



CITY OF HOUSTON

Administration and Regulatory Affairs Department
Strategic Purchasing Division

Bill White
Mayor

Calvin D. Wells
City Purchasing Agent
P.O. Box 1562
Houston, Texas 77251-1562

F. 832.393.8755
<https://purchasing.houstontx.gov>

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SUBJECT: Letter of Clarification No. 2
Learning Management & Learning Content Management System

REFERENCE: Request for Proposal No. S33-T23025

TO: All Prospective Bidders

This Letter of Clarification is issued for the following reasons:

- To revise the above referenced solicitation as follows:

Provide clarification to questions and/or concerns.

**Note: COH = City of Houston

1. **Question/concern:** Will the COH provide the number of users for license purposes?

Response: The City expects to deploy the LMS in multiple phases. During the initial phase, up to 1,500 City staff will use the system and provide support for the City's 20,000+ employees. In later phases, the City may choose to license access for all City employees.

2. **Question/concern:** Does COH have a preferred licensing model – perpetual or annual subscription?

Response: Vendors who have multiple licensing models should bid each model separately.

3. **Question/concern:** If hosted by the vendor, does COH require Tier One Help Desk (end-user support)?

Response: Typically, the City would expect to provide its own Tier 1 support and rely on the vendor for Tier 2 and beyond.

4. **Question/concern:** The RFP states: 8.10 The price agreement(s) shall become effective on or about February 9, 2009 for a term of three (3) calendar years. The City of Houston reserves the option of extending the agreement(s) on an annual basis for two (2) additional one-year terms or portions thereof. Is the COH viewing this as a 3 Year contract or 3 one year contracts with 2 additional option years?

Response: The City typically contracts for system for three years with two one year options to extend.

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5. **Question/concern:** Does COH have a license for the following that could be used for this initiative:
- a. Oracle database?
 - b. Application Server (i.e. BEA WebLogic Server, IBM WebSphere Application Server, JBoss, or Oracle AS Standard Edition Release)?
 - c. Web Server (i.e. WebLogic Web Server, WebSphere, IBM HTTP Server, Oracle Web Server, Apache, or Microsoft Internet Information Server (IIS))?

Response: Vendors should provide “all-in bids” covering ALL costs to implement the proposed solution. Vendors should not assume that the City will have/provide any hardware or software. The City, however, reserves the right to purchase the specified hardware and software components from other sources if better pricing is available.

6. **Question/concern:** Is the vendor responsible for providing hardware and third party software for this project?

Response: See question 5.

7. **Question/concern:** The RFP states the following: 4.1.5 The Contractor must provide a prototype that unequivocally demonstrates their capability of providing a viable and fully functional COH LMS/LCMS that operates with current COH legacy software, bandwidth and current infrastructure (prior to purchase). Will the COH please elaborate on this requirement? ? May Vendors assume that the COH wants to deploy the vanilla COTS in a COH environment. Beyond assisting with the standard installation, what other services and support are required?

Response: The City will conduct scripted demonstrations with all qualifying vendors. The demonstrations will be designed to ensure that each solution meets the City’s requirements.

8. **Question/concern:** The RFP states the following: 4.1.4 The Contractor must also provide technical support for the evaluation of current City of Houston’s infrastructure, bandwidth and provide a plan of action if needed (prior to purchase). Will the COH please elaborate on this requirement? What specific support or services are required to support the COH with the technical evaluation? Do you plan to pay the vendor for these services?

Response: The intent of the requirement is to have qualifying vendors determine whether the City’s infrastructure will support the proposed solution and to recommend any modifications / enhancements that might be required. Vendors should include the cost of this initial assessment in their proposal.

9. **Question/concern:** Item 7.2.1 – Documentation required (page 38). Do electronic/CD copies cover this requirement, and the COH can produce as many copies as necessary? Shipping hard copies of this quantity would add to the cost, and clients normally copy and distribute their documentation on their own as it is less expensive.

Response: The City will accept electronic or CD copies of all documentation.

10. **Question/concern:** The RFP includes information on the Network Standardization in section 2.2.1. Does the COH intend on running two live applications and databases?

Response: The information about Network Standards was included to provide vendors with a sense of the technical infrastructure within which their solutions might operation. It is not within the scope of this RFP for the vendor to deliver a disaster recovery solution. Should the core site at which LMS hardware is located “go down” LMS services will not be available until the core site is returned to normal operation.

11. **Question/concern:** What specific support or services are required to support the COH with requirement 4.1.6?

Response: The intent of the requirement is to ensure that each vendor will include sufficient time and materials to ensure that the new LMS replaces or interacts properly with learning systems already in place. This interaction may be technical (interfaces) or it may be coordinated (policies & procedures); regardless, the City would rely on the chosen vendor's knowledge of and experience in the learning management systems market to help define the rules governing these interactions.

12. **Question/concern:** RFP section 4.1.8 states, "The Contractor must provide updates and improvement to its LMS/LCMS system as they are developed.". Does the COH require the vendor to provide services outside of annual software maintenance (which includes software updates and new releases) for this requirement?

Response: No.

13. **Question/concern:** Please describe the COH project team including resources and % allocation that will be provided to support the implementation of the LMS.

Response: The City will work with the chosen vendor to define a project organization and an implementation plan. However, the City expects to devote a sufficient number of full-time resources to this project to ensure its successful implementation.

14. **Question/concern:** Does COH have a current standard tool for Virtual Classroom such as WebEx or equivalent?

- a. If so, please provide vendor name and version.
- b. Will this be required to directly interface with the new LMS?
- c. Does the COH want the bidder to include this product such as Webex, Adobe Connect, etc?

Response: The City has no current standard tool for Virtual Classroom. If a product of this type is required to fully deliver a vendor solution, the vendor should include the cost for the hardware, software, and professional services, to implement the 3rd party tools, in their proposal.

15. **Question/concern:** Please describe the level of vendor support COH requires for the following:

- d. Project Management Support – onsite/virtual, full-time or task-based
- e. Change Management Support
- f. Other (please describe)

Response: The City expects the vendor to describe the way it typically manages implementation of its solution.

16. **Question/concern:** Please identify what system(s) are required to interface with the LMS? The RFP mentions systems such as SAP, Financials, and Outlook. How do the interfaces need to function:

- One-way or two-way?
- Batch or near real-time interface?
- What data needs to be interfaced? (Learning history/completions, etc?)

Response: The City has identified several expected interfaces (SAP for chargebacks to departments, for example). The City would look to the vendor to provide a set of best practices that could be used to determine which interfaces make sense in the City's learning environment.

17. **Question/concern:** The RFP states that Active Directory will be implemented in the future (Section 3.4.1). Does the COH want vendors to include Active Directory integration effort as part of the year 1 costs? Or listed as an implementation option?

Response: To the extent that the application must be integrated into the AD environment, vendors should include the costs associated with that effort in their proposals.

18. **Question/concern:** Will the COH require the following methods to create and manage user accounts?

- a. Self Registration? Is there a need for multiple unique self registration pages and processes?

Response: Yes. What are your current customers doing? What are the pros & cons?

- b. System Interface to HR Personnel Management System?

- i. What audiences are targeted for this?
ii. Do you require this to be a one-way (HR System-to-Plateau) or two-way interface?

Response: The City's SAP HR module is the definitive source for information about employees. If a vendor solution includes an interface to this module, the vendor should bid it. If it does not, the vendor should bid a cost to develop it. The City reserves the right to NOT implement this interface. Under no circumstance should the LMS be pushing employee data into SAP.

- c. Are there any other systems that contain HR related data that COH requires the LMS to interface with?

Response: It is reasonable to assume that the City has many systems with HR-related data. It is not possible, at this time, to identify any potential interfaces.

19. **Question/concern:** Per 4.3.3, please describe further requirements for interface of data related to billing, funds transfer, and accounting.

- a. Is this for internal charge backs only?
b. Is there a need for end-users to pay for training via credit card, check, or other payment method (ie, eCommerce)?

Response: Primarily, the SAP interface will be for internal charge-backs. It is conceivable that a future enhancement might be to initiate an SAP request to reimburse staff for external training. Staff will never be asked to pay for their training via credit card, check, etc.

20. **Question/concern:** In several areas delivery is discussed. In an implementation of application software, the length of time it takes to complete the project is driven by the availability of the customer's applicable staff. Examples are IT staff and environment for hardware and software installation, interfaces to an ERP solution are based on availability of that customer staff and their ability to provide proper documentation, data migration is based on the data being provided to the contractor by the customer in the correct format, and training is based on the availability of the proper customer personnel. These and other areas that are controlled by the customer can cause schedule delays. Please explain how these issues will be handled and how delivery schedules will be adjusted to accommodate these customer controlled areas. What penalty does the customer pay to the vendor when they customer cancels a scheduled delivery with little notice or otherwise causes delays?

Response: This is something that can be discussed the successful contractor during the contract review period.

21. **Question/concern:** Does your organization have a resource (DBA, etc) who understands your current database structure and who can extract data into a pre-defined file and format?

Response: Yes

22. **Question/concern:** On page 24, 4.1.5 re: Contractor must provide prototype that unequivocally demonstrates their capability of providing a viable and fully functional COH LMS/LCMS that operates with current COH legacy software bandwidth and current infrastructure. I am not quite sure what you are looking for here or how this will be done.

Response: The City will conduct scripted demonstrations with all qualifying vendors. The demonstrations will be designed to ensure that each solution meets the City's requirements.

23. **Question/concern:** I understand you have about 22,000 total users but only 13,000 total project users and another possible 500 from third parties, do you have requirements on how many users you need on the system by a particular date? Will you eventually need all 22,000 users on the system?

Response: The City expects to deploy the LMS in multiple phases. During the initial phase, up to 1,500 City staff will use the system and provide support for the City's 20,000+ employees. In later phases, the City may choose to license access for all City employees.

23. **Question/concern:** Is it COH's intent to have Vendor sandboxes provided for its testing prior to award? If so, would you provide timelines for delivery and testing period?

Response: The City will conduct scripted demonstrations with all qualifying vendors. The demonstrations will be designed to ensure that each solution meets the City's requirements.

When issued, Letter(s) of Clarification shall automatically become a part of the proposal documents and shall supersede any previous specification(s) and/or provision(s) in conflict with the Letter(s) of Clarification. It is the responsibility of the proposers to ensure that it has obtained all such letter(s). By submitting a proposal on this project, proposers shall be deemed to have received all Letter(s) of Clarification and to have incorporated them into this proposal.

If you have any questions or if further clarification is needed regarding this Invitation for Bid, please contact me.



Conley Jackson
Senior Procurement Specialist

Cc: Bid File T23025