How to Submit a Response for a Commodity Business Opportunity

This guide covers the following topics:

- Solicitation Types
- Submitting a Response
- Responding to Reverse Auction Solicitations

The City of Los Angeles has many business opportunities. These business opportunities or solicitations are posted on the Los Angeles Vendor Self-Service (VSS) application and on the Business Assistance Virtual Network (BAVN).

To locate a solicitation, refer to the How to Search for a Business Opportunity in VSS guide (available under the “VSS Guides” link on the LA VSS website).

All responses to City of Los Angeles commodity solicitations must be submitted through VSS. To respond, a vendor must have a VSS account. To register for an account, refer to the How to Create a VSS Account guide (available under the “VSS Guides” link on the LA VSS website).
1 Solicitation Types

There are four different types of commodity solicitations that may be available in VSS:

- RFQ – Request for Quote – an informal solicitation used to procure bids under $100,000
- RFB – Request for Bid – a formal solicitation used to procure bids over $100,000
- RAQ – Reverse Auction Quote – an informal solicitation used to identify qualified bidders for a reverse auction under $100,000
- RAB – Reverse Auction Bid – a formal solicitation used to identify qualified bidders for a reverse auction over $100,000

The “Submit a Response” section below details how to respond to a Request for Quote (RFQ) or Request for Bid (RFB). Refer to the Responding to Reverse Auction Solicitations section of this document for information on reverse auction opportunities in VSS.
2 Submit a Response

The following steps outline how to submit a response to a Request for Quote (RFQ) or Request for Bid (RFB) solicitation on Vendor Self-Service. For more information on responding to Reverse Auctions, refer to the Responding to Reverse Auction Solicitations section of this document.

**Step 1:** Enter **Username** and **Password**. Click **Login**.

A vendor must be logged into VSS to respond to a solicitation. Click **New Registration** button on the VSS homepage to create an account.

**Result:** The VSS application opens to the Account Information section.
**Step 2:** Click on the Business Opportunities section.

![Los Angeles VSS screenshot](image1)

**Result:** The Business Opportunities section opens to the Solicitations tab.

![Los Angeles VSS screenshot](image2)

**Step 3:** Locate the desired Solicitation.

Refer to the *How to Search for a Business Opportunity in VSS* guide (available under the “VSS Guides” link on the LA VSS website) for information on how to search and a description of the Solicitation Details.
Step 4: Click Details to view additional information for the solicitation.

Result: The solicitation details display.
**Step 5:** Review the solicitation details.

**Solicitation: 170000900045**

**Tires**

**Issued:** 5/4/17  **Last Amended:**

**Current Status:** Open

**Start Date:** 7/31/17 4:00 AM PDT  **Closing Date:** 7/31/17 4:00 AM PDT  **36 Days, 11:52:59 Time Left:**

**Doc Dept:** General Services  **Buyer Name:**

**Category:** Automotive  **Type:** Request for Quotes (RFQ)

**Buyer Information**

**Additional Dates**  **Bid Opening Date:**  **Award Date:**

**Lots/Lines**  **Attachments**  **Additional Information**  **Terms**  **Criteria**  **Events**  **Q & A List**  **Amendment History**

**Lot 1: Default**

**Description**

TIRES AND TIRE TUBES

**Requested**

Catalog Name:

Commodity Code: 251725 null

**More Information**

**Step 6:** Click Respond Online.

**Solicitation: 170000900045**

**Tires**

**Issued:** 5/4/17  **Last Amended:**

**Current Status:** Open

**Start Date:** 7/31/17 4:00 AM PDT  **Closing Date:** 7/31/17 4:00 AM PDT  **36 Days, 11:52:59 Time Left:**

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**Category:** Automotive  **Type:** Request for Quotes (RFQ)

**Buyer Information**

**Additional Dates**  **Bid Opening Date:**  **Award Date:**

**Lots/Lines**  **Attachments**  **Additional Information**  **Terms**  **Criteria**  **Events**  **Q & A List**  **Amendment History**

**Lot 1: Default**

**Description**

TIRES AND TIRE TUBES

**Requested**

Catalog Name:

Commodity Code: 251725 null
Result: The page refreshes with the details of the response.

The Solicitation Response has two main sections: Solicitation Summary and My Response. The Solicitation Summary section provides the details of the solicitation. The My Response section is used to enter the details of the response, including pricing, criteria responses, file attachments, and discounts. VSS guides the vendor through five steps to complete the response. The five steps include:

1. Respond to Lines
2. Criteria Response
3. Attach Your Files
4. Discounts / Comments
5. Review / Submit
Step 7: Scroll down to the My Response section.

Step 8: If the options are grayed out, click Edit.

Result: The response is editable.
2.1 Step 1: Respond to Lines

The Respond to Lines section asks the vendor to respond to the lines defined on the solicitation. Each line requires a response. The type of required information will vary depending on the specifications provided. For example, if the City is interested in a catalog of items, the line will reference a **Catalog Name**, and a **Markup** or **Markdown Percentage** will be requested. This indicates that a catalog is also expected in the response. If the City is interested in a specific item, the line will request a **Unit Price**. Responses for both line types are outlined below.

**Step 9:** The vendor has the option to provide **No Bid for Solicitation**, **No Bid for Lot** or enter the Response Type by line item. Select **No Bid for Solicitation** or **No Bid for Lot**, as desired.

**Step 10:** In the **Response Type** dropdown, select the applicable option. Options include **Bid**, **Bid with Condition**, or **No Bid**.

If the user selects **Bid with Condition** or **No Bid**, the **Comments** field must be completed. When responding with a **No Bid** response type on multiple lines, the **Overall No Bid Comments** field may be used to enter one overall comment for the No Bid lines. See step 16 for instructions.
Step 11: If the response includes **Catalog Name**, this indicates that the response requires a catalog to be loaded with the response.

In the **Markdown Percentage** field, enter the amount of markdown, if applicable; OR in the **Markup Percentage** field, enter the amount of markup, if applicable. Only **Markup** or **Markdown Percentage** may be entered for each Catalog line.

In the **Catalog Name** field, enter the name of the file to be uploaded. The file will be uploaded in Step 3: Attach Your Files.

Step 12: For an item line, a **Unit Price** must be entered.
### Step 13:
If the item is **certified** as **environmentally friendly**, please check the box and select up to **3 Certifications** from the drop down list.

### Step 14:
If the item contains **recycled content**, please check the box and enter both the **Post Consumer** and **Total Recovered Content** as a percentage.
**Step 15:** If the item contains any Environmentally Preferable Product (EPP) attributes, please select Attributes from the drop down list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Your Offer</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOXES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is the item certified as environmentally friendly? [ ]
Dose the item contain recycled content? [ ]

**Step 16:** Click on Additional Specs to provide alternate specifications, if applicable and permitted.

**Step 17:** Enter Additional Specifications, if applicable. If alternative specifications are not permitted, the Alternate fields will be grayed out.
How to Submit a Response for a Business Opportunity

**Step 18:** Include Comments, as needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Your Offer</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TUBE, TIRE, HIGH FLOTATION/F/TRACTOR TIRE, 1TL, 15, ARMSTRONG 50003</td>
<td>Requested Quantity: 5 EA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Response Type: Bid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unit Price: $129.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total: $625.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alternate Specs Submitted:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Specs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requested</th>
<th>Alternate (if allowed)</th>
<th>Special Instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturer: GOODYEAR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serial Number: 1234566</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part Number:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specification:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product/Category:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDS: No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piece:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warranty Type:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is the item certified as environmentally friendly?  
Certification 1:  
Certification 2:  
Certification 3:  
Is the item certified as environmentally friendly?  
Does the item contain recycled content?  
Recycled Content %  
Total Recovered Content %  
EPP Attribute 1:  
EPP Attribute 2:  
EPP Attribute 3:  
**Step 19:** If a **Response Type** of *No Bid* has been entered for multiple lines, the **Overall No Bid Comments** field at the top of the screen may be used to apply comments to all lines where the response type is *No Bid*, and no comments have been entered.

Note: If there are no *No Bid* lines on the response, but comments have been entered into the **Overall No Bid Comments** field, the comments will not be applied to the response and an error will be issued. Instead, enter the comments into the line level comments boxes, or use the Overall Comments box on Step 4: Discounts / Comments.

Remember to click **Save** at the top or bottom of the screen to Save data.

Click **Exit** to continue at a later time.

**Step 20:** Complete the information for all line items.

**Step 21:** Once all required fields are completed, click **Go To Step 2**.
Result: If all required fields are not completed, error messages display. All errors must be resolved before proceeding.

Result: If required fields are completed, the user proceeds to Step 2: Criteria Response.

Step 22: Notification messages may display at the top.
2.2 Step 2: Criteria Response

The Criteria Response page is used to respond to Evaluation Criteria defined by the designated Central Purchasing Representative.

**Step 23:** For each criteria line, review the **Description** and **Response Type**.
Enter a response based on the **Response Type**.
If the Response Type is *None*, no response will be allowed for that line.

![Criteria Response Table](image_url)

**Step 24:** After responding to each question, click **Go To Step 3**.
Result: Error / Warning messages display.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You have 3 messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Information: This response hasn’t been submitted yet, any print actions will not reference final information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Information: Document validated successfully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Warning: No response was entered for Evaluation Criteria for Group null, 24 on the Criteria Response tab. (A607)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If any of the Evaluation Criteria lines are blank (if the Response Type was not None), a warning will be issued. A response should be provided for all questions.

Result: If all required fields are completed, the user proceeds to Step 3: Attach Your Files.
2.3 Step 3: Attach Your Files

This section is used to upload files and attachments to support the response. For Catalog line items, an excel catalog file must be attached.

If the solicitation is for a Catalog, an example catalog / market-basket will be posted with the solicitation. Refer to the How to Search for a Business Opportunity in VSS guide (available under the “VSS Guides” link on the LA VSS website) for steps to retrieve the City’s catalog / market-basket attachment for the solicitation.

Step 25: Click Attach Files.

**Result:** The Add files page opens.

**Step 26:** Click **Browse** to locate the file to upload.
Result: A pop-up opens to select the file. In this Internet Explorer example, the Choose File to Upload page opens.

![Choose File to Upload](image)

**Step 27:** Select the file.  
Note: For catalogs, the file name should match the file name entered on Step 1: Respond to Lines in the **Catalog Name** field.

Result: The Add files page refreshes.
**Step 28:** Repeat Steps 23-24 for additional files.

**Step 29:** Click Attach File.

**Result:** The page refreshes with the uploaded files.

**Step 30:** If all files attached, click **Go To Step 4.**

**Result:** The user proceeds to Step 4: Discounts/Comments.
2.4 Step 4: Discounts / Comments

The fourth step allows vendors to define a prompt payment discount if desired, or any overall comments for the response. These fields are optional.

Instructions on the page tell vendors that if no discount is offered, Net 30 will apply.

Step 31: Enter a discount, if applicable.
Enter text in the Overall Response Comment field, if desired.

Step 32: Click Go To Step 5.

Result: The user proceeds to Step 5: Review/Submit.
2.5 Step 5: Review / Submit

The final step allows the vendor to review their response before submitting the response.

**Step 33:** Review the information entered.

**Step 34:** If all information is correct, click **Submit**.

**Result:** A pop-up opens.

**Step 35:** Click **OK** to proceed.
Result: The Response Submitted Successfully displays.

Response Submitted Successfully

Thank You

Your Submitted Response can be found under the "My Responses" tab. Click any tab to continue.

2.6 Solicitation Responses

Responses can be viewed on the Solicitation Response section. Refer to the *How to Locate a Response for a Business Opportunity* guide (available under the “VSS Guides” link on the LA VSS website) for further instructions.
3 Responding to Reverse Auction Solicitations

Reverse Auction solicitations are established to identify any vendors that are qualified to participate on a Reverse Auction. On a Reverse Auction, no pricing information will be requested. Instead, vendors will be asked to provide certain Evaluation Criteria responses and/or attachments to help the City determine if the vendor is eligible to participate in the Reverse Auction.

Refer to the How to Search for a Business Opportunity in VSS guide (available on the LA VSS website) for steps on viewing the details of a solicitation.

**Step 1:** Log into VSS and locate the Reverse Auction solicitation by following the steps in Section 2.

**Step 2:** After locating the desired Reverse Auction, click Details.

**Result:** The Details page will load. No Lots/Lines will be displayed.
Step 3: Review the solicitation details.

Step 4: Click Respond Online.

Result: The Response View will load. The Lots / Lines section will be blank.

Step 5: Click Go to Step 2.

Step 6: Follow the instructions in Section 2: Steps 2 – 5 to complete the response.