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3B Supplier Relations for Construction Services

This chapter addresses several preliminary steps required prior to selecting a contractor to perform under a Postal Service construction contract. Topics covered in the chapter include the requirements for publicizing construction contract requirements in the *Commerce Business Daily* (CBD) and for giving other public notification and the procedures to be followed in prequalifying contractors.

3.1 Policy

3.1-10 Partnerships 

3.1-20 Supply Chain Management 

3.2 Supplier Diversity

Participation of minority and woman-owned businesses is encouraged for construction contracts, whether as the prime contractor, subcontractor, member of a joint venture, or consultant. In all CBD notices include a statement that such participation is encouraged. During purchasing planning, the contracting officer must perform market research as to the availability of such businesses where the contract is to be performed. The contracting officer should send notices of the planned purchasing action to development organizations, as appropriate (see PM 3.2.1.c).

3.3 Mandatory Sources

3.3.1 Policy 

3.3.2 Existing Assets 

3.3.3 Workshops for People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled 

3.3.4 **People Who Are Blind or State Licensing Agencies for the Blind** 

3.3.5 **Defense Fuel Supply Center** 

3.4 **Government Sources**

3.5 **Commercial Suppliers**

3.5.1 **Policy** 

3.5.2 **Prequalification**  

3.5.2-10 ***Planning for Construction Contractor Prequalification***

The purchase team should begin prequalification planning approximately seven months before the anticipated contract award date, depending on the size and complexity of the project. Completion of the prequalification process should be scheduled for approximately one month before solicitations are to be issued. See PM chapter 2 and chapter 2 of this handbook.

3.5.2-11 ***Solicitation Considerations***

When considering solicitation distribution, determine:

- a. Whether the solicitation will be provided to only the most highly qualified firms, following review and evaluation of all qualification statements (single projects).
- b. Whether solicitations will be rotated among prequalified firms on a master list maintained over an established period (standard projects), from which list three or more contractors will be selected for each solicitation.

3.5.2-20 ***Evaluation Team***

An evaluation team must be established and it must consist of a minimum of two highly qualified professional Postal Service employees who, collectively, have experience in architecture, engineering, construction, purchasing, environmental matters, and other related matters, depending on the type of project. Sample formats for establishing the evaluation team and obtaining a confidentiality statement from its members are provided as Exhibits 3.5.2-20a and 3.5.2-20b.

3.5.2-30 ***Prospective Contractor Qualification Statements***

See 2.1.7-33.

3.5.2-40 *Prequalification Announcements*

In addition to the notices prescribed in PM 3.5.3.b, to ensure that construction contractors are aware of upcoming Postal Service purchase requirements, place notices in suitable construction industry publications. Allow interested firms a minimum of 30 days to obtain and submit the prequalification package. Exhibit 3.5.2-40 provides a sample CBD notice. Modify your notice to suit individual project requirements. See also PM 3.5.2.e.1 and Exhibit 3.5.3.b-10a.

3.5.2-41 *Project Description*

Describe the general characteristics of the specific Postal Service facility or category of projects in sufficient detail so that a contractor can decide whether to submit a qualification statement. Characteristics may include the facility location and type, its estimated gross square footage, a description of fixed mechanization (if included), and a range of estimated construction cost. If the notice is for a category of projects, state the time period for which the prequalification will remain in effect.

3.5.2-42 *Other Requirements*

State the specific information to be included in the qualification statement that prospective contractors seeking prequalification complete. Identify factors prepared during the prequalification planning phase that may be used during evaluation of the prequalification statements. State that only contractors meeting the stated requirements need apply for the prequalification package.

State that requests for prequalification packages be in writing, addressed to the contracting officer or designee, and received by the date specified in the notice.

State the date that completed qualification statements are due.

Inform contractors that they will be advised within 60 days after the due date for submitting statements whether they have prequalified for the proposed project or category of projects.

3.5.2-50 *Evaluation of Qualification Statements*

Evaluation of qualification statements will be performed by the evaluation team acting as a unit rather than by individual members. The conclusions reached must be by team consensus. The purchase team will make the final decision on the selection of firms after considering the evaluation team's recommendation (see Exhibit 3.5.2-50).

3.5.2-51 *Evaluation Steps*

Follow the steps below in evaluating prequalification statements:

- a. Review each qualification statement to ensure that all information requested in the prequalification package has been provided. A yes or no checklist may be prepared and used for this purpose.
- b. Conduct a detailed evaluation of each qualification statement based on the preestablished factors. Identify and record the strengths, weaknesses, and risks for each firm. Rate each firm as excellent, good, fair, or poor for each

factor. Evaluation teams may use a numerical rating system. Based on the overall evaluation of statements submitted, the evaluation team will recommend a list of the most qualified firms for approval by the purchase team.

- c. Prepare a written record of each reference checked.

3.5.2-60 ***How to Notify Contractors of Prequalification Results***

Send an appropriate written notice to each prequalified firm as follows:

- a. In notification to firms prequalified for specific projects under \$5,000,000, include the project's general characteristics, the estimated cost range, and the anticipated date plans and specifications are to be available.
- b. In notification to firms prequalified for a category of projects, include a statement of how contractors will be selected from the list to submit proposals for projects within the category. Also, state the length of the prequalification period in the letter.

Advise, by letter, each firm that was not selected for prequalification. In the letter, advise that they may request a debriefing and how the request should be made. Also, state that the firm may submit prequalification statements for future Postal Service work when prequalification notices are published. Handle any protest that may result from this notification process in the manner required by PM 3.6.

Exhibits 3.5.2-60a through 3.5.2-60d provide sample notification letter formats.

3.5.2-70 ***Soliciting Proposals from Prequalified Contractors***

Send solicitation documents to prequalified contractors.

If requested, subcontractors and other interested parties may be provided a copy of the solicitation package. Include a statement that the solicitation is open only to prequalified contractors. To promote subcontracting opportunities, especially for small, minority, and woman-owned firms, place a notice of the prequalification in the CBD and in construction industry publications, as appropriate.

The contracting officer may require those parties requesting a copy of the solicitation package to pay reproduction and mailing charges.

3.5.3 **Publicizing Purchases**

3.5.3.a **Policy**

3.5.3.a-10 *Publicizing Construction Contracts*

To promote competition, place the notice in construction industry publications, as appropriate.

3.5.3.a-11 *Presolicitation Notices for Construction Contracts*

The contracting officer may issue a presolicitation notice for construction projects. The presolicitation notice must be published, posted, and distributed as provided in PM 3.5.3 and in 3.5.3 of chapter 3A of this handbook.

3.5.3.a-20 *Notice of Contract Awards*

See PM 3.5.3.a.2 and PM 3.5.3.a.3.

3.5.3.b *Methods*

3.5.3.b-10 *Preparation of CBD Notices for Construction Awards*

CBD notices for construction awards follow the prescribed format in the example in Exhibit 3.5.3.b-10a.

3.5.3.b-11 *Additional Information for CBD*

Provide the following additional information for the CBD notice:

- a. Project type — indicate project scope, approximate gross square feet, whether fixed mechanization is included, and estimated construction cost range.
- b. Timing — state when the solicitation package will be ready to pick up. State where and how the solicitation package may be obtained.
- c. Factors for evaluation — indicate the special factors to be used in evaluating contractor proposals that are specifically required for the project, stating the relative importance of each criterion.

3.5.3.b-20 *Advertising Multiple Contracts*

Determine whether multiple listings of more than one construction contract can be grouped under a single CBD notice. If multiple construction contracts are scheduled for award in a six-month period in the same geographical area, the CBD notice may list multiple projects or indefinite-quantity contracts for which construction services are sought, provided:

- a. Each project listed is identified by title, approximate gross area, and estimated construction cost range.
- b. Any number of projects may be grouped together for a single anticipated contract award (the name of each facility must be listed).
- c. Firms identify the specific projects or indefinite-quantity contracts for which they wish to be considered.

3.5.3.b-30 *Other Announcements*

Promote competition by sending notices of construction purchases to *Engineering News-Record*; *Dodge Reports*; industry publications; contractor association newsletters; plan hold rooms; small, minority, and woman-owned business development organizations; and in-house contractor lists and databases. Send these notices prior to issuing the solicitation.

3.5.3.b-40 *Transmittal*

- a. Electronic online service.

- b. If electronic service is not available, use Express Mail and send it to:

US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
COMMERCE BUSINESS DAILY
CHICAGO IL 60638-3187

3.5.4 **Unsolicited Proposals** 

3.5.5 **Noncompetitive Purchases** 

Also see MI AS-710-97-1, *Noncompetitive Purchases*.

3.6 Protests

3.7 Debarment, Suspension, and Ineligibility

Exhibit 3.5.2-20a

Memorandum to Establish a Prequalification Evaluation Team



May 01, 2001

_____, Chairperson
_____, Committee Member, Project Manager
_____, Committee Member

SUBJECT: Establishment of Evaluation Team

In compliance with the Postal Manual, Chapter 2, the purpose of this memorandum is to establish a Qualification Statement Evaluation Team for the **Phoenix, AZ, Air Mail Center**, SOLICITATION NUMBER: _____. You are hereby appointed as a panel member. The chairperson will be _____.

The team will meet in **Arlington, VA, at the Major Facilities Purchasing Office** to evaluate the Prequalification responses from contractors in accordance with the established selection criteria. Arrangements have been made to meet and review the packages beginning **Tuesday, May 01, 2001, from 8:00 a.m. through Wednesday, May 02, 2001, until 4:00 p.m.**

The evaluation team's efforts will include, first, to review the Qualification Statements against the statement of work and determine if there is a need for clarification; secondly, review, evaluate and rank each Qualification Statement, and finally, a selection recommendation to the contracting officer. The evaluation team will present its findings in a written report that summarizes the process.

CONTRACTING OFFICER

Exhibit 3.5.2-20b

Evaluation Team Statement of Confidentiality



May 01, 2001

PROJECT FILE

SUBJECT: Evaluation Team Confidentiality Statement
Phoenix, AZ Air Mail Center
Solicitation Number: _____

I affirm that I will not reveal to anyone except the other members of the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Evaluation Team, the number, location, or names of the companies or design/build entities in connection with the subject project. An exception to this prohibition of disclosure may occur if ordered by a USPS Executive (as applicable: Manager, Major Facilities Purchasing; Manager, Facilities Service Office, Area Vice President; or an Officer of the United States Government (who has a known (to me) need for knowledge of such information.

I also affirm that no members of my immediate family or myself have any financial interests in the potential suppliers to be evaluated.

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____
_____, **Chairperson**

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____
_____, **Project Manager**

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____

Cc: Contracting Officer

Exhibit 3.5.2-40

CBD Notice for Single Project Prequalification (Page 1 of 2)

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

Commerce Business Daily
P.O. Box 5999
Chicago, IL 60660-5999

1. P (Purchasing)
2. 0511!!
3. 98!!
4. 1800!!
5. 20230!!
6. Y!!
7. United States Postal Service, Facilities Service Office, address, ZIP+4!!
8. Y—Qualification statements are solicited from contractors interested in being placed on the prequalified contractors list for construction of a new mail processing facility.
9. 999999-98-B-9999!!
10. 061198!!
11. Contact point's name, telephone number; contracting officer's name, telephone number!!
12. N/A!!
13. N/A!!
14. N/A!!
15. N/A!!

Exhibit 3.5.2-40

CBD Notice for Single Project Prequalification (Page 2 of 2)

16. N/A!!

17. This is a notice of intent to prequalify firms to construct a new Postal Service facility at _____ . The facility is approximately 35,000 square feet, with an estimated cost range of \$20,000,000 to \$28,000,000. Fixed mechanization is included. Planned construction starting date is 010299.

Qualification statements will be evaluated by the contracting officer's staff. Primary factors that will be considered are: construction experience, financial stability, capacity, and references and previous clients. Other factors to be considered will include: project management capabilities and company organization. Applications will be evaluated by a Postal Service team, and all firms will be advised within 60 days of receipt of their application as to prequalification status. Firms selected as being the most highly qualified will be placed on the prequalification list. Interested firms that meet the minimum criteria stated above may obtain a Contractor Qualification Statement by contacting _____. Participation by minority-owned and woman-owned firms is encouraged. Contractor Qualification statements will not be returned. This is not a request for a proposal.*****

Exhibit 3.5.2-50

Memorandum from Evaluation Team

Date:

Ref:

Subj: Contractors Selected for Prequalification List

Project: _____

To: Purchase Team

The Evaluation Team met on [date] to review statements received as a result of CBD Notice No. _____ for Contractor Prequalification.

[number] statements were received. Of those statements, [number] are recommended as being the most highly qualified firms to ensure successful completion of a Postal Service facility within prescribed cost, time, and quality objectives.

The recommended firms are listed in alphabetical order, as follows:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Upon receipt of your approval and in accordance with the CBD notice, each of the [number] firms who submitted a statement will be notified of its prequalification status.

Submitted: _____
Chairman

Approved: _____
Contracting Officer

Exhibit 3.5.2-60a

Letter to Selected Firms — Single Project

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

Contractor's Name
Contractor's Address

Dear _____:

Subject: Construction Prequalification
 Notice Number:
 Location:

The U.S. Postal Service Contractor Evaluation Team has reviewed your qualification statement submitted in accordance with the evaluation procedures listed in the *Commerce Business Daily* notice. Your firm will be placed on our Construction Contractor Prequalification List for _____.

A solicitation package containing plans and specifications for the [state project and location] will be available on [date]. The project includes [list general characteristics], and the estimated cost range is [list cost range].

Sincerely,

Contracting Officer

Exhibit 3.5.2-60b

Letter to Selected Firms — Multiple Projects

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

Contractor's Name
Contractor's Address

Dear _____:

Subject: Construction Prequalification
 Notice Number:
 Location:

The U.S. Postal Service Contractor Evaluation Team has reviewed your prequalification application submitted in accordance with the evaluation procedures listed in the *Commerce Business Daily* notice. Your firm will be placed on our Construction Contractor Prequalification List for _____.

This prequalification relates to multiple projects and the drawings and specifications are not yet available. The approximate date that a solicitation package containing drawings and specifications will be available is [date]. The projects will include [list general characteristics], and the estimated cost range is [list cost range].

Sincerely,

Contracting Officer

Exhibit 3.5.2-60c

Letter to Selected Firms — Standard Projects

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

Contractor's Name
Contractor's Address

Dear _____:

Subject: Construction Prequalification
 Notice Number:
 Location:

The U.S. Postal Service Contractor Evaluation Team has reviewed your prequalification application submitted in accordance with the evaluation procedures listed in the *Commerce Business Daily* notice. Your firm will be placed on our Construction Contractor Prequalification List for _____.

Contractors who have been placed on the prequalification list for (state category) may be selected to submit proposals for projects in this category over the next (state duration of prequalification) period. Selection of firms to compete for a particular project will be based on the total number of prequalified firms and the Postal Service policy to rotate projects among qualified contractors. You will be advised when your firm's name is selected, and where to obtain plans and specifications.

Firms selected to submit proposals, but not awarded the contract, will be returned to the list to be considered for future projects.

We look forward to working with [firm's name].

Sincerely,

Contracting Officer

Exhibit 3.5.2-60d

Letter to Firms Not Selected

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

Contractor's Name
Contractor's Address

Dear _____:

Subject: Construction Prequalification
 Notice Number:
 Location:

The U.S. Postal Service Contractor Evaluation Team has completed review of your construction prequalification statement, but your firm was not selected. If you wish to have a debriefing, please contact (insert phone or address)

Your application will not be retained; it will be necessary for you to reapply for future Postal Service notices.

We appreciate your interest and encourage your response to future notices as they appear in the *Commerce Business Daily*.

Sincerely,

Contracting Officer

Submit the notice to the following address; electronic transmittal is permitted:

U.S. Department of Commerce
Commerce Business Daily
P.O. Box 5999
Chicago, IL 60680-5999

1. Action Code - A single alphabetic character identifying the type of action for the synopsis (notice). The choices are only the following:
 - P = Presolicitation Notice
 - A = Award Notice
 - M = Modification to a Previous Notice
 - R = Sources Sought Notice
 - F = Foreign Purchasing Notice
2. Date - Month and day synopsis is submitted. Insert four digits for this item, two digits for the month and two digits for the day (MMDD). For example, February 25 will be 0225.
3. Year - Year synopsis is submitted. Insert two digits for the year (1999 will be 99).
4. FIPS Number - Your organization's code number. For the Postal Service, the code number is 1800.
5. ZIP Code - The purchasing office's Zip Code.
6. Classification Code - Select the correct service or supply that the synopsis should be listed under. Insert either one alphabetic code or a two-digit code. For A/E, use C; for construction, use Y. For repair and alteration construction, use Z.
7. Office Address - The complete address of the purchasing office.
8. Subject - Insert the classification code from item 6 and a brief title description of the synopsis. Example: C--Design of a GMF.
9. Solicitation Number - Your organization's reference number for the synopsis.
10. Response Date - The deadline for the receipt of proposals. Insert a six-digit date (March 1, 1999, should be 030199).
11. Contact Points - The names and phone numbers of officials to contact in regard to this synopsis.
12. Contract Award Number - For awards only, your organization's reference number.
13. Contract Award Dollar Amount - For awards only, the value of the contract.
14. Contract Line Item Number - For awards only, when appropriate, list the contract's appropriate line item number.
15. Contract Award Date - For awards only, insert a six-digit date (May 25, 1999, should be 052599).

Exhibit 3.5.3.b-10a

Preparation of Notices to the CBD — Format (Page 2 of 2)

16. Contractor - For awards only, the name and address of the awardee.
17. Description - The narrative description of the purchasing action. Always use grammatically correct capitalization in this item. Never insert the narrative in all upper case. Include a statement encouraging participation by minority-owned and woman-owned businesses.

Special CBD Format Instructions

- a. Begin each item with the number for the item followed by a period--e.g., 1.
- b. Then make two spaces after the period.
- c. Next insert the appropriate information for each item.
- d. When an item does not require information, always insert: N/A
- e. Conclude each item with two exclamation points (!!).
- f. Conclude each completed synopsis with five asterisks (*****).

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