Procurement Department: Operations and Initiatives Update

City of Rockville Procurement

Overview

- **Streamlining Initiatives**
- **MFD-V Outreach and Sustainability Initiatives**
- **Standard Operations Improvements**

Streamlining: Procurement Review Team (PRT)

- **Background: User departments, Procurement, and the City Attorney's Office meet every two weeks to review current and upcoming projects.**

- ✓ The team walks through timelines, tracks progress, and works through issues or delays, encouraging shared accountability.

Examples of success:

- ✓ AMI Meter project
- ✓ EV Shuttle Bus purchase
- ✓ LED Street Light Phase III

Progress indicator: Track project milestones met on time and resolution of identified issues.

Streamlining: DPW Backlog Cleared

- **Background: Over one year's time, a backlog of Public Works projects accumulated consisting of about 15-20 items.**

- ✓ A full-time position was filled and temporary personnel was obtained to help fully clear all projects that had accumulated.
- ✓ The backlog was completed within months while Procurement continued addressing new requests.
- ✓ Targeted staffing support added the capacity needed to complete accumulated work while maintaining attention to current needs.
- ✓ Additional staffing support has allowed Procurement to begin assignments timely and efficiently.

Progress indicator: Projects completed with fewer pending requests.

Streamlining: Carryover of CIP Requests

- **Background: Historically, Procurement staff have been required to return CIP requisitions to the user departments at the end of the fiscal year with user departments required to resubmit the same requisition once the fiscal year changed.**

- ✓ CIP requests now transfer automatically into the new fiscal year, including requests already moving through Procurement.
- ✓ Automatic carryover eliminates duplicate entry and an additional processing step for user departments and Procurement.

Progress indicator: Requests transferred without resubmission and estimated staff time saved.

Streamlining: Procurement Process Mapping

- **Background: Staff noted a variety of processes that should be examined and rethought to determine if steps could be eliminated or certain steps within the process can be done concurrently.**

- ✓ A workgroup of Procurement staff and user department representatives completed a process review of Invitation for Bids (IFB) and Request for Proposals (RFP).
- ✓ The review focused on removing redundancy and steps that add little or no value, with the goal of shortening processing times.
- ✓ Implementation is ahead. Additional procurement methods will follow, with resulting changes incorporated into procurement procedures.

Progress indicator: Process changes implemented and changes in processing times.

Streamlining: Public Contracts Portal

- **Background: City departments requested a listing of active contracts that may be accessible in real-time by staff and the public.**

- ✓ A searchable portal within the contract management system will give the public and City departments easier access to contract information.
- ✓ Initial access will include vendor names, contract descriptions, and expiration dates. Contract documents will become accessible in phases.
- ✓ Implementation is anticipated within 30-60 days, supporting greater visibility into the City's existing contracts.

Progress indicator: Portal launch, usage, and availability of current contract information.

MFD-V Outreach: Quarterly Open House

- **Background: Based on recommendations provided within the University of Maryland Capstone project, staff has developed a quarterly virtual open house to expand outreach and education opportunities to the vendor community.**

- ✓ Quarterly virtual open houses will give vendors regular opportunity to learn about the City procurement processes, practical tips, and resources.
- ✓ Sessions will share future bid opportunities to help businesses prepare. The first session is scheduled for November 2026.
- ✓ The sessions will serve all vendors, with additional outreach to MFD-V and local businesses, putting the Capstone project's recommendations into action.

Progress Indicator: Attendance, MFD-V engagement, and subsequent bid participation.

Preference Considerations: RFP Evaluation

- **Background: Based on recommendations provided within the University of Maryland Capstone project, staff is considering the use of preference points in the competitive proposal process.**

- ✓ Procurement is exploring Request for Proposals (RFP) evaluation criteria points for proposals that consider optional minority subcontractor participation.
- ✓ The review also considers points for strategies incorporating sustainable products or practices into contract performance.
- ✓ The City Attorney's Office is reviewing these options. No preferences have been adopted, and any next steps will depend on that review.

Progress indicator: If adopted, track proposals containing qualifying commitments and whether contractors fulfill those commitments.

Sustainability: Procurement Strategy

- **Background: Based on recommendations provided within the University of Maryland Capstone project, staff is exploring other options for incorporating sustainable practices within the procurement process.**

- ✓ Procurement is working with another department to identify where procurement decisions can best support sustainability and align with the City's Climate Action Plan.
- ✓ The planned approach is to establish a policy and include specific requirements in solicitation documents.
- ✓ This pending initiative aims to turn sustainability goals into clear expectations that departments can apply and vendors can address in their responses.

Progress Indicator: Policy and solicitation requirements developed, and contract-specific sustainability outcomes.

Standard Operations: Guide Implemented

- **Background: The Procurement Department recently implemented a city-wide Contract Administration Guide to assist user departments with management of contracts post award supporting accountability throughout the life of the contract.**

- ✓ Provides a consistent reference for overseeing services, construction, technology, and other contracts requiring ongoing performance oversight.
- ✓ Clarifies responsibilities, when to involve Procurement, verification before payment, and authorization before contract changes.
- ✓ Offers guidance on performance issues, contract renewals, closeout, and records retention.

Progress indicator: User department use of the guide and documented completion of key oversight responsibilities.

Standard Operations: Vendor Evaluations

- **Background: As a component of the Contract Administration Guide, formal vendor performance evaluations will be conducted for contracts that require active oversight.**

- ✓ Evaluations assess quality, timeliness, contract compliance, responsiveness and management, and overall vendor performance using consistent criteria.
- ✓ Conducted annually for contracts requiring active oversight, evaluations use fact-based ratings and documentation to capture performance.
- ✓ Completed evaluations remain in the contract management system to support contract decisions. Procurement reviews significant adverse evaluations and will take necessary action.
- ✓ Implementation is in its early stages.

Progress indicator: Track evaluations completed and corrective actions resolved by agreed-upon deadlines.

Standard Operations: Procurement Training

- **Background: Procurement has launched a procurement training program to help user departments understand the various methods of procurement and tools needed to navigate the procurement process.**

- ✓ Regularly scheduled training began with live virtual sessions. Interactive refresher training is now available through NeoGov.
- ✓ Topics include cooperative procurement (rider contracts), emergency and sole source procurement, Invitation for Bids (IFB), Request for Proposals (RFP), exemptions, and small and informal procurements.
- ✓ Training also covers independent cost estimates and price/cost analysis, giving user departments guidance they can revisit prior to submitting procurement requests.

Progress indicator: Track participation, knowledge-check results, and recurring procurement errors.

Standard Operations: Digital Forecasting

- **Background: Procurement has replaced the previous PDF forecast calendar with a revamped digital forecast calendar that can be accessed by the business community via the City website.**

- ✓ The digital forecast calendar will continue to be provided on the City's website, with updates available in real time.
- ✓ Replaces the need to revise and upload a PDF document a few times throughout the year.
- ✓ More current information on anticipated procurement opportunities helps vendors plan and prepare while simplifying the update process for staff.

Progress indicator: Timeliness of updates and accuracy of published forecast information.

Success Factors

- Completed improvements have cleared accumulated work, removed duplicate steps, and given departments clearer guidance.
- Ongoing and planned initiatives will expand vendor access and strengthen project coordination and contract oversight.
- Advance sustainable procurement through policy development and solicitation requirements that support environmentally responsible procurement.
- Collaboration across Procurement, user departments, and the City Attorney’s Office continues to support this progress.