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New Automated Procurement Process Helps Businesses

Streamlined System Increases Efficiency, Reduces Costs, Enhances Accountability

Oakland, CA — Mayor Ron Dellums commended Councilmember Desley Brooks, 100 Black Men of the Bay Area, and the City of Oakland’s Department of Contracting and Purchasing today on the launch of a new, automated Procure-to-Pay (P2P) system to streamline and modernize the City’s contracting and purchasing processes. The system, so-named because it enhances every aspect of the process from procurement to payment, will reduce paperwork, eliminate time-consuming manual processes, and enhance accountability.

The P2P system electronically tracks the entire lifecycle of the process—from advertising the contracting opportunity, to bidding the work, awarding the contract, and paying invoices—thus shaving time from each step of the process. It also enhances the transparency of the process, so businesses can electronically track each step themselves 24 hours/day.

“In these challenging economic times, the City of Oakland strives to maintain a business-friendly environment, both to retain existing and establish new relationships with the contractors and vendors interested in doing business with us,” said **Mayor Dellums**. “Under the current system which relies on manual notices, local businesses are not always aware of contracting opportunities. This new system automates that process, ensuring that our local businesses will have a fair and equal opportunity to bid on all City contracts, as well as a chance to secure federal economic stimulus funds through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.”

The need for an enhanced, automated system was originally identified at a business roundtable sponsored by **Councilmember Desley Brooks** and 100 Black Men of the East Bay. “The new system creates efficiencies for businesses seeking to do business with the City. Most importantly, it provides greater transparency, accountability and collaboration in the contracting process,” said Councilmember Brooks. “The revisions and updates to the City’s contracting process that have been put in place during the past few years, including the prompt payment policy that I authored, are creating greater opportunities for Oakland’s businesses and residents.”

The P2P system is the third and final phase of a three-phase process, which also included the launch of a one-stop web site, centralizing the City’s contracting and purchasing department and

launching iSupplier, which allows suppliers of goods and services to communicate with the City through a secure Internet connection. All non-registered suppliers are urged to register as quickly as possible. Go to www.oaklandnet.com and click on the link “Business with the City of Oakland.”

The P2P system was developed by the Department of Contracting and Purchasing in partnership with the Department of Information Technology. It integrates every process of the procurement lifecycle and includes the following improvements and benefits:

Improvement	Benefit
Automates the purchasing workflow.	Reduces processing time, maximizes staff productivity and improves supplier management.
Centralizes procurement contracts and accounts payable documents.	Provides greater visibility, financial control and quicker approval processes.
Automates purchasing practices.	Streamlines purchase-order processing and strengthens policy compliance.
Provides online collaboration.	Allows suppliers the ability to directly access information and enter business transactions across the procure-to-pay life cycle using a secure, Internet-based portal.
Allows suppliers to electronically submit invoices.	Creates a paperless invoice review, approval, and payment process.
Enforces purchase review, approval, and spending limits through online self-service requisitioning.	Ensures that City departments comply with established purchasing guidelines and financial controls.
Implements electronic “stores” for pre-approved blanket purchase agreements or contract purchase orders. Allows authorized City employees to shop for needed items using an electronic catalog that resembles popular consumer Web sites such as Amazon.com .	Delegates the large number of smaller transactions to the departments, allowing the Department of Contracting and Purchasing to focus on big-ticket items such as construction, professional services and consulting services.
Includes supplier registration to allow prospective suppliers to register online via the department's Web site (registration is required before a supplier can do business with the City). When prospective suppliers submit their registration application, they receive an e-mail notification of registration with a user ID, a password, and a link to the City's Supplier Portal.	As a registered iSupplier portal user, suppliers can create and maintain a company profile, access their purchase orders, and submit electronic invoices.
Publishes current bid and proposal opportunities as well as bid results on the City Web site.	Allows registered suppliers as potential bidders to be notified of opportunities by e-mail and directed to the site.

Oakland’s new Business Assistance Center, located at 270 Frank Ogawa Plaza, provides businesses which do not have access to technology with access to laptop computers so that they may take full advantage of the new system.