



City of Long Beach
Purchasing Division
333 W Ocean Blvd/7th Floor
Long Beach CA 90802

City of Long Beach

Request For Information Number CM16-098

For A Business Assistance Challenge: Launch, Do, Grow

Release Date:	01/26/2016
Questions Due to the City:	02/22/2016
RFI Due Date:	02/25/2016

For additional information, please contact:

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pp@citymart.com, +34 931 855 110

and

Heidi Wiersma, City of Long Beach
Heidi.Wiersma@longbeach.gov, +1 562-570-5170

See Section 4 for submittal instructions.

Company Name _____ Contact Person _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (____) _____ Fax (____) _____ Federal Tax ID No. _____

E-mail: _____

I have read, understand, and agree to all terms and conditions herein. Date _____

Signed _____

Print Name & Title _____



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1. OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

The City of Long Beach, California, is currently exploring how the City can make it easier for first-time entrepreneurs to launch, do business, and grow in Long Beach. The City has partnered with Citymart, a New York-based firm, to research the global marketplace to find innovative solutions including services, technologies, and commodities that will allow the City to assist first-time entrepreneurs more effectively. This Request for Information (RFI) is part of this research.

The responses to this RFI will inform a Request for Proposals (RFP) that will be issued at the conclusion of the research phase. The RFP is slated for release in early 2016 and will be open to submissions for 4 weeks. The RFP may result in the procurement of goods and services. The City intends to select and award the winning solution(s) procured through the upcoming RFP in the spring of 2016.

The City recognizes the effort required to respond to this request and values your participation. The City understands that it is difficult to provide estimates for a project of this nature and is looking for rough assessments.

The deadline for submission is February 25th, 2016 at 11 a.m. Pacific Time.



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2. **ACRONYMS/DEFINITIONS**

For purposes of this RFI, the following acronyms/definitions will be used:

Challenge Statement	Overview of the problem and the desired outcomes.
City	The City of Long Beach and any department or agency identified herein.
Department / Division	City of Long Beach, Technology & Innovation Department, Business Information Technology Division, and Financial Management Department.
May	Indicates something that is not mandatory but permissible.
RFI	Request for Information.
RFP	Request for Proposals.
RFQ	Request for Qualifications.
Shall / Must	Indicates a mandatory requirement. Failure to meet a mandatory requirement may result in the rejection of a proposal as non-responsive.
Should	Indicates something that is recommended but not mandatory. If the Proposer fails to provide recommended information, the City may, at its sole option, ask the Proposer to provide the information or evaluate the proposal without the information.
Proposer	Organization/individual submitting a response to this RFI.



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3. **SCOPE OF PROJECT**

To help City staff better understand the types of goods and services that would enable the City to assist first-time entrepreneurs more effectively, this Request for Information (RFI) has been issued to request basic knowledge from organizations that provide such solutions.

A vendor's response to this RFI neither enhances nor detracts from the vendor's likelihood of a future contract with the City of Long Beach as a result of the future Launch, Do, Grow RFP. The RFI is intended to allow the City to better understand the marketplace.

Please review the "challenge statement" in **Appendix A**. The challenge statement is a brief summary of the opportunity in the City and the types of solutions we believe may assist the City in addressing the challenge.

Please read the challenge statement before responding to the following questions:

Question 1a: Does your firm have a solution(s) that could address some or all of the points outlined in the challenge statement?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Question 1b: If your answer to question 1a is yes, please describe your solution(s) and how it would address some or all of the points outlined in the challenge statement. Please keep your response concise; consider 500 words or less.



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Question 2a: Has your solution ever been implemented before?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Question 2b: If your answer to question 2a is yes, please list where your solution has been implemented and what the results of each deployment have been. Please keep your response concise; consider 500 words or less.

Question 3a: Is your solution financially sustainable in the long term?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Question 3b: If your answer to question 3a is yes, please explain how your solution generates revenue. If your answer to question 3a is no, please estimate your funding needs. Please keep your response concise; consider 500 words or less.



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Question 4a: Does your solution require in-kind City resources (e.g. staff time, facilities, technology, etc.)

☐ Yes ☐ No

Question 4b: If your answer to question 4a is yes, please specify what you would need the City to provide. Please keep your response concise; consider 300 words or less.

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Question 5: How would you describe your business (e.g. startup, small business, not-for-profit, large corporation)? Please describe your organization (e.g. number of employees, business model, annual revenue, etc.). Please keep your response concise; consider 300 words or less.

Question 6: What additional information should be included the “Launch, Do, Grow” challenge statement?

Question 7a: Would you need to partner with other organizations or firms to deliver your solution to Long Beach?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Question 7b: If the answer to 7a is yes, do you need support identifying potential partner organizations?



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4. **SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS**

4.1 **Submittal Overview**

The expectation is that responses to this RFI will provide the City with industry insight, experience, and understanding of industry standards about potential features and capabilities available in the market and assist in framing the context of a future RFQ/P.

For questions regarding this RFI, submit all inquiries via email to (1) Philippa Parry at pp@citymart.com and (2) carbon copy (cc) Heidi.Weirsm@Longbeach.gov. Questions should be submitted by Wednesday, February 22, 2016 at 8:00 a.m. Pacific Time, in order to receive a response before the RFI submission due date. All proposers are recommended to visit the City of Long Beach's Planet Bids portal on a regular basis as the responses to all inquiries will be posted here. The portal can be found at <https://www.planetbids.com/portal/portal.cfm?CompanyID=15810#>.

All **final responses to the RFI** must be submitted electronically as a PDF document. Submitters are requested to respond to the questions outlined in the scope of project. Scanned documents are acceptable.

4.2 RFI Timeline (All Times indicated are Pacific Time)

<i>TASK</i>	<i>DATE/TIME</i>
Final Deadline for Questions or other inquires	February 22, 2016 by 8:00 a.m.
Deadline for submittals	February 25 by 11:00 a.m.

NOTE: This represents a tentative schedule of events. The City reserves the right to modify this date at any time, with appropriate notice to prospective Proposers.

4.3 Respondents shall submit one (1) PDF document via Planet Bids.

Documents must follow the given naming convention:
"LaunchDoGrow_CompanyName_Month-Day-Year"

4.4 Submittals must be received by **11:00 a.m.** Pacific Standard Time, **Thursday, February 25, 2016**. Submissions that do not arrive by the specified date and time **WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**. Respondents may make their submittal any time prior to the above stated deadline.

4.5 The submittal should be presented in a format that corresponds to and references sections outlined in the Scope of Project and should be presented in the same order.



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Responses to each section and subsection should be labeled so as to indicate which item is being addressed.

5. AWARD OF CONTRACT

- 5.1 The City will not award a contract directly from this RFI. The purpose of this RFI is only to obtain information regarding the availability of services and features in an anticipated future RFP.
- 5.2 This is a Request for Information only. This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes and it does not constitute a Request for Proposal (RFP) or a promise to issue a solicitation in the future. This RFI does not commit the City to any contract whatsoever. The City is not at this time seeking proposals and will not accept unsolicited proposals.
- 5.3 Respondents are advised that all costs associated with responding to this RFI are solely at their expense.
- 5.4 There will be no evaluation, ranking, or selection of respondents as a result of this RFI. It will not be used to pre-qualify or screen respondents for a subsequent selection process, if any.
- 5.5 If subsequent selection opportunities are issued, the City is under no obligation to advise any respondent to this RFI, although it is the City's intent to notify all qualified respondents of any such plans via the City's electronic bid notification system.
- 5.6 All submissions become the property of the City and will not be returned.



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Appendix A

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Challenge Statement

A Business Assistance Challenge: Launch, Do, Grow

How can the City make it easier for first-time entrepreneurs to launch, do business, and grow in Long Beach?

The City wants to find better ways to **support entrepreneurs starting a business for the first time**. First-time entrepreneurs often arrive at City Hall without accurate information on the steps needed to lawfully start a business and leave frustrated when they cannot submit an application because they do not have their paperwork in order. Long Beach offers a variety of business education, assistance and incentive programs that provide information on how to start, operate, and grow your business in the city. Information on everything that Long Beach has to offer is available, yet, it does not reach entrepreneurs in the early stages of business development. This could stem from limited and inconsistent internal and external communication, as well as lack of early-stage engagement with entrepreneurs.

Currently, information on business support services and processes exist on various websites and platforms and this information is communicated passively. There is no central location where all the information is housed and no system that proactively engages the target community the City seeks to support. Furthermore, the information available is not customized to individual business needs. A restaurateur will have to go through a very different set of processes than a healthcare startup and tailored guidance is not readily available.

In order to meet business needs more effectively, the City seeks solution(s) that will address one or more of the following point listed below. All proposed strategies should extend the City's capacity to serve entrepreneurs beyond its current capacity.

- **Effectively triage business service** activity and provide customized next steps based on the business classification and the business model. An example of providing triage might be helping an entrepreneur deal with conflicting information from plan checkers, interpret the municipal code, or understand the sequence in which certain tasks should be performed. In these instances, the entrepreneur may require further direction and connection. These examples are only illustrative and do not encompass all situations when triage might be necessary.



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- **Build on the City's current effort to provide a true one-stop shop** for all business processes and service information across the larger business services network—not just City-sponsored services but those provided by federal, state, and county government, colleges, non-profits, and community groups. The City is currently focusing resources on creating an online one-stop shop and is interested in proposed solutions that may include elements that enhance or compliment current online efforts. Proposed complimentary solutions do not have to be digital in nature.
- **Communicates clearly to entrepreneurs.** Uses diverse communication strategies and media to educate entrepreneurs on the necessary steps to open a licensed business in Long Beach, business assistance programs, and how they can best prepare to ensure timely approval of submissions. This may be through any of the following: marketing materials, a communications campaign that is proactive in nature, digital content to compliment StartupLB (see below), dynamic social media communication, and two-way communication channels, such as meet ups and workshops. This list is exemplary only and the City looks forward to learning about other dynamic possibilities.
- **Reaches diverse and traditionally hard to reach populations** such as those with limited English proficiency, limited computer literacy, limited access to internet, or groups who historically have not actively engaged with City government.

Within two years the City wants to see notable performance improvements against some or all of these key performance indicators:

- Increase in successful first-time applications for business licenses;
- Increase in number of permit application packages that are complete at the first submission, including building permits, business license application, and other city-managed processes;
- Increase in user satisfaction, based on a survey of applicants.



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Profile: The City of Long Beach, California

The City of Long Beach, California covers approximately 52 square miles on the southern coast of Los Angeles County. Long Beach has a population of 462,257, making the City the second largest city in Los Angeles County and the seventh largest city in the State. Long Beach is home to many valuable assets including the second busiest sea port in the nation; notable tourist attractions such as The Aquarium of the Pacific and the Queen Mary; remarkable education institutions such as California State University Long Beach, Long Beach City College, and Long Beach Unified School District. The City boasts seven miles of coast line as well as 164 parks.

The City celebrates its vibrant diversity. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the City has the following ethnic breakdown: 40.8 percent Hispanic, 29.4 percent White, 13.0 percent Black, 12.6 percent Asian, and 4.2 percent all other ethnicities.

Long Beach is a community of both large and small businesses. There are an estimated 14,300 businesses in Long Beach. The latest data from the California Employment Development Department reports that in 2014, there were approximately 146,580 payroll jobs in the City of Long Beach. There are a limited number of large employers in the City, the largest of those include each of the educational institutions, medical institutions, and the City of Long Beach government. The remainder of the businesses are small with few or no employees.