

**Albany Public Library**  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL for**  
**Customer Service and Library Usage Study: Research and Assessment**  
**December 19, 2011**

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS: January 18, 2012**

Albany Public Library  
161 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12210  
[www.albanypubliclibrary.org](http://www.albanypubliclibrary.org)

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Purpose**

Albany Public Library (APL) seeks a consultant or consultants (hereafter referred to as the Consultant) to conduct research and provide analysis of customer service and usage at the seven-location public library system in Albany, New York.

### **1.2 Background**

The APL mission is: “Albany Public Library educates, entertains, and empowers our community.” The library is at the end of a three-year strategic plan that was created in 2008 by the nine-member elected Board of Trustees and several executive staff.

The 2009-2011 strategic plan focused primarily on guiding the Library through an intense period of growth that saw the renovation of three branch libraries and construction of two new branches. These five buildings opened within just eight months of each other, and increased the library system’s square footage by 42 percent, collection by 86 percent, and technology by 300 percent. During this time, the Library changed leadership with the arrival of a new executive director in July 2009. APL also experienced a stressful and contentious public budget process in May—July 2011 with the failure of one budget (that called for a 25 percent tax increase) and subsequent approval of a trimmed down spending plan two months later.

The Library is facing several critical projects in the coming months:

- Overhauling a run-down central library building (including an interior renovation and a redesign of the service delivery model)
- Determining the best way to staff and operate an expanded library system now and into the future
- Examining library services and usage and developing new and better ways to serve library customers
- Examining how the emergence of e-books and digital collections will impact our facilities, services, and staffing
- Creating a new comprehensive strategic plan

Library administration and the Board strongly believe that in-depth statistics and demographics about library customers, current usage, future needs, and community input are integral to making the best decisions on how to proceed with these system-wide projects. Library leaders have agreed to seek a Customer Service and Library Usage Study to guide the decision-making process.

## 2. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

### 2.1 Responsibilities

The Consultant will work closely with APL's Project Team (which includes the executive director, public information officer, and two other supervisory librarians) to design, implement, and assess the necessary research to meet the Customer Service and Library Usage Study goals. Ideally, the research and findings should be available for immediate use by the Library.

In consultation with the Project Team, the Consultant needs to determine the following:

#### Relevant Information

- What kinds of information does APL need to gather from current users?
- What kinds of information does APL need to gather from non-users?
- What kinds of information does APL need to gather from users who can become more frequent users?
- What kinds of information does APL need to gather from the Albany community at large and organizational stakeholders?
- What kinds of information does APL need to gather from internal stakeholders (administration, staff, trustees)?
- What questions need to be asked to help APL make good decisions about changing service models, overhauling the Main Library, and providing better service to customers?
- What questions need to be asked to help APL better understand the impact digital content (books, music, movies) will have on our service delivery models, collection purchases, and usage?
- What information does APL have that is current, relevant, and useful?
- What information do the American Library Association and other relevant organizations have (see 2.2 below)?
- What technology and other resources does APL have that can facilitate research?

#### Measurement Tools

- What are the most effective means to gather information from and about library users?
- What are the most effective means to gather information from and about non-users?
- What are the most effective means to gather information from and about the Albany community at large and organizational stakeholders?
- What are the most effective means to gather information from internal stakeholders?

#### Key Projects

- Given the data collected, what strategies does APL need to consider when planning and implementing key projects?

## 2.2 Non-responsibilities

A great deal of research and information exists about library usage on a national level. The Project Team is compiling and assessing this information, which will be made available to the Consultant. Sorting through this information and its relevance is the role of the Consultant.

## 2.3 Requirements for the Consultant

The Consultant needs to be knowledgeable in the following areas:

- Design and implementation of research projects that result in tangible, reliable, market-driven information
- Familiarity with consumer research as it applies to customer loyalty and awareness
- Translation of research data into measurable strategies and tactics
- Ability to work well with the Project Team and communicate effectively with Library leadership

## 2.4 Project Schedule

The timeline for the Customer Service and Library Usage Study is approximately seven months, from December 2011 to July 2012. The preliminary project schedule is:

<b>Dec. 19, 2011</b>	Issue the RFP
<b>Jan. 3—11, 2012</b>	Input sessions with prospective Consultants, as needed
<b>Jan. 18, 2012</b>	Proposals due and review begins
<b>Jan. 25, 2012</b>	Project team invites finalist to conduct informational presentation to library staff and trustees
<b>Feb. 15, 2012</b>	Consultant selected and notified
<b>Feb. 2012</b>	Kickoff meeting with Consultant and project team to review project scope and timeline
<b>March to June 2012</b>	Data collection and analysis
<b>July 2012</b>	Summary report completed and findings presented by Consultant to APL leadership team and Board of Trustees

### 3. PROPOSAL SPECIFICATIONS

#### 3.1 Proposal Content

Proposals must include the following information:

- 3.1.1 Basic Information:** The name, address, telephone number, email address, and website (if applicable) of the Consultant submitting the proposal. If the proposal is being submitted by a team of consultants, one individual should be designated as the project lead.
- 3.1.2 Knowledge:** Evidence that the Consultant is knowledgeable in the areas listed in section 2.2.
- 3.1.3 Experience:** Evidence that the Consultant has previous experience with projects comparable to this Customer Service and Library Usage Study. This evidence should include references. The Consultant should also include evidence that the project deadlines were met.
- 3.1.4 Project Framework:** A conceptual framework or proposed outline for the project.
- 3.1.5 Project Team:** A list of all the team members and the responsibilities assigned to each, and a resume from each team member.
- 3.1.6 Project Budget:** A project budget to include all fees, costs and expenses required to conduct the project.
- 3.1.7 Samples:** Six (6) non-returnable sample tools, workshop/presentation curricula, campaign materials, web screen shots, and any other appropriate publications from related projects.
- 3.1.8 Non-collusive Bidding Certification:** Each proposal shall include a completed and signed non-collusive bidding certification in the form attached here to and provide herewith.

#### 3.2 Submission of Responses

Two (2) print copies of the proposal and one (1) electronic copy (on CD-ROM, DVD, or removable storage device) are due by 5:00 pm (EST) Jan. 18, 2012 to:

Stephanie Simon, Public Information Officer  
Albany Public Library  
161 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12210  
[simons@albanypubliclibrary.org](mailto:simons@albanypubliclibrary.org)

518-427-4344

Proposals received after 5:00 pm (EST) on Jan. 18, 2012 will not be considered.

Submittal of a proposal constitutes a release of information and waiver of the individual's right of privacy with regard to information provided in the responses to the Request for Proposal. By submitting a proposal, a consultant agrees to hold that proposal open for acceptance by APL for a period of six (6) months from the time of submission.

## **4. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

### **4.1 Ownership of Materials**

This is a Work for Hire project. All materials developed by the Consultant will become the property of Albany Public Library, which reserves the right to edit the products, if necessary. Albany Public Library reserves the exclusive right to publish, disseminate, or otherwise use the materials developed under the terms of this agreement.

The Consultant will not have exclusive speaking, marketing, or consulting rights for the product, concepts, or techniques developed for this project.

### **4.2 Consultant Replacements**

The Consultant will be required to obtain prior approval before changing the project professional personnel and/or their tasks.

### **4.3 Form of Agreement**

The selected Consultant will be expected to enter into a Consulting Services Agreement provided by APL which will incorporate the terms of this RFP and the Consultant's proposal include, among other things, a requirement for general liability, professional liability, workers compensation, statutory disability, and automobile liability insurance and an indemnification in favor of the Library.

### **4.4 Questions**

Any questions regarding the contents or requirements of this RFP should be submitted to Stephanie Simon, Public Information Officer via e-mail to: [simons@albanypubliclibrary.org](mailto:simons@albanypubliclibrary.org). Responses to such inquiries will, where appropriate in the Library's discretion, be shared with all persons expected to propose. No inquiries received less than 48 hours before the proposal submission deadline will be responded to.

## 5. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

### 5.1 Review Process

APL's Project Team, in consultation with Library leadership as needed, will review the proposals. References may be contacted as part of the review process.

Additional information and/or clarification from any Consultant responding to this RFP may be required. Input sessions may be arranged for potential bidders.

The Library reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive any defects in a proposal or enforce the requirements of this RFP in its sole discretion, to accept any or all parts of a proposal, and to award work on the Project to more than one Consultant.

### 5.2 Review Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria, which are not necessarily listed in priority order:

- 5.2.1 Project Personnel:** Evidence that the Consultant has the experience, expertise, and professional credentials to carry out the project.
- 5.2.2 Project Approach:** Evidence that the Consultant understands the nature of this project.
- 5.2.3 Project Schedule:** Evidence that the Consultant understands the time commitments this project will require and can meet those requirements.
- 5.2.4 Project Experience:** Evidence that the Consultant has experience with design and execution of research projects in order to drive decision making.
- 5.2.5 Project Cost:** Evidence that the Consultant has provided projected costs for all aspects of the research study. Cost will not necessarily be the determining factor for the selection of a Consultant under this RFP.

## **6. APPENDIX**

### **6.1 APL Fact Sheets**

#### **6.1.1 Library System Fact Sheet**

#### **6.1.2 APL Branch Project Fact Sheet**

### **6.2 Selected APL Usage Statistics**

### **6.3 Non-Collusion Certification**



## **Albany Public Library educates, entertains, and empowers our community.**

### ***Albany Public Library:***

- Is committed to connecting the people of Albany, New York, to the information they need to empower and enrich their lives
- Operates seven locations across the city of Albany (Main Library, Arbor Hill/West Hill Branch, Bach Branch, Delaware Branch, Howe Branch, North Albany Branch, Pine Hills Branch)
- Completed a \$29.1 million project in 2010 to renovate three branch libraries and build two new ones in Albany's neighborhoods
- Serves the 93,000 residents of the city of Albany (just about two-thirds of them have Albany Public Library cards)
- Provides access to a collection of over 300,000 materials—including books, magazines, audio books, e-books, music CDs, and DVDs
- Offers e-books and digital audio books, as well as online renewals, via an interactive website
- Delivers dozens of programs each week—including story times for toddlers, noontime lectures for seniors, game nights for teens, reading clubs and movie screenings for children and adults, research and job search assistance for adults, and special events for the whole community
- Provides building-wide Wi-Fi connections, as well as public access computers and computer training classes, at all locations
- Hosts free literacy programs, tax preparation, and financial education services for Albany residents
- Houses the Pruyn Collection of Albany History—which includes many historical books, pamphlets, clippings, newspapers, photographs, city directories, and census records—in a newly renovated room in the Main Library
- Has won numerous accolades, including five library design/building awards for the new/renovated branch libraries, as well as awards for adult and children's programming

### ***Each Month at Albany Public Library, More Than:***

- 110,000 books, DVDs, magazines, CDs, audio books, and electronic materials are loaned out
- 95,000 people use the libraries
- 16,000 people use library computers for research and entertainment
- 10,000 people use the reference librarians for research assistance
- 800 new library cards are issued

**For More Information, Visit Albany Public Library Online:**

[www.albanypubliclibrary.org](http://www.albanypubliclibrary.org)  
[twitter.com/AlbanyNYPubLib](https://twitter.com/AlbanyNYPubLib)

## Albany’s New Neighborhood Libraries

### Overview

As of June 2010, the Albany Public Library (APL) completed the \$29.1 million Branch Improvement Plan—the first comprehensive infrastructure project in its history. The plan involved renovating three existing branches—Pine Hills, Delaware, and John A. Howe—along with constructing two new branches—John J. Bach and Arbor Hill/West Hill. Albany voters showed support for the plan in 2007 when they overwhelmingly approved a referendum to fund the relocation, renovation, and construction of five branch libraries in the city. The new libraries opened to the public between November 2009 and June 2010. The project to build and renovate Albany’s branch libraries was named “best use of public funds” by Metroland magazine in 2010. Albany Public Library was given the 2010 Organization of the Year Award from the Neighborhood Resource Center for its “incredibly transformative work in our city neighborhoods” through the new libraries.

### Design & Construction

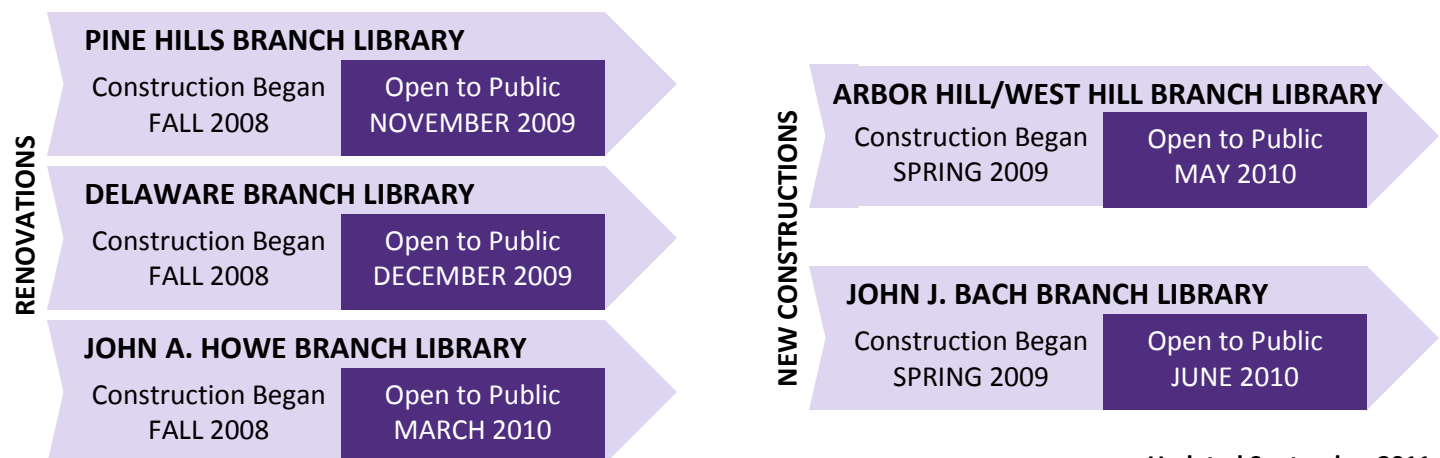
These state-of-the-art, fully accessible branch libraries include community meeting spaces; expanded collection spaces for adults, teens, and children; public computing areas for adults, teens, and children; indoor and outdoor gardens; and small group tutoring/study rooms. All of these features were suggested by the community through an extensive input process that formed the foundation of the plan.

The three renovation projects were designed by the Albany-based architectural firm of CS Arch and were built by Latham-based Bunkoff General Contractors. The two new building projects were designed by Hom & Goldman architects of New York City and were built by Albany-based Sano-Rubin Construction, Inc. The Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY) was project manager at all five projects in the Branch Improvement Plan.

### “Green” Buildings

APL is committed to “green” branch libraries that are energy efficient, environmentally responsible, and healthy for customers and staff. Green building is the best, most responsible use of taxpayers’ money because energy efficient libraries are more cost effective to operate and healthier for the environment. The renovation and building projects utilized green design and construction principles, techniques, materials, and furnishings. All five buildings are being evaluated by the U.S. Green Building Council in pursuit of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) designations. The three renovated buildings are expected to achieve LEED certified status, while the two new buildings are planned to achieve LEED silver status.

### Timelines



## PINE HILLS BRANCH



- 517 Western Avenue
- Renovation began Oct. 2008; doors opened Nov. 2009
- Two-story, 19,000-square-foot library
- New collection of 50,000 items
- *Received 2010 Historic Preservation/Adaptive Reuse Merit Award from AIA Eastern NY Chapter*

## DELAWARE BRANCH



- 331 Delaware Avenue
- Renovation began Oct. 2008; doors opened Dec. 2009
- Single story, 9,500-square-foot library
- New collection of 35,000 items
- *Received 2010 Outstanding Public Library Building Award from NY Library Association*

## JOHN A. HOWE BRANCH



- 105 Schuyler Street
- Renovation began Oct. 2008; doors opened March 2010
- Opened doors to public March 15, 2010
- Two-story, 12,000-square-foot library built in 1929
- New collection of 30,000 items
- *Received 2010 Preservation Merit Award from Historic Albany Foundation*
- *Received 2010 Historic Preservation/Adaptive Reuse Merit Award from AIA Eastern NY Chapter*

## JOHN J. BACH BRANCH



- 455 New Scotland Avenue
- Construction began April 2009; doors opened May 2010
- Single-story, 8,500-square-foot library
- New collection of 30,000 items

## ARBOR HILL/WEST HILL BRANCH



- 148 Henry Johnson Boulevard
- Construction began April 2009; doors opened June 2010
- Single-story, 12,000-square-foot library
- New collection of 75,000 items
- *Received 2011 Outstanding Public Library Building Award from NY Library Association*

# Monthly Statistical Report

## November 2011



Circulation by Material Type (all locations)				
	Nov. '10	Nov. '11	YTD 2010	YTD 2011
Audiobook	10,153	9,615	115,760	106,904
Fiction	16,302	15,124	191,888	185,289
Nonfiction	13,522	12,263	157,989	149,804
Children's	18,841	18,421	191,397	201,690
Video	51,488	44,667	538,978	540,581
Periodicals	2,014	1,731	19,836	22,013
Book Dnld	737	1,130	5,482	10,262
Music Dnld		1,200		11,882
Misc.	1	7	96	158
<b>Total</b>	<b>113,058</b>	<b>104,158</b>	<b>1,221,426</b>	<b>1,228,583</b>

Computer Use				
	Nov. '10	Nov. '11	YTD 2010	YTD 2011
Arbor/West	1,577	1,854	13,100	25,145
Bach	1,175	1,892	8,922	15,239
Delaware	2,228	1,541	24,875	21,562
Howe	1,311	1,439	19,320	18,856
Main	5,956	5,567	70,250	67,449
North Albany	930	854	10,038	9,738
Pine Hills	3,138	2,349	31,008	32,070
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,315</b>	<b>15,496</b>	<b>177,513</b>	<b>190,059</b>

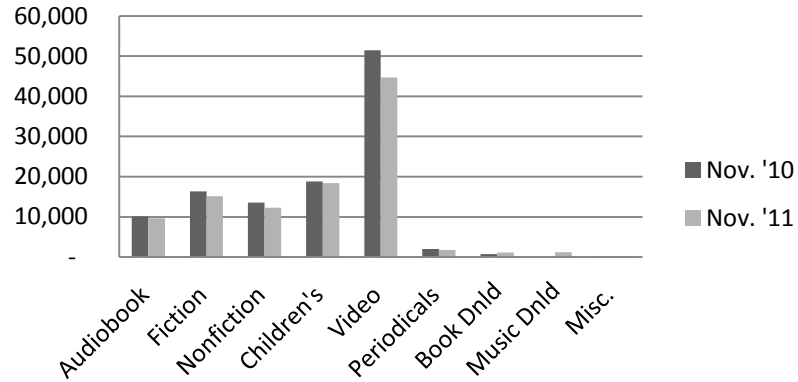
Door Count				
	Nov. '10	Nov. '11	YTD 2010	YTD 2011
Arbor/West	9,352	5,128	51,485	72,667
Bach	8,183	6,730	54,757	84,618
Delaware	10,638	9,792	122,930	110,861
Howe	8,457	6,676	83,267	81,398
Main	41,217	35,662	451,012	418,056
North Albany	4,555	3,951	50,670	43,525
Pine Hills	22,268	20,658	232,347	219,688
<b>Total</b>	<b>104,670</b>	<b>88,597</b>	<b>1,046,468</b>	<b>1,030,813</b>

Circulation by Location				
	Nov. '10	Nov. '11	YTD 2010	YTD 2011
Arbor/West	11,255	8,510	73,185	107,054
Bach	11,862	11,046	88,658	131,161
Delaware	13,742	11,546	157,498	140,411
Howe	7,822	7,068	76,823	81,966
Main	43,265	42,740	524,624	485,377
North Albany	3,574	3,383	46,979	45,710
Pine Hills	21,538	19,865	241,157	236,904
<b>Total</b>	<b>113,058</b>	<b>104,158</b>	<b>1,208,924</b>	<b>1,228,583</b>

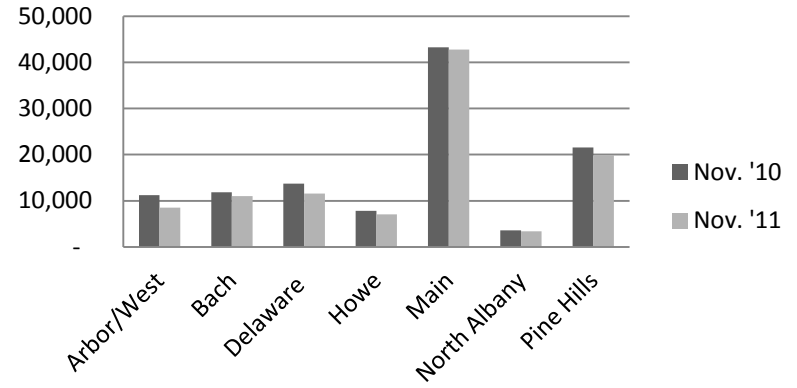
Reference Transactions				
	Nov. '10	Nov. '11	YTD 2010	YTD 2011
Arbor/West	1,119	599	5,805	7,632
Bach	1,054	540	5,936	11,030
Delaware	1,302	953	13,801	12,006
Howe	565	738	4,457	10,919
Main	5,734	4,730	64,010	66,220
North Albany	199	364	1,749	3,704
Pine Hills	2,729	3,202	18,965	25,122
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,702</b>	<b>11,126</b>	<b>114,723</b>	<b>136,633</b>

New Borrower Registrations				
	Nov. '10	Nov. '11	YTD 2010	YTD 2011
Arbor/West	44	52	702	569
Bach	94	42	467	689
Delaware	94	76	1,220	988
Howe	56	35	693	450
Main	349	323	4,134	3,953
North Albany	15	7	194	255
Pine Hills	85	104	1,552	1,246
<b>Total</b>	<b>737</b>	<b>639</b>	<b>8,962</b>	<b>8,150</b>

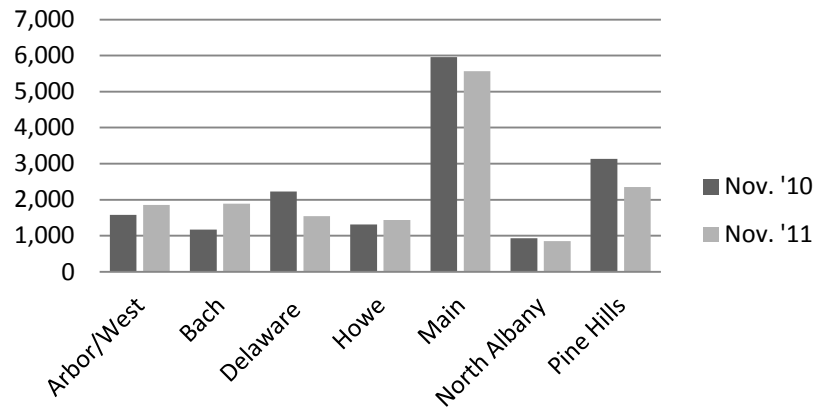
### Circulation by Material Type



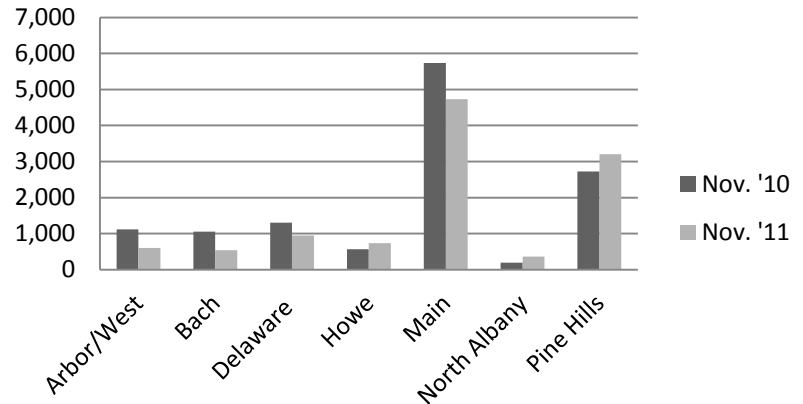
### Circulation by Location



### Computer Use



### Reference Transactions



**Non-Collusion Certification**

- A. By submission of this proposal, each proposer and each person signing on behalf of any proposer certifies, and in the case of a joint proposal each party thereto certifies as to its own organization, under penalty of perjury, that to the best of knowledge and belief:
1. The prices in this proposal have been arrived at independently without collusion, consultation, communication, or agreement, for the purpose of restricting competition, as to any matter relating to such prices with any other proposer or with any competitor;
  2. Unless otherwise required by law, the prices which have been quoted in this proposal have not been knowingly disclosed by the proposer and will not knowingly be disclosed by the proposer prior to opening, directly or indirectly, to any other proposer or to any competitor;
  3. No attempt has been made or will be made by the proposer to induce any other person, partnership or corporation to submit or not to submit a proposal for the purpose of restricting competition;
  4. The proposal is made in good faith and not pursuant to any agreement or discussion with, or inducement from, any firm or person to submit a complementary proposal;
  5. The proposer has not offered or entered into a subcontract or agreement regarding the purchase of materials or services from any firm or person, or offered, promised or paid cash or anything of value to any firm or person, whether in connection with this or any other project, in consideration for an agreement or promise by any firm or person to refrain from submitting a proposal or to submit a complementary proposal on this project;
  6. The proposer has not accepted or been promised any subcontract or agreement regarding the sale of materials or services to any firm or person and has not been promised or paid cash or anything of value by any firm or person, whether in connection with this or any other project, in consideration for the proposer's submitting a complementary proposal or agreeing to do so on this project;
  7. The individual signing on behalf of the proposer represents and warrants that they are authorized to sign on behalf of the proposer and that they have made a diligent inquiry of all members, officers, employees and agents of the proposer with responsibilities relating to the preparation, approval or submission of the proposal on this project and have been advised by each of them that he/she has not participated in any communication, consultation, discussion, agreement, collusion, act or other conduct inconsistent with any of the statements and representations made in this certification; and
  8. This certification is in accordance with Section 103-d of the General Municipal Law.
- B. If the proposer is a corporation, a corporate resolution authorizing the signing of the proposal and this certification shall be included with the proposal.

Proposer: \_\_\_\_\_  
By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Its: \_\_\_\_\_