

PEPS Fireside Chat Question & Answer Summary

Electronic Submittal Process – March 2021

- Q1: Will the “Intent to Bid” date/time always match the “Close Date” date/time?
- A1: The "Intent to Bid" date/time is typically set on or immediately prior to the "Close Date" date/time.
- Q2: It was stated that NLCs should each be in their own PDFs. However, in RFP 4695 (due today, 3/5 at 1pm), the RFP documents indicate to combine all of the NLC PDFs into one document for upload. Can you confirm if this is the case for only RFP 4695? Or is this how it should be done for NLCs on all procurements?
- A2: Although multiple NLC templates may be posted with the procurement, the NLC response should be combined into a single pdf for submittal. Both the Request for Qualifications and Request for Proposals contain instructions for submitting the NLC files as a single PDF file as Attachment 5 in the Bonfire portal.
- Q3: We are wondering what the new proposal file naming convention is. Some RFPs are not including the file naming so we've asked a question but we'd appreciate an answer so we know the standard going forward.
- A3: For FY2021 Wave 3, both the Request for Qualifications and Request for Proposals contain instructions for submitting files using a standardized naming convention.
- Q4: What if all of us with Bonfire login access at a firm, reply "yes, intent to bid" but we understand only one of us will formally submit. Does that allow all of us to receive the notifications as if we are "following" this project in Bonfire?
- A4: Public notices for the project will be sent to all email addresses that submitted "yes" on the Intent to Bid. However, private notices for the project will be sent to the email address used to submit the response. Bonfire has indicated that some firms are using a general email account that is accessible to a few select individuals in the firm to submit the response, so that the notifications may be viewed by those individuals.
- Q5: Does the PM listed on the submittal still received notice of award, or does it go to the person that submitted on Bonfire?
- A5: Notification of the award of a contract is sent as a private notice in Bonfire and is therefore sent to the email address used to submit the response package. The Selected firms are then posted externally on the TxDOT.gov webpage.
- Q6: Please clarify: When notifications of selection are sent by the Procurement Engineer, will the firm's Project Manager receive it or will the contact that made the submittal receive it, assuming they are separate contacts within the firm. Thank you.
- A6: See A5

- Q7: We receive notification emails from other public agencies who use Bonfire. Is this an option that TxDOT is considering, or is there something the consultant needs to do to receive bid notifications?
- A7: TxDOT does not send out notifications to potential vendors when procurements are advertised. Notifications are posted in the Electronic State Business Daily (ESBD) and the full solicitations are posted in Bonfire.
- Q8: On the submittal page, there is an opportunity to reenter an email address. Should we not use a different email address (perhaps the PM's email)?
- A8: The person (email address) tied to the vendor account who submitted the response can go in after submitting and change the email account to something different. However, this action alters the vendor account so that in the future a person would need to access Bonfire by logging in to the new account. The purpose of this feature is for the user to self-perform a change of address.
- Q9: Who will be notified of contract selection? The PM as in past, or the Bonfire contact?
- A9: See A5
- Q10: Will I have to "deny" the intent to bid on every solicitation? Or is it on just the solicitations I view?
- A10: A vendor may choose to say "yes" or "no" and include a reason why for the solicitations in which they are not interested. Or they may ignore any in which they are not interested.
- Q11: Most solicitations have the awarded contract date. but not all. Can that be a standard?
- A11: The Bonfire event titled "Awarded Contract Date" is optional for a procurement, although the approximate date of Contract Execution is in the posted Request for Qualifications or Request for Proposal. We will standardize our use or non-use of this event for future solicitations.
- Q12: We're currently receiving notices for solicitations we have not indicated an intent to bid. Is there any plan for consultants to receive notification of NEW solicitations?
- A12: TxDOT does not send out notifications to potential vendors when procurements are advertised. Notifications are posted in the Electronic State Business Daily (ESBD).
- Q13: Can a HUB/DBE firm self-perform if they are the prime to meet the DBE goal.
- A13: The term "self-perform" is associated with the State's Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) program, and applies if a prime provider firm is doing 100 percent of the work without using subproviders. For the federal Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program, the DBE goal can be achieved through a DBE prime provider or DBE subproviders, or a combination of both.

- Q14: Is it necessary then for the individuals who did NOT submit to change their Intent to Bid?
- A14: The information for vendors who indicate "no" and the reason why on the Intent to Bid may be tracked and used by TxDOT improve the process at a later date. We recommend that if a vendor decides not to submit a response, they go back and change the Intent to Bid to "no" and provide a reason. However, an intent to bid cannot be changed after the closing date.
- Q15: Why was the ability to comment on the Cover Page removed? We've needed to utilize that capability to explain PTC issues on occasion.
- A15: The Cover Page has been restructured in Bonfire to become a questionnaire and provide critical information to PEPS. Any explanations that are necessary for issues on the PTC form should be handwritten on the PTC form itself. Vendors may download and complete the PTC form, print it to a hard copy, make notations next to the item on the page, scan it to a pdf file, and submit with their response. Guidance is provided in the notes at the bottom of the PTC form and in the Instructions tab.
- Q16: We received the Shortlist Notification for a recent submittal under the "Opportunity Q&A" tab, which is not the most intuitive place to look. Is this a limitation of the Bonfire platform?
- A16: The Opportunity Q&A is a private message between the project owner (procurement engineer) and the vendor. Selection notices are sent privately to the selected firms (email associated with the submittal).
- Q17: Where on the PTC form would we write it? We need to add comments for people who were pre-certified after the PTC data was populated, but before the solicitation deadline.
- A17: See A15
- Q18: What happens if we don't make notes on the PTC? Doesn't TxDOT verify everything?
- A18: There are a variety of reasons issues occur on a PTC form. To avoid a misinterpretation of the issue, the firm should follow the instructions on the PTC form and provide an explanation if necessary.
- Q19: The RFQ doesn't list the estimate award date, just when contract execution is expected.
- A19: See A11.
- Q20: A solicitation was recently cancelled. Is there a reason why?
- A20: An internal decision by TxDOT was made to cancel the solicitation.