

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

❖ What is the City's Purchasing organization?

Procurement is decentralized with centralized oversight by the Purchasing Office. Operating departments partner with Purchasing in the procurement of supplies, equipment, and services.

Purchases of \$75,000 and Under

The operating department takes the lead in making small dollar purchases. The vendor may contact the departmental project manager directly to discuss their product/service. The Department Head determines the best product to meet their needs. The Purchasing Agent authorizes the purchase and obligates City funds through the purchase order process. All purchases with the City of Thousand Oaks of \$5,000 and over require a Purchase Order.

Purchases over \$75,000

Purchases over \$75,000 are procured through a formalized Bid or Request for Proposal (RFP) process. These purchases are posted on the Purchasing Division's website, OpenGov website, advertised in the newspaper, awarded by City Council, and authorized when the Purchase Order has been issued by the Purchasing Officer. Once the Bid or RFP process is underway, all inquiries concerning the Bid or RFP must be directed to Purchasing. Responses to questions will be posted as an addendum to the bid and posted on the website.

Construction Bids are generally procured through our Public Works Department. These purchases are posted on the Purchasing Division website, OpenGov website, advertised in the newspaper, and awarded by City Council. Once the Bid is underway, all inquiries concerning the Bid must be directed to the Project Manager. Responses to questions will be posted as an addendum to the bid on the website.

❖ Who is authorized on behalf of the City to obligate City funds for a purchase?

All purchases charged to the City for purchases of \$5,000 and over require a purchase order. City Council awards bids over \$75,000. The purchase order number is vital to doing business with the City and acts as insurance that you will be paid.

❖ **How do I register to be a vendor for the City?**

The City of Thousand Oaks maintains a list of interested suppliers of the various products and services the City requires. You may contact the City Purchasing Office or visit our website to register as an interested supplier. All vendors are required to register on-line as a vendor for specific commodities which they can provide. Visit <https://procurement.opengov.com/portal/toaks> to register as an interested vendor for the City.

❖ **How are vendors notified of a business opportunity with the City?**

For purchases over \$75,000:

1. Solicitations (Bids/RFPs) are posted in a newspaper of general circulation at least 10 days prior to the bid opening;
2. Notices are posted at Thousand Oaks City Hall;
3. Solicitations or notices are posted at <https://procurement.opengov.com/portal/toaks>. Vendors who have registered for the category which is being purchased will be notified of the business opportunity by email.
4. Construction Bid opportunities are posted in local plan rooms as required by law, such as Ventura County Contractors Association, Greater Conejo Valley Chamber of Commerce, and McGraw Hill Construction Dodge, etc.

❖ **What are the City's methods of procurement?**

Petty Cash: City personnel are authorized to make petty cash purchases of up to \$35.00.

Procurement Card: The City's Purchasing Cards are fundamentally VISA charge cards with enhanced controls and data reporting capabilities and are used for procurement of small-dollar purchases. The Purchasing Card allows the City Cardholder to purchase goods on an as-needed basis up to the specified transaction limit without obtaining specific Purchasing approval. Single purchase limits may vary with a monthly limit of \$5,000.

Purchases of \$5,000, but less than \$75,000: Purchases meeting these criteria require competitive quotes from at least three vendors and are obtained from the operating department. The purchase is authorized through the issuance of a Purchase Order.

Purchases of more than \$75,000: Purchases of more than \$75,000 require a Bid or Request for Proposal (RFP) process, are posted on our website, advertised in the newspaper, awarded by City Council, and are authorized when the Purchase Order has been issued by the Purchasing Officer.

Purchase Order: All purchases charged to the City for purchases of \$5,000 and over require a purchase order. City Council awards bids over \$75,000. The purchase order number is vital to doing business with the City and acts as insurance that you will be paid.

Blanket/Contract Purchase Order: The City's Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) allows a supplier to sell goods to the City on an as-needed basis, up to the specified transaction limit of the BPA. If you are awarded a BPA, you should carefully review the terms and conditions and the transaction limits to ensure any orders shipped are within the scope of the Agreement.

❖ **Should a Purchase Order be issued prior to all purchases?**

No. Purchase Orders are not issued for purchases less than \$5,000. The originating department representative is authorized to purchase items on behalf of the City and invoices should be sent directly to the originating department. Please obtain the individual's name and department, as well as identification, if the order or purchase is made in person. The City also uses Purchasing Cards for transactions under \$5,000.

❖ **How can I meet with City staff to discuss my product or service?**

Office hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. alternating Fridays. To conserve time and ensure you receive adequate attention, we urge you to make an appointment before coming to the Purchasing Office. Routine "courtesy" visits are not encouraged as they can disrupt the daily workflow. For additional information, you may contact the Purchasing Office at 805/449-2226 or by emailing isavulescu@toaks.org.

❖ **What is the basis for bid awards?**

Bids are awarded to the lowest, responsive, responsible bidder.

❖ **What is the definition of a "Responsive Bidder?"**

A responsive bid is one which is in substantial conformance with the requirements of the specifications, the invitation to bid, and the City's contractual terms and conditions. This includes completeness of the quotation forms, inclusion of references and attachments, as well as completion of required responses.

❖ **What is the basis for RFP awards?**

Requests for Proposal are awarded to the firm that best fits the criteria as set out in the solicitation document. Many times, as part of the request for proposal, end-results needed are described and the vendor is asked to present the best solution to meet the needs.

❖ **How can my flyer be included in the Utility Bill mailings?**

Four inserts can be included in Utility Bill mailings without raising the postage rate. This is one method the City uses to communicate City business matters to the public. When space is available, non-profit organizations can include a flyer. If you are interested, please call 805/449-2215 to get an application and additional information.

❖ **Does the City's Print Shop provide printing for non-profit organizations?**

Yes, the City's Print Shop can provide printing services for outside agencies. Please contact the Print Shop directly at 805/449-2215 for pricing and additional information.
