

# Streamlining processes with modern purchasing tools

**Online procurement platform helps civil servants work better together**



*We accepted every vendor submission as paper, CDs or USBs that we had to manually scan, print and email to our review team. Not only was it a slow process with too many steps, it was a costly one too. We would sometimes foot the bill for the USBs to make bidding worthwhile for vendors.*

— **KEITH GLATZ,**  
*Purchasing & Contracts Manager, City of Tamarac*

## THE BACKSTORY

The City of Tamarac is a vibrant community in the Miami and Fort Lauderdale area of Florida. Formed in 1963 with the goal of becoming the ideal place to live for active adults, it now has a diverse population of 65,000 and counting. Known as “The City For Your Life,” Tamarac offers its residents suburban neighbourhoods with an urban feel. This mixed approach to city development provides the people of this community with a surprising number of amenities, award-winning programs and services, and some of the most affordable homes in South Florida.

As an ever-evolving place to live, the City of Tamarac has ramped up its expansion projects over the last few years. With massive construction sites developing across the city, they saw a chance to streamline some of their processes using modern purchasing tools.

## THE CHALLENGE

Tamarac's small 4-person purchasing team handles an annual budget of up to \$50 million for City goods and services. Tamarac's choice in suppliers is extremely important, especially because of the high-profile nature of its development projects. Running procurements for these important contracts was particularly difficult given the processes in place at the time.

Along with a time-consuming and costly submission process, Keith and his team didn't have a standardized system in place for handling incoming questions from potential suppliers. Questions were answered on the fly by whoever was in the office that day. Not only did this make the questions hard to keep track of, but it was impossible to share the answers with other potential suppliers. The team found themselves answering the same questions repeatedly, wasting valuable time and resources.

Ironically, the biggest challenge for Tamarac's purchasing department was dealing with smaller procurements of \$65,000 or less. The individual departments needing those goods and services had to handle those procurements on their own. This meant a lack of standardization; for example, departments might send inconsistent specifications to suppliers before passing all the details over to the purchasing team to finalize. This meant Keith and his colleagues had to re-issue procurements when specs weren't standardized, and double-check that potential suppliers actually had the necessary certifications to work with the city.

There had to be a better way.

## THE SOLUTION

To help alleviate these issues, the procurement team at Tamarac looked at eProcurement platforms. They needed a solution that could handle the differing needs of their small and large procurements, had the ability for supplier questions to be submitted and tracked, and allowed certification documents to be uploaded for compliance review. But most of all, it needed to be simple and easy to use, since internal teams would have to jump in and run their own procurements.

The City of Tamarac modernized its entire approach to purchasing by switching to the online procurement platform **bids&tenders**. After going through the trouble of using manual processes for years, the City saw the benefits of its new digital solution almost instantly. Improved bid compliance and internal process efficiency were major wins for all involved.

## THE RESULT

Since switching to **bids&tenders**, Tamarac's procurement department has been able to implement a user-friendly end-to-end solution that meets all its purchasing needs. Both the industry professionals on the team and those working in the City's various internal departments were trained and transitioned seamlessly.

*The ability for departments to handle quotes on their own and roll that up to our procurement team without issue is a big improvement for us. We spend far less time scanning emails and fixing mistakes which gives us peace of mind from a liability perspective. It's just a faster, smarter process overall.*

Now that the City of Tamarac runs all its procurements completely online, teams accept and answer questions from suppliers in real time. Since every potential supplier can access the responses, the procurement team only answers each question once. And when they choose their preferred vendors, they easily notify them of the awarded contracts directly through **bids&tenders**.

The transition provides major benefits from a liability standpoint as well. Tracking bid compliance and authenticating supplier certification is easy, thanks to the system's automated checklist. Auditing is no longer an issue; the City can easily download procurement contracts, supplier submissions, and evaluation criteria.

Now the team at Tamarac is set up to achieve the City's ambitious goals more quickly and easily than ever before, all while making sure their operations are efficient, cost-effective, and transparent.



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