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MCbiz i-News

"Won by One - Initiating Opportunities, Promoting Growth"

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Getting Started: Doing Business with Maricopa County

By Nelson Mitchell

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Dear Small Business Enterprise Owner/Operator:

Thanks for your interest in selling commodities or providing services as a Small Business Enterprise (SBE) to Maricopa County. Each year, the Materials Management Department contracts for more than \$400 million in goods and services, and we hope your business becomes a member of this elite team of County providers. *County procurements are called **Article 3** for commodities and services, and they are called **Article 5** for design, construction, reconstruction, or remodel of County facilities.*

MCbiz, Maricopa County's Small Business Enterprise Program, is interested in your small business being involved in Maricopa County's procurement process. These small business activities strengthen our local economy and increase a business's vitality in our community.

MCbiz will support and help your small businesses through the self-certification and registration process so it can become eligible to participate in County procurement activities. MCbiz's primary goal is to help SBEs, like yours, position themselves to

Please see *Getting Started* on page 2

Maricopa County Article 5 Registration Guide

By Andres Chagolla and Lynda Cull

"Did you know that you may have to register in two areas to do business with Maricopa County?"

If you are interested in Maricopa County design and construction projects and want to receive notices of upcoming projects, please read the following register instructions:

- First, to receive notice of new construction projects for any of the public works entities (Flood Control, Transportation, Facilities Management, Parks & Recreation and Stadium District), you need to register with our Article 5 Procurement site at this link:
http://www.mcdot.maricopa.gov/procurement/article5/RSIA5_apphome.asp. You will automatically be notified of all new projects for those areas you indicate you are interested in receiving. At this page, please read carefully and follow the instructions provided on the right side of the black vertical line.

Please see *Article 5 Registration Guide* on page 3

“To become eligible to do business with the County as an SBE, the business must register on the County’s online BuySpeed (BSO) system”

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provide Maricopa County departments with commodities, services and construction projects not covered by existing contracts with a one-time estimated cost of less than \$50,000.

In order to self-certify as an SBE, a business must have less than 100 full-time employees or have gross annual receipts of less than \$4 million in its last fiscal year. Certification is part of the registration process. Irrespective of a business’s current standing as a Minority Business Enterprise or a Women Business Enterprise, it must still meet the aforementioned test to be considered an SBE. Consequently, SBEs may or may not be women- or minority-owned businesses.

To become eligible to do business with the County as an SBE, the business must register on the County’s online BuySpeed (BSO) system at www.maricopa.gov/materials. (The City of Phoenix, State of Arizona, and Grand Canyon Minority Supplier Development Council registration and certification guidelines and requirements may differ from those of the County.)

Registration includes:

- Self-certification as an SBE
- Identifying and designating the commodity codes that apply to the business
- Listing all of the required contact information in the application.

An important step in this process is for vendors to register to appropriate commodity codes. Vendors that register to non-applicable National Institute of Government Procurement (NIGP) commodity codes may not be contacted to participate in the procurement process. Vendors may be exempted from the procurement process by not registering to a commodity code or by registering a business under the wrong code. Please review www.maricopa.gov/materials/Vend-Reg_Help/04_help_register.asp for specific, step-by-step registration instructions.

County procurement representatives select suppliers to bid on commodities and services based on the commodity codes the businesses opted for in BuySpeed Online. For a list of the applicable commodity codes, please visit our website at www.maricopa.gov/materials.

County procurement personnel can not select or designate commodity codes for vendors. However, they can provide assistance in an advisory capacity to “help” a vendor make the best choices in the interest of his/her business.

Please note, although **registration and certification are absolutely required**, a vendor will not automatically be designated as the County’s vendor of choice.

Businesses that register will be added to the official Vendor List. These companies may or may not be subsequently contacted to provide a bid. **Being added to the Vendor List does not constitute a contract between the County and a business.** Being added to the Vendor List only signifies that an enterprise is interested in doing business with Maricopa County under a certain commodity code.

The decision to select a vendor to provide a particular commodity is based on a number of factors including *lowest bid*, *responsiveness* and *responsibility*—one solicitation at a time. *Responsiveness* is defined as delivering the solicitation response to the location designated in the document by the required date and time. *Responsibility* is defined as the ability of a vendor to successfully fulfill the requirements of the contract. These vendor qualifications are NOT reviewed prior to a vendor being added to the official Vendor List. The qualifications are reviewed only after the solicitation and resulting bids from vendors.



“Making sure the correct commodity codes are selected?”

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A **formal solicitation** is defined as a bid or proposal with an estimated value greater than \$50,000. Registered vendors will receive notification of solicitation opportunities each time a formal solicitation for the NIGP commodity codes identified in their Vendor Registration Application is issued.

Please take a look at the following web address to access current formal solicitations:
www.maricopa.gov/materials/advbd/bidinfo.asp.

Typically, small business enterprises will receive **informal solicitations** for bid. Informal solicitations are defined as quotations, and have a value of \$50,000 or less. Businesses that are looking to provide a bid in this realm **WILL NOT BE AUTOMATICALLY NOTIFIED** that a bid has been solicited for a specific commodity.

- The County does not require posting of informal solicitations for bid as they are very dynamic. Subsequently, the businesses may or may not be contacted by a County procurement representative for a bid, even if the business' identified NIGP application.

Commodity codes track with a County department's requested commodities.

We invite you to certify and register as a Small Business Enterprise with Maricopa County Materials Management at your earliest possible convenience so you can become empowered to provide goods and services to the County.

We can help - please call:



602-50MCbiz / 602-506-2249 or

Visit the MCbiz website

www.maricopa.gov/mcbiz

We look forward to working with you!

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"...to get registered with the County for payment should you receive a contract, you must register with: Maricopa County Materials Management..."

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- After you have gathered the information as indicated in the appropriate registration form, return to the site and click on the "New User: Register Here" link on the left side of the black vertical line. You will have approximately 30 minutes to enter your data. Please be as thorough as possible.
- All Article 5 departments are authorized to utilize the information contained on this site for the selection of firms on the register list. These can be used under certain circumstances as permitted in our Procurement Code (to read the procurement code, please follow this link: <http://www.maricopa.gov/materials/p-code/Policies.asp>).
- It is important to include as much information as possible as this is similar to having an on-line, generic Statement of Qualifications on file. While this is not strictly the case, this is the information needed to select firms that seek contracts with the County in some cases.

To receive notices of other County procurements for which your firm may be qualified, but which are not covered under Article 5 of the Maricopa County Procurement Code, or to get registered with the County for payment should you receive a contract, **you must register with:**

- ✚ Maricopa County Materials Management by following this link: <http://www.maricopa.gov/materials/default.asp>.

Before beginning the registration process at this page, please review this document:

- ✚ (http://www.maricopa.gov/Materials/Vend-Reg/nigp_comm_code.pdf) and print out the relevant pages. The system used by Materials Management is based on the **NIGP (National Institute for Government Procurement) codes**. This helps us market our procurement opportunities to those firms interested in receiving notice based on the codes for which they register.
- ✚ **Search the code list and mark the codes that are relevant to your industry or services provided. Once you know your NIGP codes, return to the website and register. At a minimum, you will need to have your Tax ID also available.**

For both of these sites, you will require a login and a password. After initial registration, you can update and expand your profiles by using these logins to manage your accounts. If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to call **602-50MCBIZ / 602-506-2249**. Again, thank you for your interest in Maricopa County projects.

MCbiz Website Debut



In August 2007
Connect with MCbiz at
www.maricopa.gov/mcbiz

MCbiz website will soon zoom into your cyberspace at the address of: www.maricopa.gov/mcbiz, and its various features will benefit the small business community
Features include:

i-Team - page showcasing virtual partner organizations which provide valuable resources to the business community.

Business Strategies - page providing advice to the small business community via articles from peers representing industry clusters.

Enterpriser Zone - page including listings of workshops, seminars, conferences scheduled by MCbiz and other organizations.

Connect Zone - page providing info on how to do business with governmental organizations and other corporations.

Success Stories - page showcasing business owners' journeys to success.

Community Economic Development Galleria - page highlighting pictorial-historical glimpses of surrounding cities' small business communities.

i-Newz - page providing electronically-based information and news.

Business Resources - page providing links to business-related resources.

Phase Two of the Website

- ⊕ MCbiz Vendor Mart, where registered vendors may participate in interactive marketing.
- ⊕ Bilingual page.
- ⊕ Intranet for the County's Certified Agency Procurement Aides (CAPAs).
- ⊕ Refining web pages and instituting its i-Blog.

For Current Solicitations:

Materials Management - <http://www.maricopa.gov/materials/advbd/advbd.asp>
 Transportation - <http://www.mcdot.maricopa.gov/procurement/mcdot/home.htm>
 Flood Control - <http://www.fcd.maricopa.gov/Procurement/>
 Facilities Management - <http://www.maricopa.gov/fmd/>
 Parks & Recreation - <http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/planning/default.aspx>
 Maricopa Integrated Health Hospital - <http://www.mihs.org/openbid/index.html>
 Maricopa Public Health - http://www.maricopa.gov/materials/advbd/pub_health.asp



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Maricopa County Small Business Enterprise Program

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