

Quality and Productivity Commission
27th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
“Saluting County Excellence”

2013 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):

NAME OF PROJECT: DOING BUSINESS WITH PUBLIC WORKS

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION: SEPTEMBER 2011
 (Must have been implemented at least one year - on or before June 30, 2012)

PROJECT STATUS: _____ Ongoing One-time only

HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT? _____ Yes No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. Summarize the problem, solution, and benefits of the project in a clear and direct manner

1 The LA County Public Works Department offers a multitude of contracting opportunities
 2 to businesses, including service contracts, architectural designs, construction,
 3 consulting services, and capital projects. Public Works created the Business
 4 Opportunities portal (<http://dpw.lacounty.gov/general/contracts/opportunities/>) to
 5 enhance communications with businesses and other interested parties so they are
 6 notified when contracting opportunities are available, and have access to download
 7 detailed information. Through this “one-stop” destination, solicitation materials, contact
 8 information, and other related County and State contracting information is available. The
 9 portal tracks the solicitation life cycle from upcoming, open, closed, to awarded
 10 contracts. Businesses are provided options to stay connected and informed of
 11 contracting opportunities, including e-mail notifications, social media (tweets), and/or
 12 Rich Site Summary (RSS) feeds. In 2012, Public Works posted more than 120 projects
 13 valued at over \$432 million through this portal. More than 2,500 businesses used the
 14 system to register their business profile and/or to subscribe to notifications. Overall, the
 15 site received more than 230,000 unique visitors.

(1) ESTIMATED/ACTUAL ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ESTIMATED/ACTUAL ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ESTIMATED/ACTUAL ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) TOTAL ESTIMATED/ACTUAL BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$ 0	X
SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works 900 S. Fremont Ave., Alhambra CA 91803			TELEPHONE NUMBER (626) 458-4093	
PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME Khaled Tawfik			TELEPHONE NUMBER 626-458-4108 EMAIL ktawfik@dpw.lacounty.gov	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE (PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME) Emma L. Ayala SIGNATURE ON FILE		DATE 6/25/13	TELEPHONE NUMBER (626) 458-4093 EMAIL eayala@dpw.lacounty.gov	
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE Gail Farber SIGNATURE ON FILE		DATE 6/27/13	TELEPHONE NUMBER (626) 458-4002	

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CHALLENGE - Public Works processes a large number of solicitations/projects, managed by different contract managers, spanning multiple categories, and governed by distinct funding sources and contracting requirements.

Vendors were faced with different solicitation types and formats specific to the very diverse business categories such as landscaping, shopping cart retrieval, graffiti removal, debris removal, traffic signal design, trash collection, dam rehabilitation, architectural and engineering design, large building construction, etc.

Public Works was challenged to bring together the large volume and variation of solicitations by presenting all the opportunities in one central location. Our contracting divisions were using various methods and applications to manage and track the life cycle of a solicitation. Staff manually set reminders for upcoming solicitation milestones and internal communications varied depending on the contract analyst.

Public Works desired to improve and standardize internal processes, while making it easier for vendors (respondents) to receive timely and accurate information. The goal was to develop a solution to encourage potential vendors to do business with Public Works through a seamless and user-friendly process. In return, the Department could expand the number of interested vendors, make it easier to receive responses to our solicitation, and recommend the award of contracts that would stimulate economic activity.

SOLUTION - The Business Opportunities portal was created with the following objectives: (1) Improve communications and increase the visibility of business opportunities to vendors and help them easily track the solicitation life cycle; (2) Provide a simple, user-friendly experience for vendors to register their businesses with Public Works and to receive timely solicitation related notifications, and (3) Centralize Public Works' process to create a “one-stop” portal for all of our contracting opportunities with easy to use links for vendors to get information on and complete various registrations with the State and County.

The initial portal was developed in-house in three months, which included business process improvements, online workflow for review and approval, design, coding, testing, and it was successfully deployed in 2011. It was significantly enhanced in 2012 to improve filtering capabilities and to establish new communication channels, including social media.

The Business Opportunities portal is available to the public from any Internet browser at <http://dpw.lacounty.gov/general/contracts/opportunities>. The clientele are potential vendors (businesses, non-profits, etc.) interested in doing business with Public Works. The solution provides a filter to display the type of solicitation being requested (e.g., Building Projects, Infrastructure Projects, Professional Services, or Sundry Services), with additional filters to locate the desired status (e.g., Upcoming, Open, Closed, or Awarded).

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Other features include search, link to register your business, and links to other contracting information provided by State, County, and Public Works.

Each contracting opportunity provides project details such as scope of work, location, map, estimated budget, solicitation items, and additional solicitation documents available for download.

The portal opened new communication channels with vendors to promote activity and transparency. Four unique features that support the program’s objectives include:

1. Upcoming and Awarded Contracts: (a) The Upcoming filter displays solicitations with an anticipated schedule for release within the next 12 months. This allows vendors to strategically plan, align resources, and be potentially more competitive on future solicitations/projects, and (b) The Awarded filter allows vendors to view past contracts, trends, and identify key attributes of a winning contractor.
2. Registration and Subscription – Vendors can subscribe to receive e-mail notifications when a new solicitation is issued or when the status changes.
3. Twitter –Public Works Twitter accounts are used to market and tell followers about new solicitations or awarded contracts and link them to the portal.
4. RSS feed – Users can subscribe to RSS feeds to receive information on contract opportunities and solicitation results.

To improve internal process flow, many business rules and logic were programmed to standardize and centralize the contracting process. Public Works’ various contracting divisions enter, manage, and track the entire life cycle of a contract within the application. There are date fields (milestones) that trigger e-mail notifications to remind staff of an upcoming or past due event, which can then trigger a work flow to take action (e.g., renew an optional year in the contract or obtain updated insurance certificates, etc.). Standard management reports are available that can be filtered based on criteria, such as date range, contract status, Supervisorial District, payments paid to contractor, etc. These functionalities have improved internal communications, provided public visibility, and allowed contracting divisions to manage the entire contract life cycle in one place. Having centralized and standardized the contract process allows Public Works to provide a “one-stop” portal for vendors.

BENEFITS - The three project objectives were all met: 1) To improve communications and promote transparency; 2) To make it simple to use; and 3) To centralize processes to make it a “one-stop” shop.

In 2012, Public Works posted more than 120 solicitations/projects valued at over \$432 million through the portal. More than 2,500 businesses used the system to register their business profile and/or to subscribe to notifications. Overall, the site received more

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than 230,000 unique visitors. In addition, Public Works received numerous e-mails from bidders thanking the County for making the process more “contractor friendly.”

Numerous process improvements were introduced including, but not limited to, standardization and the use of consistent terms and forms across divergent business areas, wherever possible. Prior to the system, Public Works printed large volumes of solicitation material in preparation for bidder/proposer’s conferences. Providing the solicitation materials online enables vendors the immediate ability to view and download specific materials.

Vendors are receiving targeted information in a timely manner from various channels. We believe this has improved access to the solicitation process, encouraged vendor participation (including small business owners) and, by expanding the field of potential contractors, ultimately results in the County securing the best service, solution, and contractor for the work required.

Forecasting upcoming solicitations enables businesses to plan their resources efficiently. As a result, companies can hire or retain staff in anticipation of future solicitations/projects. The centralized (one-stop) system enhances Public Works' ability to market (advertise) business opportunities and makes it easier for businesses to find new opportunities thereby saving them time, resources, and money.

The Business Opportunities portal is instrumental in supporting Public Works' efforts to promote the awareness of the magnitude and availability of our contracting opportunities. The portal provides information and reports on how Public Works supports Local Worker Hiring and the Local Small Business Enterprise Programs. There are specific reports showing utilization and hiring statistics specific to large capital projects.

Additionally, our portal links to the County’s main website (www.lacounty.gov) which features Stimulus Funding Information, which align to federal funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) with the stated goals to “create jobs, restore economic growth, and strengthen America’s middle class...” The data on the County’s site includes Capital Projects, which point back to the contracts that were awarded by Public Works on our Business Opportunities portal.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN (DETAIL IS REQUIRED FOR COUNTY DEPARTMENTS):

The Doing Business with Public Works website meets the County’s Strategic Plan goals of Operational Effectiveness and Integrated Services Delivery.

- Operational Effectiveness – improves process for both customers (potential vendors) and internal staff.
- Integrated Services Delivery - improves vendor and contract administration functions, which leads to improved delivery of services to the public.

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COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFIT): If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation.

Cost Avoidance: Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes.

Cost Savings: A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes.

Revenue: Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL= 12 MONTHS ONLY

N/A