

# Procurement Forecasting & Making a Buying Plan Roundtable

January 19, 2023



**HARVARD** Kennedy School  
Government Performance Lab

Welcome! In the chat, please share your name and what government you represent.

---

# Agenda

- **Welcome & Introductions**
  - **Overview: What is a Buying Plan? Why is it Important?**
  - **Lessons Learned from Other Jurisdictions**
    - Long Beach, CA
    - Charlotte, NC
    - Cook County, IL
    - Boston, MA
    - Pasadena, CA
  - **Group Discussion**
  - **Next Steps: The Procurement Excellence Network**
-

**What is a buying plan? Why is it important?**

# What is a buying plan?

- Provides an overview of the purchases a government plans to make and when the solicitation or opportunity is scheduled to be released
- Informs the vendor community about upcoming procurement and contracting opportunities
- Often includes:
  - Description of purchase
  - Estimated release date (or quarter)
  - Estimated dollar amount of contracts
  - Procuring agency or department
  - Contract type

**City of Chicago**  
Contracting Opportunities

Department	Contract Type	Project Description	Estimated Value	Estimated Term (Months)	Anticipated Ad Date	Subcontractor Opportunities	Funding Source
Animal Care & Control	Commodities	Compounded Animal Pharmaceuticals	\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	84	3Q 2022	TBD	Non-Federal
Animal Care & Control	Work Services	Dead Animal Cremation and Removal	\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	84	3Q 2022	TBD	Non-Federal
Animal Care & Control	Work Services	Dead Animal Cremation and Removal	\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	84	3Q 2022	TBD	Non-Federal
Assets, Information, and Services	Commodities	Photographic Supplies	500,000 - 1,000,000	60	4Q 2022	Delivery	Non-Federal
Assets, Information, and Services	Information & Technology	IT and Software Training	1,000,000 - 5,000,000	60	3Q 2022	Professional Services	Non-Federal
Assets, Information, and Services	Information & Technology	Computer Hardware, Software, Peripherals, Cloud Services, and Related Maintenance and Installation Services.	10,000,000 - 50,000,000	60	4Q 2022	IT Services	Non-Federal
Assets, Information, and Services	Information & Technology	Riverwalk Community Marketplace	500,000 - 1,000,000	36	4Q 2022	No Stated Goals	Non-Federal

# Five benefits of releasing a buying plan

1. **Fosters improved writing of solicitations:** Long-term can planning can help governments write results-oriented solicitations and more time spent on market research
2. **More time for vendors to prepare:** Vendors – especially small, local, and minority-owned firms – can respond more effectively
3. **Departments plan more strategically:** Encourages departments to more strategically plan by thinking through what they will need to buy and when
4. **Central purchasing offices see the big picture:** Helps a central purchasing office know what solicitations departments plan to release
5. **Increases transparency:** Both vendors and the general public have a clearer vision of the jurisdiction's goals and plans

# Lessons Learned from Other Jurisdictions

# Annual procurement forecasting in Long Beach, CA

## 1. Prompt Departments to plan upcoming procurements for the year

**Submitted via excel:** description; contact person; procurement type; annual contract value; date contract needed; contract duration; has dept. previously contracted for the good/service; is this a top-5 priority procurement; will the solicitation benefit from targeted vendor outreach?; should the solicitation be included in a public forecast to vendors?

Department	Forecasted Solicitations	
	#	% of Total
Airport	7	3%
City Manager	3	1%
Development Services	8	4%
Economic Development	11	5%
Energy Resources	8	4%
Fleet	27	13%
Fire	15	7%
Health	15	7%
Parks, Recreation & Marine	12	6%
Police	9	4%
Public Works	55	26%
Technology & Innovation	13	6%
LBRA	32	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>215</b>	

## 2. Meet annually with each Department to discuss plans, inform procurement strategy, and troubleshoot challenges



## 3. Used the forecast to inform outreach efforts, and made the forecast of ARPA contracts publicly available online

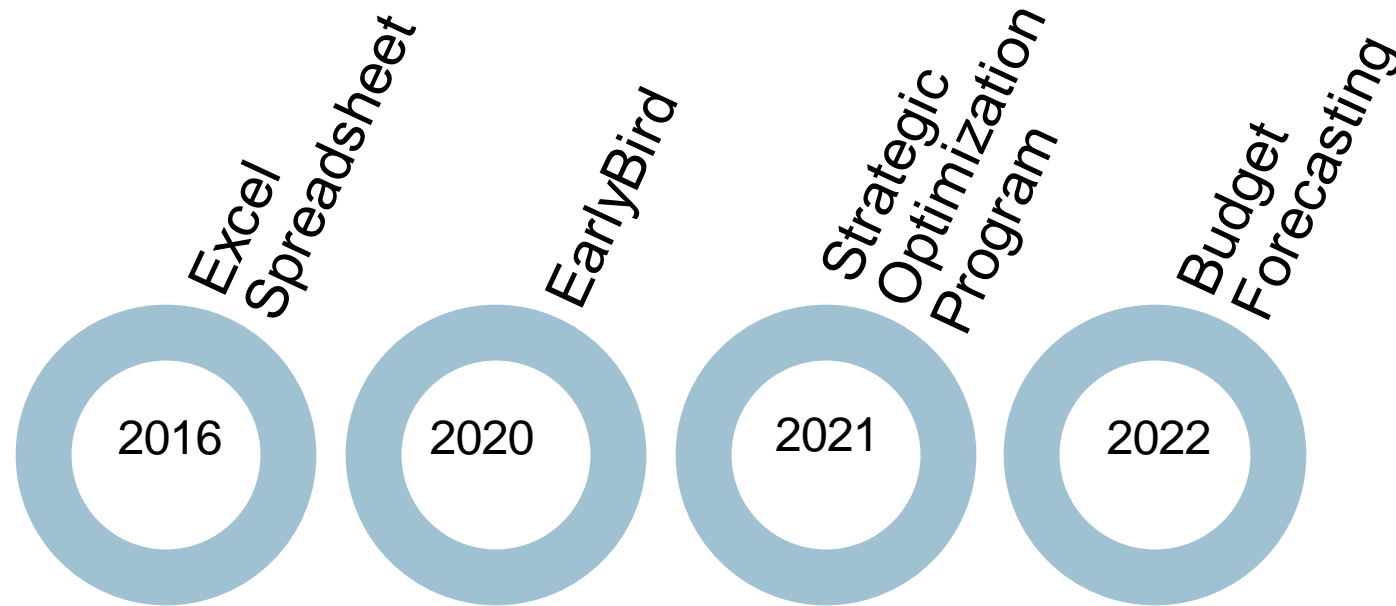
The screenshot shows a 'Grid view' of procurement opportunities. The table includes columns for 'Anticipated R...', 'Working Project Title/ Services Sought', 'Ass...', 'Contract Opportunity', 'Estimated Value', and 'Period of Performance'. The data is grouped by 'Health & Well...' and 'Healthy & Safe C...'. The table lists various projects with their respective dates, descriptions, and estimated values.

# Lessons learned in Long Beach

- Forecasting gets easier over time!
- Department staff appreciate being asked to plan
- Conversations between Purchasing and Departments helped build relationships and improve procurement approaches
- Forecasting helps to initiate planning, even if that plan does not always match reality
- Creating a public forecast requires additional effort to refine descriptions and ensure accuracy of information

# Overview: Charlotte

Forecasting is a process requiring planning, communication, and training



# Lessons Learned: Charlotte, NC

- Integrating a forecasting model as a way of doing business takes time
  - Work with cooperating departments
  - Provide as much data up front as possible
  - Show value from the exercise i.e. shorter cycle times, no gap contracts, improved communications
- Find a strategic partner and/or bigger initiative
  - Internal Audit
  - Budget
  - MWBE Program
- Need Data Analyst or Business Analyst resource(s)
- Set your team up for success

# Overview of Buying Plan: Cook County, IL – The Office of The Chief Procurement Officer

- **Interactive Version:** In addition to the hard copy, the schedule of anticipated purchases in the hard copy Buying Plan is made into a filterable database, also exportable to Excel, that is offered 24/7 at our homepage.
- **Sister Agencies:** Typically, our Buying Plan includes the schedule of anticipated purchases for County Sister Agencies.
- **Upcoming Improvements:** 1) Hopeful to release a mid-year Buying Plan in 2023 with the long-term goal of doing it quarterly; and 2) looking at adding a Buying Plan number for each item identified in the schedule of anticipated purchases and including this number with each solicitation.
- **Opportunity:** Our Buying Plan is more than the schedule of anticipated purchases. It is also another opportunity to educate people about doing business with Cook County, which can help non-incumbents sharpen their pencil like an incumbent and hopefully generate more competition with each solicitation.
- **Major challenge:** getting departments to do a timely and accurate forecast

# Boston Buying Plan: Different Challenges Year over Year

## FY 2022

- “How do we do this at all?”
- “How this is different than your budget request.”

### Result:

- Aggregating spreadsheets
- Trying to understand what they wrote.

## FY 2024 (in process)

- “Do departments understand the purpose?”
- “Can we improve support for submission?”

### Results:

- Office hours during the submission period
- Improved tool, documentation and training
- More familiarity allows for better writing

## FY 2023

- “How do we automate this?”
- “How do we capture more procurements?”

### Result:

- Tie to Budget two phases: Base & New
- Google sheets - Tableau
- > \$600M in procurements
- Usable for strategic planning

The screenshot shows a Google Sheet titled "300 - Equitable Procurement Buying Plan". The sheet contains a table with multiple columns, including "Status of Submission", "New Department", "New Dates", "Comments", "Procurement Description", "When do you anticipate doing your procurement?", "Total estimated amount for this procurement", "UNSPSC", "Industry", "Procurement Method", "Will submission be able to submit a quote, bid or proposal?", "Is this a recurring procurement?", "Which department manages the sourcing of this procurement?", "Is a preliminary Review of the Directory of Certified Businesses and their businesses that provide this good or perform this work?", and "Name of your Department's Contact for this procurement". The table lists various procurement items such as "Landscape Services to Study Event", "Street Tree Planting", "Street Tree Removal", "Landscape Services to Millennium Park", "Green Infrastructure", "Chain Link Fencing", "Ornamental Fountain Maintenance", "Arboretum Road Pathways", "Custom Park Improvements", and "Custom Park Turf Replacement". Each row includes details like the department (e.g., Parks and Rec), dates, comments, descriptions, estimated amounts, UNSPSC codes, industries, procurement methods, and contact information.

# How do we use it?

## Internal:

- Identify “Cornerstones”
- Opportunities to pilot/test equity interventions
- Pro-active sourcing of potential, diverse bidders

Buying Plan   EPP Submissions										
Total Procurements Entered				Total Estimated Amount				Total Entries w/ Dollar Value		
413				\$646,825,370				380		
Search	Department	Quarter	Industry	UNSPSC	Procurement Description	Comments	Sourcing Dept.	Procurement Method	Competi	Procure
			Goods & Sup.	49100000 - Awards, Gifts, Collectable I.	Awards • Delivery	Contract Services	My Department	Sound Business	Yes	
				10220000 - Live Plants, Flowers	Venue Decorations (i.e. flowers) • Deliv.	Contract Services	My Department	Sound Business	Yes	
				45110000 - Audio and visual presentation and composing equipment	Video Editor	Contract Services	My Department	Sound Business	Yes	
				45120000 - Photographic, film, video equipment	Workshop Presenter Honorarium	Contract Services	My Department	Sound Business	No	
					Photographer	Contract Services	My Department	Sound Business	No	
					Videographer	Contract Services	My Department	Sound Business	Yes	
				82121500 - Printing Services	Program Book Printing • Delivery	Contract Services	Central Procurem.	Sound Business	Yes	
				82141600 - Graphic display services	Graphic Designer	Contract Services	My Department	Sound Business	Yes	
				90150000 - Entertainment services	Performers	Contract Services	My Department	Sound Business	Yes	
				93141503 - Social Planning Services	Event Planner "We Are Boston"	Contract Services	My Department	Sound Business	Yes	
			Goods & Supplies	44120000 - Office Supplies and Copy Paper	Office supplies	Null	Central Procurem.	Sound Business	Null	
			Services	80161500 - Management Support Services	Stationery / Envelopes	Null	Central Procurem.	Sound Business	Null	
					Equipment Repairs	Null	My Department	Sound Business	Null	
			Goods & Sup.	43210000 - Computer Equipment & Acc.	Technology Replacement Plan	New Initiative Budget Submission	My Department	Sound Business	Yes	
					Business Personal Property Tax Audit	FY23 Budget Submission (\$105k)	My Department	RFP	Yes	
					CoStar Suite Research Renewal	FY23 Budget Submission	My Department	Sound Business	Yes	
					Litigation Appraisal Services	FY23 Budget Submission	My Department	Sound Business	Yes	
					LRE System Integration	New Initiative Budget Submission	My Department	Sound Business	Yes	
					Spatially Referenced Street Level Imag	New Initiative Budget Submission	My Department	RFP	Yes	
				80120000 - Legal Services	Legal Counsel Services	FY23 Budget Submission	My Department	Sound Business	Yes	
				81112200 - Software Maintenance and Support	AssessPro APS CAMA System Software	FY23 Budget Submission	My Department	Other	No	
					AssessPro Personal Property Software	FY23 Budget Submission	My Department	Other	No	
			Other - See comment		Maintenance Services for RICH Pro 907	Sole Source - Specialized printers to p	My Department	WQC	No	

CITY OF BOSTON   Buying Plan				
Search	Category	Quarter	Department	
Category	Estimated Quarter	Procurement Description	Department	Estimated Amount
Adhesives & Sealants	FY22 Q4	Hot Bituminous Patching Mix FY21 (RE-AD)	Procurement	\$100,000
		Taginator and Tagaway Graffiti Remover Chemicals	Procurement	\$50,000
Audio and visual presentation and composing equipment	FY23 Q4	Video Editor	Office for Immigrant Advancement	\$2,500
		Workshop Presenter Honorarium	Office for Immigrant Advancement	\$500
Auto Parts	FY22 Q3	Heavy Vehicle Glass work	Fire Department	\$12,000
	FY22 Q4	Heavy Vehicle Break Repairs	Fire Department	\$55,000
Awards, Gifts, Collectable Items	FY23 Q4	Awards • Delivery	Office for Immigrant Advancement	\$250
Building & Office Clean & Maintain	FY22 Q4	Cleaning services at the Strand Theatre, City of Boston Animal Shelter, and the Family Justice Center	Property Management	\$492,900
		Janitorial Services - non Firehouse	Fire Department	\$90,000
	FY23 Q4	Nightly Cleaning Service for the Main Office of the BCYF	Boston Center for Youth & Families	\$90,000
		Furnish moving and storage services	Boston Public Schools	\$478,500
Building and Facility Construction and Maintenance Services	FY22 Q4	Non-Hazardous Material	Boston Public Schools	\$91,700
		On call fire alarm north & south	Boston Public Schools	\$68,750
		Refrigeration Services	Boston Public Schools	\$444,600
		servicing of fire extinguisher	Boston Public Schools	\$93,000
		Boiler and HVAC equipment maintenance	Fire Department	\$60,000
		Fire alarm system maintenance	Parks & Recreation	\$45,000
		HVAC systems maintenance and repairs	Parks & Recreation	\$75,000
		Locksmith services for buildings and security of vacant land	Neighborhood Development	\$500
Building Maintenance & Repair Services	FY22 Q4	Millennium Park & Spectacle Island Monitoring Services	Parks & Recreation	\$750,000
		Repairs and maintenance services for plumbing, heating, electric, pest control, etc.	Neighborhood Development	\$277,053

## External:

- Jumping off point for discussions with businesses
- “I build homes for bears. Is Boston buying those?”

Buying Plan   EPP Submissions					
Total Procurements Entered			Total Estimated Amount		
1			\$720,000		
Department	Quarter	Industry	UNSPSC	Procurement Description	
300 - Parks and Recreation	FY24 Q2	Construction	72140000 - Heavy Construction Services	Franklin Park Bear Dens	



# Another Interesting Example from Pasadena, CA

OPENGOV  
PROCUREMENT

Projects

Calendar

All Departments

All

Advanced Search

Project Title	Project ID	Addenda	Release Date	Due Date
Villa Substation Oil Containment COMING SOON	2022-IFB-LM-224	-	-	-
Facility Surveillance Equipment and Supplies COMING SOON	2023-IFB-MS-054	-	-	-
Seismic Retrofit of Public Works Building at City Yards COMING SOON	2022-IFB-ENG-168	-	-	-
Lake Avenue Pedestrian Access Improvements Project COMING SOON	2023-IFB-CIV-009	-	-	-
Architectural Services for Design of Colorado Street Bridge - Barrier Enhancements OPEN	2023-PWRFP-0001	0	1/5/2023	2/2/2023
Portland Cement Concrete for Various Locations in City of Pasadena 2023 OPEN	2023-IFB-MS-042	0	1/19/2023	2/1/2023
Laboratory Services OPEN	2023-RFP-002	1	1/6/2023	1/31/2023
PEACH Collaborative OPEN	2022-RFP-131	4	12/14/2022	1/26/2023
Full-size Pickup Trucks Gasoline and/or All Electric OPEN	2023-IFB-MS-010	0	1/12/2023	1/26/2023
Pay by Plate Parking Pay Stations	2023-RFP-028	1	12/22/2022	1/24/2023

# Group Discussion


# Next Steps: The Procurement Excellence Network

# Community Conversations

- Community Conversations is our online discussion board for asking procurement questions, sharing best practices, and connecting with other PEN members.
- You must agree to follow our Community Values when posting to this discussion board.
- We encourage members to ask for advice or tips while conducting market research, drafting a solicitation, or managing a contract!


### Questions & Answers

[ASK QUESTION](#)




**Solicitation Inspiration**  
[Hope Patterson](#)  
Government Performance Lab  
28 views · Sanford Hess Answered question 3 days ago

0 Votes 1 Ans




**Simplifying Procurement Process for Vendors**  
[Valerie Eisenson](#)  
City of Boston  
8 views · Valerie Eisenson Asked question 11/21/2022

0 Votes 0 Ans




**Diversity and Equity**  
[Annie Perez](#)  
City of Miami  
48 views · Cynthia Maltz Posted new comment 11/21/2022

0 Votes 2 Ans




**Re-writing Your Procurement Code**  
[TJ Martin](#)  
City of Phoenix  
21 views · nate@neonrain.com Changed status to publish 11/17/2022

0 Votes 0 Ans



**Resources or Advice to Help Convey Full Procurement to Payment Process?**  
[Colin Erhardt](#)  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
16 views · Colin Erhardt Asked question 11/16/2022

0 Votes 0 Ans



**Cost control in the face of inflation**  
[Hope Patterson](#)  
Government Performance Lab  
8 views · Hope Patterson Asked question 11/15/2022

0 Votes 0 Ans

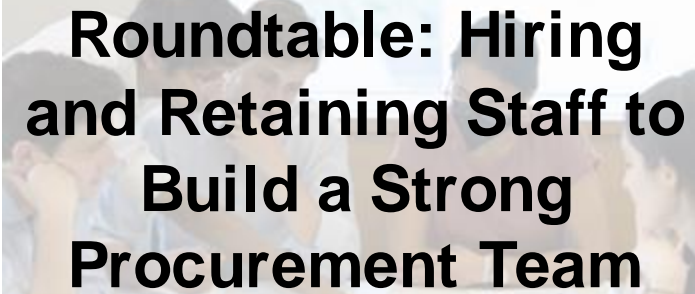
# Upcoming Events

Wednesday,  
February 1

2:00pm – 3:00pm  
ET

A photograph of three women sitting around a table in a meeting, looking at documents and talking.

**Training: Actively  
Managing Contracts to  
Improve Results**

A photograph of a group of people sitting around a table in a meeting, looking at documents and talking.

**Roundtable: Hiring  
and Retaining Staff to  
Build a Strong  
Procurement Team**

Wednesday,  
February 22

11:00am –  
12:00pm ET

A photograph of a person sitting at a desk with a computer monitor, looking at the screen.

**Stay Tuned for  
More Events!**

A photograph of a group of people sitting around a table in a meeting, looking at documents and talking.

Register at [gplpen.hks.harvard.edu/events](https://gplpen.hks.harvard.edu/events)