations and fees associated with the insurance?

## **CAPABILITES**

1. How long has the proposer offered the service being requested in this RFQ?
2. What issues should we consider as we move forward with this initiative?
3. List the critical success factors for a purchasing card program and factors that have prevented achievement of program goals.
4. Does your program screen transaction activity for fraud patterns? If yes, explain. Provide statistics on fraud associated with your purchasing card program.
5. Can the proposer reproduce lost charge slips? Is there a charge for reproduction? What is the typical turnaround time for you to provide copies of charge slips?
6. What differentiates your company's services from that of other providers?
7. How will you keep this product technically and procedurally current and competitive?
  - a. What approach is the proposer taking in the development of new services?
  - b. What new services or features does the proposer plan to offer and within what timeframe?
8. What are the hardware and software requirements for using your card transaction reporting software packages, including RAM and disc space, minimum processor speed and modern specifications?
9. Can your system provide reports regarding 1099 and minority owned vendors? How detailed is the information in these reports?
10. How will you onboard new customers?

## **RESERVATION OF RIGHTS**

**It is the intent of the City to select the proposal that it deems to be in the best interests of the City. To that end, the City reserves the following rights:**

- 1. To accept any proposal in whole or in part;**
- 2. To accept multiple proposals if doing so is in the best interests of the City;**
- 3. To reject any or all proposals in whole or in part;**
- 4. To waive any informalities, omissions, or irregularities in any proposal;**
- 5. To terminate and reissue this RFP for any reason;**
- 6. To remedy any error in the RFP process without reissuing it; and/or**
- 7. To change or negotiate any specifications in the City's sole discretion.**

## **CONDITIONS**

1. All proposals and work completed must be performed in accordance with applicable rules, regulations, codes, and ordinances of local, state and federal authorities.
2. Pre-bid meetings are available to discuss these specifications. Any bids submitted prior to receipt of these specifications will be accepted automatically, but may be amended to comply with these specifications or to provide additional information, at the bidder's request.
3. Bids will be reviewed on a rolling basis as received, and the city reserves the right to discuss or negotiate any bid with any bidder prior to acceptance of the final bid.

4. The city intends to accept the bid it determines to be in the best interests of the city, based on the overall proposal, not exclusively on cost or any other specific factor. The city reserves the right to amend, modify, reject, negotiate, or accept any bid in whole or in part at its sole discretion. The city reserves the right to re-advertise for additional proposals and to extend the deadline for submission of the proposals. This Request for Proposals in no way obligates the city to award a contract.

5. The City of Burlington does not tolerate unlawful harassment or discrimination on the basis of political or religious affiliation, race, color, national origin, place of birth, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, crime victim status, veteran status, disability, HIV positive status or genetic information. The City is also committed to providing proper access to services, facilities, and employment opportunities. The successful bidder must comply with these non-discrimination provisions.

6. Any party responding to this Request for Qualifications is acting in an independent capacity and not as an officer or employee of the city. Any party responding to this request for proposals will be required to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the city, its officers, and employees from all liability and any claims, suits, expenses, losses, judgments, and damages arising as a result of the responding party's acts and/or omissions in the performance of the contract.

7. The selected party will be required to obtain insurance naming the city as an additional insured with minimum limits as set forth in the attached draft contract.

8. The city assumes no responsibility or liability for costs incurred by parties responding to this Request for Proposals, or responding to any further requests for interviews, additional data, etc., prior to the issuance of the contract. Any costs incurred by any person or entity in preparing, submitting, or presenting a proposal are the sole responsibility of that person or entity. The city will not reimburse any person or entity for any costs incurred.

9. Any materials submitted to the city in response to this Request for Proposals shall become the property of the city unless another arrangement is made by written agreement between the city and the responding party. The responding party may retain copies of the original documents.

10. Any and all records submitted to the City, whether electronic, paper, or otherwise recorded, are subject to the Vermont Public Records Act. The determination of how those records must be handled is solely within the purview of City. All records considered to be trade secrets, as that term is defined by subsection 317(c)(9) of the Vermont Public Records Act, must be identified, as shall all other records considered to be exempt under the Act. It is not sufficient to merely state generally that a proposal is proprietary, contains a trade secret, or is otherwise exempt. Particular records, pages, and sections which are believed to be exempt must be specifically identified as such and must be separated from other records with a convincing explanation and rationale sufficient to justify each exemption from release consistent with Section 317 of Title 1 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated.

11. A sample contract is attached, and the successful bidder will be expected to comply with this and Burlington's Standard Conditions (Attachment C).

12. The successful bidder must be registered to do business in the State of Vermont.

## **SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**

To be considered, please submit an electronic copy by 1:00 p.m. EST on January 31, 2020 to:

Rich Goodwin  
Director Financial Operations  
City of Burlington  
149 Church Street  
Burlington, Vermont 05401  
[rgoodwin@burlingtonvt.gov](mailto:rgoodwin@burlingtonvt.gov)  
802-865-7013

Thank you in advance for your interest.