

AMENDED RFP ADDENDA

**American Rescue Plan Act Funding
Accounting, Reporting and Compliance Assistance
for North Shore Towns**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

ADDENDA ISSUED ON 10/21/21

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council issues this Request for Proposal on behalf of the Massachusetts Towns of Hamilton, Manchester By-the-Sea, Essex, Topsfield, North Andover, Boxford, Marblehead and Middleton (and other MAPC region cities and towns)



LEGAL NOTICE

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) is requesting proposals from qualified Vendors to provide accounting support to the Towns of **Hamilton, Manchester By-the-Sea, Essex, Topsfield, North Andover, Boxford, Marblehead and Middleton** (and other MAPC region cities and towns) with the management of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding they are receiving and expending from 2021 through 2024. This Request for Proposals (RFP) is open as of Tuesday September 28th. RFP documents can be accessed by emailing Mark Fine at mfine@mapc.org any time after they are issued. A Proposer's Conference will be held via Zoom on Thursday October 7th at 1pm. To attend, please request the Zoom link details from Mark Fine at mfine@mapc.org no later than Tuesday October 5th. Proposals from qualified Vendors are due on Wednesday November 3rd at 3pm by sending them to ARPASupport2021@mapc.org.

SECTION 1: SERVICES TO BE PROCURED

Description of Services

The participating towns listed above seek assistance with the management of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding they are receiving and expending from 2021 through 2024. Specifically, they are interested in receiving contracted support to properly account for these funds, report on them as required under grant rules and comply with all federal, and any subsequent state regulations, relating to how ARPA funds can be employed by municipalities. Vendors with significant experience working with cities and towns (preferably with Massachusetts communities) on municipal financial accounting and federal grant compliance will be preferred for the provision of these services. Familiarity with federal and state procurement laws/rules is also a plus, including the ability to support communities in ensuring that any purchases of goods or services they seek to make using ARPA funds are procured in compliance with relevant laws/rules.

ARPA Funding and Quantity of Services

Each of the participating towns will have different needs in managing ARPA funds which will likely evolve over time as they make decisions about the use of these revenues. Some communities may need more support on accounting while others may focus on assistance with determining whether projects are eligible under ARPA rules. Given that their needs are still developing, they cannot at this time share a set number of hours for which they will need support. Provided below however are the expected ARPA funding levels for each community based on allocations determined by federal formulae. These numbers demonstrate the scale of funding they will be managing. In some cases, towns may also receive ARPA-related grants that will supplement the core funding shown below, and which they may also need assistance in accounting, reporting and compliance tasks.

Town	ARPA Funding Expected
Hamilton	\$2,400,000
Middleton	\$3,021,948
Marblehead	\$6,000,000
Essex	\$1,135,547
Manchester	\$1,500,000
North Andover	\$9,000,000
Boxford	\$2,490,492
Topsfield	\$1,985,000

The participating towns are under no obligation to purchase any services from an awarded vendor, and some may determine they no longer need the services described above.

Minimum Qualifications

Proposers should be or possess on staff a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and proof of such credential must be submitted to MAPC upon execution of any contract. MAPC will consider responses from parties without a CPA credential if they can demonstrate exemplary experience on all the evaluation criteria.

Use of RFP Process

MAPC, thru its Chief Procurement Officer (CPO), has deemed that an RFP process would best serve the interests of the participating communities. Such a process will enable proposals to be evaluated based on important criteria, including but not limited to vendors' experience. It is important that the most advantageous proposals based on such factors are considered in addition to cost.

SECTION 2: CONTENT AND EVALUATION

Proposal Content

Proposers are asked to submit two separate documents (with all the completed elements) electronically as part of their proposals. These are the:

- Technical Proposal; and the
- Price Proposal.

The technical proposal should provide the following information:

- 1) Include an overview of the Vendor's work on behalf of cities and towns (make sure to note any Massachusetts communities you have worked with), including years or overall service, number of cities and towns served in the last three years (please list them) and the range of support the Vendor provided; and please note if any assistance with procurement laws/rules was offered – this should be no more than two pages.
- 2) A plan setting out how the Vendor will provide the support participating towns are seeking with ARPA funds, including who will staff this work – this should be no more than one page.
- 3) Describe four examples of support provided to cities and towns in helping them properly account for and report on federal grant funding they have received – if possible, using examples from Massachusetts cities and towns. Each example should be no more than three paragraphs but should be clear about which community the support was for; what grant(s) it related to; and the nature of the work done for the community;
- 4) Describe the types of challenges you anticipate the participating towns will face in determining how best to manage ARPA funding, including on accounting, reporting and determining eligible uses – this should be no more than one page.
- 5) Include three references from officials you have worked with from cities and towns in the past five years using the reference template provided as Appendix A.

The information provided in the technical proposal elements listed above will be used to evaluate respondents according to the criteria shown in the "Evaluation Criteria" section below. Additionally, Proposers must also submit the following relevant forms provided in Appendix B, signed by an authorized signatory.

The price proposal should be a separate document from the technical proposal and comprised of the price proposal form included as Appendix C. The price proposal form must be signed by an authorized signatory for the proposal. As shown in the document, Proposers are asked to provide a rate per hour for providing accounting, reporting and compliance services to the participating towns. It is preferred this be a single hourly rate for those services. The rate proposed will be rate for the first year of the contract. If the contact is extended, the awarded Vendor will be able to provide a new hourly rate that can be increased by as much as 5%, but not more, than the original pricing proposed.

Please carefully read the section "Proposal Submission" below, which describes where, when and how to submit the separate technical and price proposals.

Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will be used to evaluate proposals:

General experience in municipal finance

- **Highly advantageous:** Has been providing a range of accountancy support to more than seven cities and towns for more than five years in the last decade, with at least two from Massachusetts.
- **Advantageous:** Has been providing a range of accountancy support to more than five cities and towns for more than a year in the last decade.
- **Not advantageous:** Has provided limited accountancy support to less than three cities and towns.
- **Unacceptable:** Has no experience providing accountancy support to cities and towns.

Staffing plan and staff experience

- **Highly advantageous:** Proposer provided a detailed plan for how they will work with participating towns and who will work with them.
- **Advantageous:** Proposer provided an adequate plan for how they will work with participating towns and who will work with them.
- **Not advantageous:** Proposer did not clearly describe how they will work with participating towns and who will work with them.
- **Unacceptable:** Proposer did not provide any description of how they will work with participating towns and who will work with them.

Experience with federal grant support for municipalities

- **Highly advantageous:** Examples provided demonstrate the provision of in-depth support in accounting for federal grant funds to four cities and towns, with at least one example from Massachusetts.
- **Advantageous:** Examples provided demonstrate the provision of modest or related support in accounting for federal grant funds to four cities and towns.
- **Not advantageous:** Examples provided demonstrate only a limited or subordinate level of support in accounting for federal grant funds to four Massachusetts cities and towns.
- **Unacceptable:** Examples are not provided or are not relevant to providing support in accounting for federal grant funds.

Understanding of ARPA

- **Highly advantageous:** The description of the accounting, reporting and eligible use challenges provided by the Proposer demonstrates an excellent understanding of what participating towns are likely to face in successfully managing ARPA funds.
- **Advantageous:** The description of the accounting, reporting and eligible use challenges provided by the Proposer demonstrates a satisfactory level of understanding of what participating towns are likely to face in successfully managing ARPA funds.

- Not advantageous: The description of the accounting, reporting and eligible use challenges provided by the Proposer demonstrated only a limited level of understanding of what participating towns are likely to face in successfully managing ARPA funds.
- Unacceptable: The description of the accounting, reporting and eligible use challenges provided by the Proposer did not demonstrate an understanding of what participating towns are likely to face in successfully managing ARPA funds, or the description was not provided at all.

Quality of references

- Highly advantageous: The quality of all three references were relevant and excellent.
- Advantageous: The quality of all three references were relevant and satisfactory.
- Not advantageous: The quality of the references was inconsistent.
- Unacceptable: Three relevant references were not provided.

SECTION 3: SUBMISSION AND AWARD

RFP Timeline

- **Issuance/Posting:** The RFP will be issued on Tuesday September 28th. It will be posted on CommBUYS and the MAPC website at that time and noticed in the Boston Herald and Goods and Services Bulletin.
- **Proposer's Conference:** This Conference will be held via Zoom on Thursday October 7th at 1pm. To attend, please request the Zoom line details from Mark Fine at mfine@mapc.org no later than Tuesday October 5th.
- **Deadline for Written Questions:** Written questions will be accepted until Friday October 15th. Questions should be sent to Mark Fine at mfine@mapc.org.
- **Last Addenda:** Any final responses to written questions and/or changes to this RFP will be made no later than Wednesday October 27th and posted on CommBUYS.
- **Due Date:** Proposals are due for submission on Wednesday November 3rd at 3pm by sending two separate emails (one containing the Technical Proposal document(s), and one for the Price Proposal) to ARPA_Support2021@mapc.org.

Proposal Submission

The Technical and Price Proposals should be submitted as separate emails with the relevant documents enclosed. They should be sent to the following email account which has been set up for the purpose of receiving them: ARPA_Support2021@mapc.org. As stated previously, proposals are due by Wednesday November 3rd, 2021, at 3pm, sent to the email shown above.

Please make sure that price information is not submitted in any way as part of technical proposals. Price information must only be cited and shown in the price proposal form, which should be sent as a separate document via a separate email then the technical proposal. If pricing information is included in the technical proposal document, it could be grounds for MAPC to disqualify the response from consideration.

Rule of Award

The award is expected to be made to the most highly advantageous proposer as determined by an evaluation using the criteria cited previously. The evaluation will be conducted by a committee of officials from participating towns. The committee will look at the technical proposal first, develop a composite assessment, and then consider price proposals to determine the final grade. There is however the potential for multiple proposers to be awarded a contract if the evaluation committee believes that would be to the benefit of the participating towns.

Award Authority

MAPC will be the awarding authority for the services described herein, on behalf of the participating towns. After the evaluation committee meets in the first week of November it is expected that they will determine which Vendor(s) awards will be made by MAPC. Award notice is anticipated to be made by November 12th at which point MAPC will work to execute a contract with the awarded Vendor. MAPC, and the participating towns, are under no obligation to proceed with an award to any Proposer and can withdraw this RFP at any time while open or prior to contract execution.

SECTION 4: TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Contracting Authority

Once awarded, MAPC will work to agree a contract with the Vendor. This will be a Master Contract for the oversight of the work to be provided to the participating towns. Certain towns may however require a direct contract with the awarded Vendor before work procured via this RFP can be undertaken. They will take that up directly with the Vendor.

Contract Term

The contract term will be for one year from the date of contract execution to October 31, 2022, with two possible extensions for two further years (to October 31, 2023, and October 31, 2024).

Insurance

The selected vendor shall secure and maintain in effect insurance coverage adequate to meet its obligations under this section and shall provide MAPC with certification of such as a condition of award if requested.

Payment for Services Rendered

The awarded Vendor will work directly with, and the under the supervision of officials from the participating towns on ARPA related accounting, reporting and compliance tasks. They will be paid by those towns for any work performed under this contract. MAPC is not a party to any of these transactions and is not responsible for any such payment. The Vendor shall not be deemed an employee of the MAPC.

Indemnification

The Vendor shall indemnify, hold harmless and defend MAPC, the participating comm, their officers, agents, and employees from all liability of any nature or kind, including costs and expenses for all actions or claims resulting from injuries or damages sustained by any person or property arising directly or indirectly as a result of any error, omission, negligent, or wrongful acts of the Vendor, sub-contractor, or anyone directly or indirectly employed by them in performance of this contract.

Disclosure of Information

Submission of a proposal shall be deemed acknowledgement that the Proposer is familiar with the Massachusetts Public Records Law, M.G.L. c. 66 § 10 and is bound thereby. Disclosure of any information provided by a Respondent in connection with this RFP shall be in strict accordance with the laws and regulations regarding such disclosure pursuant to M.G.L. c. 66 § 10. To review copies of proposals after contracts have been awarded, submit a written request in compliance with the Massachusetts Public Record Law to the RFP contact person identified in this RFP.

Contract Administration Fee

The contracted vendor will pay to MAPC a contract administration fee which will be equal to .05 percent of the total billed sales of services provided to participating towns. The vendor will have to report annually to MAPC their overall sales via this contact within 30 days of the end of each fiscal year or 30 days at the end of the overall contract. MAPC will then calculate its fee based on those billed sales and invoice the vendor for the associated contract administration fee.

Appendix A: Reference Template

Please have three references you have worked with from Massachusetts cities and towns in the past five years fill out the form below. This form should be included in your technical proposal alongside the other documents requested.

REFERENCE FORM	ARPA ACCOUNTING, REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE RFP
Period of Contract	
Contract \$ Value or Value of Sales	
Point of Contact (PoC) Name	
PoC Title	
PoC Email	
PoC Phone	
Summary of Services Provided to Reference	

Appendix B: Required Forms

The following pages contain three forms that must be included with the technical proposal document.

1. Proposal Signature Page
2. Certifications Page
3. Additional Certifications Page

PROPOSAL SIGNATURE PAGE

Complete this page and return as a cover sheet for the completed non-price proposal.

ARPA Accounting, Reporting and Compliance RFP

Company Name

Contact Person

Street

Phone

City, State, Zip

Fax

Email

Submits the attached proposal for this Request for Proposals to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), on the authority of the undersigned and as dated below. I confirm and pledge to abide by and be held to the requirements of this RFP and its resulting contract, to perform any tasks and deliver any documents required, and to execute a Contract with the MAPC.

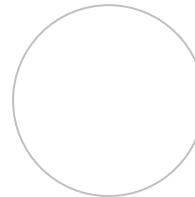
Authorized Agent of the Vendor:

Signature (blue ink please)

Printed Name

Title

Date



(If a corporation, attach
certificate of vote or
apply corporate seal here)

Proposal must be signed by a duly authorized officer(s) eligible to sign contract documents for the firm. Consortiums, joint ventures, or teams submitting proposals will not be considered responsive unless it is established that all contractual responsibility rests solely with one Vendor or one legal entity. The Proposal must indicate the responsible entity.

Vendor should be aware that joint responsibility and liability will attach to any resulting contract and failure of one party in a joint venture to perform will not relieve the other party or parties of total responsibility for performance.

CERTIFICATIONS PAGE

Complete this page and return with completed non-price proposal.

ARPA Accounting, Reporting and Compliance RFP

As required under Chapter 233 and 701 of the Massachusetts Acts and Resolves and Chapter 30B of the Mass. General Laws, certification must be made to the following by signing in the space indicated below. Failure to offer such signature will result in rejection of the proposal.

- A. “The undersigned certifies under penalties of perjury that this proposal has been made and submitted in good faith and without collusion or fraud with any other person. As used in this certification, the word person shall mean any natural person, business, partnership, corporation, union, committee, club or other organization, entity, or group or individuals” and also;”

- B. “Pursuant to M.G.L. c.62C, §49A, I certify under the penalties of perjury that to my best knowledge and belief the undersigned has complied with all laws of the Commonwealth relating to taxes, reporting of employees and Vendors, and withholding and remitting child support.”

Authorized Agent of the Vendor:

Signature (blue ink please)

Name (as used for tax filing)

Printed Name

SS# or Federal ID#

Title

Date

Proposal must be signed by a duly authorized officer(s) eligible to sign contract documents for the firm. Consortiums, joint ventures, or teams submitting proposals will not be considered responsive unless it is established that all contractual responsibility rests solely with one Vendor or one legal entity. The Proposal must indicate the responsible entity.

Vendors should be aware that joint responsibility and liability will attach to any resulting contract and failure of one party in a joint venture to perform will not relieve the other party or parties of total responsibility for performance.

ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATIONS PAGE

Complete this page and return with completed non-price proposal.

ARPA Accounting, Reporting and Compliance RFP

Pursuant to 28 CFR Part 42.204 (d), I certify that my employment practices comply with Equal Opportunity Requirements and complies with 28 CFR Part 42.202.; that my organization complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Authorized Agent of the Proposer:

Signature (blue ink please)

Printed Name

Title

Date

Proposal must be signed by a duly authorized officer(s) eligible to sign contract documents for the firm. Consortiums, joint ventures, or teams submitting proposals will not be considered responsive unless it is established that all contractual responsibility rests solely with one Vendor or one legal entity. The Proposal must indicate the responsible entity.

Proposers should be aware that joint responsibility and liability will attach to any resulting contract and failure of one party in a joint venture to perform will not relieve the other party or parties of total responsibility for performance.

Appendix C: Price Proposal and Form

Please use the Price Proposal form included on the following page. This document should be a separate document from the technical proposal and sent back in a separate email. The price proposal form must be signed by an authorized signatory for the proposal. As shown in the document, Proposers are asked to provide a rate per hour for providing accounting, reporting and compliance services to the participating towns. It is preferred this be a single hourly rate for those services.

The rate proposed will be rate for the first year of the contract (November 2021 – October 31, 2022). If the contract is extended, the awarded Vendor will be able to provide a new hourly rate that can be increased by as much as 5%, but not more, than the original pricing proposed

PRICE PROPOSAL PAGE

Complete this page and submit with any attachments in a separate sealed envelope from non-price proposal.

ARPA Accounting, Reporting and Compliance RFP

The undersigned proposes to provide the accounting, reporting and compliance support to the participating municipalities in accordance with its response to this Request for Proposals (RFP). This price must cover and include the cost for all contingencies, including all labor and materials, necessary for the delivery of services.

Price includes the provision of the services described in the RFP for the period between November 1, 2021 and October 31, 2022.

\$ _____

Proposed hourly rate for the provision of the services during this period.

The selected Vendor will invoice MAPC on a monthly basis for the hours worked that month for each police department at the Vendor's approved hourly rate. Each invoice must be accompanied by a Status Report detailing the work done towards fulfilling the Scope of Services described above.

Signature (blue ink please)

Printed Name

Title

Date

Company Name

Email

Street

Phone

City, State, Zip

Fax