



ABOUT US

Contract Purchasing



Working cooperatively...

TOGETHER

THE AAMDC AND NJPA

The AAMDC and NJPA, as like-structured organizations, have constructed a formal arrangement. This will allow AAMDC members to access NJPA's capital purchasing programs including CAT. These contracts are tendered regularly by the NJPA on the member's behalf.

NJPA's PURPOSE: The general purpose of NJPA is to serve our member agencies by facilitating a national municipal contracting alliance. Our goal is to provide our members with requested programs and services that are created, coordinated and delivered through a cooperative effort between NJPA and our member agencies. **NJPA is a national organization that creates a business and service relationship alliance between buyers and suppliers.** Appropriate levels of membership are offered to government, education and all non-profit agencies nationwide and in Canada. Member agencies are responsible for interpreting their own purchasing laws and recognizing NJPA as having satisfied their own competitive bidding and contracting requirements.

NJPA's MEMBER COMMITMENT: NJPA is committed to serving you, our member agency, through a continuous effort to meet your present and future needs. Our goals are highlighted by our desire to provide valued national contract purchasing solutions. We will strive to identify and meet your needs in a measurable, cost-effective manner. We will research the industry with regard to our members' common needs, and as a result deliver to you the opportunity to purchase the very best products, equipment and services through nationally leveraged contracts offering our members the lowest possible contract price. We are only able to do this as we work together to develop business and member agency relationships, creating a unified purchasing alliance.

We look forward to working closely with you and your agency, listening to your needs and interests and responding by providing valued national and international contract solutions.

NJPA's VENDOR COMMITMENT: NJPA awarded contract vendors can expect only the highest level of integrity, business practices and ethics. Our commitment to you will reflect our very best efforts to embrace and grow our relationship through common goals and respect. Our partnership will demonstrate open and honest communication, and our actions will represent the foundation of who NJPA is as an organization and how our employees represent the mission of NJPA. We will focus on our contracting process and procedures to ensure the level of consistency necessary to exceed the overall contracting and procurement expectations of our member agencies and vendors.

Your decision to respond to an NJPA national solicitation resulting in an awarded NJPA contract will be something you can be proud of. It will become a critical element in your company's success. Your NJPA contract will advance your commitment to effectively do business with government and education agencies nationwide through competitively bid and awarded contracts.

On behalf of the NJPA Board and our staff, we are committed to earning your trust and respect as a valued contract solution for our member agencies across the U.S. and Canada.

SERVICE IS OUR STANDARD

As a unit of government, NJPA exists for the singular purpose of providing valued services to our member agencies. We engage our membership throughout our procurement process in an effort to stay in tune to their individual needs and interests. Members are encouraged to give us input and express their views on everything we do on their behalf. This includes which products and equipment to bid for, the process we use, how to evaluate, and finally, how our members judge the value of our contracts. We are driven to provide efficient public service through our national cooperative purchasing programs. Our common needs and the desire to serve your agencies will lead our efforts as we face the challenges of the procurement, business and industry communities both now and in the future.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. WHO IS NJPA?

A. NJPA is a public corporation or agency serving as a municipal contracting agency for government and education agencies. NJPA serves member agencies under the legislative authority established and granted by Minnesota Statute 123A.21 (see specific statutory references on pages 4-5). All NJPA employees are public employees whom are required to pay into Public Employment Retirement Association (PERA) through payroll deduction. NJPA employees have the same employment status as employees of NJPA government and education member agencies.

Q. WHAT IS NJPA'S PRIMARY PURPOSE?

A. Among other areas of serving members, NJPA creates national cooperative contract purchasing solutions on behalf of its member agencies which include all government, education and non-profit agencies in Canada. These cooperative contract opportunities offer both time and money savings for their users by consolidating the efforts of numerous individually prepared solicitations to one national, cooperatively shared process. This process leverages the aggregation of volume from members nationwide.

Q. WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR NJPA MEMBERSHIP?

A. Any AAMDC member is eligible to participate in the program.

Q. HOW IS NJPA GOVERNED?

A. Similar to the AAMDC, the NJPA is governed by a Board of Directors. The eight-member board is comprised of publicly elected governing officials; including school board, city council members and county commissioners from Region Five in Minnesota.

Q. HOW CAN WE JOIN AND PARTICIPATE IN NJPA AND ITS CONTRACTS AND SERVICES?

A. As a member of the AAMDC there is no application process. Participating members are non-voting members of NJPA and are able to enter into Joint Powers Agreements. Non-profit organizations, non-public schools and other similar entities may join NJPA through an associate membership.

Q. DOES NJPA HAVE A PROFESSIONAL PUBLIC PURCHASING BOARD OF ADVISORS?

A. Yes. At this point, all current members are a part of our Board of Advisors. NJPA also has multiple member advisory committees that specialize in various membership verticals. These verticals include our general membership represented by procurement professionals from our government and education agencies and others, such as fleet departments, food service departments, park and recreation departments and public utility departments.

Q. WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF BEING A MEMBER OF NJPA?

A. • The competitive bidding and contract process is completed and satisfied on behalf of your agency. • National aggregation of product and equipment demand and volume resulting in aggressive and competitive pricing. • Choice of equipment, products and services is offered under awarded contracts featuring the highest quality solutions from industry-leading and nationally acclaimed vendors. • Members enjoy a broad range of exceptional product and equipment selections complimented by substantial time savings and multiple other related benefits for participating agencies. • NJPA contract solutions offer choice with the ability to continue to perform your own competitive bidding process if you choose to do so.

NJPA strives to exceed our members' needs and expectations. Our contracting process mirrors our members' process. In creating a contract pathway through a unified and commonly embraced contracting process, NJPA contracts are accepted by the highest level of government and education agencies across the country. NJPA increases our members' comfort by conducting complete financial audits of our organization annually through an independent auditor with the results submitted to the State of Minnesota as required by state law.

Q. AS NJPA MEMBERS, ARE WE STILL ABLE TO BUY FROM OTHER CONTRACTS?

A. Yes. This is a non-binding purchasing tool. All NJPA membership and contracts are non-exclusive with no obligation to purchase and are contracts of choice by our member agencies.

Q. CAN MY PUBLIC AGENCY USE NJPA CONTRACTS WITHOUT ISSUING OUR OWN SOLICITATION?

A. The AAMDC has filed a notice of planned procurement. Barring any significant challenges each AAMDC member will be included. There will be a minimal process before you may adopt the contract, to ensure approval in your marketplace. It will be the responsibility of each municipality to ensure their compliance.

Q. HOW CAN I OBTAIN COPIES OF THE LEGAL DOCUMENTATION ASSOCIATED WITH EACH CONTRACT?

A. Related contract and competitive bid process documentation is available on the NJPA website under each individual vendors' page or by request. Once on a vendor page, there is a tab titled "Contract Documentation" where these documents can be reviewed. Please follow the instructions under each vendor's "Pricing" tab to access pricing for specific contracts. Due to pricing complexity, most pricing is not located on the website and is available upon request in compliance with MN Data Practices. Procurement files are also available upon request.

Q. WHO SHOULD I CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS PROGRAM?

A. Carolyn Boyle
Manager of Client Relations
AAMDC - Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties
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OUR 11-STEP PROCUREMENT PROCESS

1) IDENTIFY MEMBER NEED

NJPA pursues member participation and conducts research through our member advisory committees represented by various verticals. This is also carried out at numerous national trade shows; we take the opportunity to not only display our current offerings, but also listen to our members' needs in an effort to refine our current and future product and service offerings.

2) RESEARCH SOLUTIONS AVAILABLE IN THE MARKET PLACE

Constant research helps us develop the best approach for each offering. Some industries lend themselves to a manufacturer's response because that manufacturer provides a complete industry solution through their authorized dealers. Other industries lend themselves to a distributor response because they are able to provide the most complete industry solutions through the large number of manufacturers they represent.

3) REQUEST PERMISSION FROM THE NJPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

After establishing the existence of both a viable need and a viable NJPA style solution, permission from the publicly elected NJPA Board of Directors is sought and must be granted to officially begin the development of the bid and overall procurement process.

4) DRAFT A SOLICITATION, PUBLIC ADVERTISEMENT AND NOTICE

Our bid document is our cornerstone of cooperative contract purchasing. The consistency of that bid document and its response forms and evaluation criteria are some of our greatest assets. NJPA advertises each RFP:

- in the print and online versions of the Minneapolis Star Tribune;
- in the online version of the USA Today;
- at least once in Oregon and Utah in the Daily Journal of Commerce and the Salt Lake News, respectively;
- on the NJPA website (NJPAcoop.org);
- on NoticeToBidders.com, and other appropriate e-commerce sites such as bidsync.com, onvia.com, publicpurchase.com, MERX.com, and biddingo.com; and
- by notifying state procurement departments in each state for possible re-posting of solicitation within their systems at their discretion.
- In the future: APC and Canadian MERX.com

5) CONDUCT A PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE FOLLOWED BY RECEIPT OF PROPOSERS' RESPONSES

Proposers are typically given 5-6 weeks from the start of the RFP advertisement to respond to the RFP. A Pre-Proposal Conference is conducted to answer questions and the PowerPoint slides used are sent to all who requested the RFP. An addendum may also be issued if there are any items covered beyond RFP content clarifications in the conference, and such items are deemed material by NJPA. NJPA uses an atomic clock to electronically time and date stamp all Proposals immediately upon receipt in NJPA's Staples, MN office. Proposals are later opened and read aloud by a Bids and Contracts department employee at the time, date, and place specified in the RFP.

6) EVALUATE PROPOSERS' RESPONSES

Evaluation begins at the bid opening by determining the "responsiveness" of each bid. "Level One Responsiveness" includes:

- Timely submission
 - Original signatures on appropriate documents
 - Liability insurance verification
 - Pricing document
 - Responses provided to all form questions
 - Required electronic and physical copy.
- "Level Two Responsiveness" is the evaluation of the response according to the evaluation criteria provided in the RFP and documented on the "Overall Evaluation and Criteria" (Form G) by the Proposal Evaluation Committee. It establishes a weighted scoring method and provides for an optional Cost Comparison. This point-based system is used as a part of the final scoring and awarded vendor determination. For future Canadian bids AAMDC will be on the proposal evaluation committee.

PROCUREMENT PROCESS

Evaluating proposers' responses, continued:

Our typical RFP's intent is to invite the widest variety of products and services within the scope of a tender to create a national contract that provides the greatest range of utility to the widest array of NJPA members. We specifically invite bidders to define their products and services not only by industry standard terms, but also in terms of the latest technological advances and applicability/utility to our members. NJPA believes the perceived procurement value of a proposal to NJPA and its members includes, but is not limited to:

- Conformance to RFP's intent, scope and specifications
- Competitive pricing strategies
- Ability to sell and service NJPA members nationally
- Financial strength, experience and success in the industry/marketplace
- References from past customers and prior experience with NJPA
- A clear, concise, aggressive and effective marketing plan
- Value Adds: related products, services and technological advances; green; WMBE and/or SBE status; ability to sell and service Canada and other International countries
- Financing options and detailed payment terms
- Warranty, product and service responsibility
- Identification of depth, breadth and quality of equipment, products and service offerings

7) PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NJPA BOARD

The recommendations of the Proposal Evaluation Committee are presented to the NJPA Board of Directors for final review and possible award. The NJPA Board has the final authority to issue or deny a procurement contract.

8) AWARD VENDOR/S

Upon approval by the NJPA Board, the recommended vendor is awarded a four-year contract term with one additional one-year renewal/extension at the discretion of NJPA. The Bids and Contracts Department emails Notices of Award and Non-Award to vendors.

9) POST APPROVED CONTRACT DOCUMENTS

A complete procurement file is organized and posted on our website for review by our members, it includes: the bid, competitive bidding and evaluation process and contract documentation.

10) DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A JOINT MARKETING PLAN WITH AWARDED VENDOR/S

NJPA works with both the vendor and member to educate on the benefits and uses of an awarded contract. We work with the awarded vendor(s) to educate and energize their sales and service teams.

NJPA advertises awarded contracts in select national publications; produces a full-color, hard copy "Contract Directory"; maintains a website offering of the contract solutions; exhibits with vendor partners in numerous national and regional trade shows; and provides break-out meetings at trade shows presenting information on contract purchasing and cooperative opportunities available through NJPA.

11) REVIEW AND MAINTAIN OUR CONTRACT THROUGHOUT ITS TERM

Contracts are periodically reviewed for their effectiveness. NJPA contracts are written with four-year terms with a fifth year option. As a result, NJPA provides a simple, structured, well-documented procurement contract in an effort to create a seamless process for all of its member procurement needs. It is important to stress that NJPA does not eliminate member responsibility for following the bid process; but rather, provides a nationally pre-competed option so as not to duplicate the formal tender process.

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