

4.0 PRECONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES

4.1 BID PROCEDURES

The bid process for DDOT projects is managed by OCP. As explained in Section 3, the consultant team is considered as an extension to the DDOT CA and Project Engineer. The consultant CM team is generally not contracted at this stage of the construction project. Therefore, the DDOT team lead's and CA's roles are to provide technical support to the contracting office during the bid process. This support includes but is not limited to response to bidders' questions, review of bid documents, and verification of cost items.

4.1.1 Pre-Bid Conference

OCP manages the bid process and schedules this meeting. All (potential) bidders are invited/informed by the [OCP solicitation site](#) and a newspaper advertisement. When possible, a Pre-Bid Conference should be conducted. The purpose of the Pre-Bid Conference is to ensure a thorough understanding of the project by the prospective bidders. The more the bidders understand the project and its conditions, the more intelligent and realistic will be their bids, and the potential for conflict during construction is likely to be reduced. Maximum use of visual aids such as colored and highlighted drawings, aerial photographs, large-scale location maps showing major access routes and restrictions, scale models, and three dimensional CADD graphics should be considered.

OCP shall keep records of the meeting and responses to questions. If the response merely provides clarification of the contract documents, there is no need for inclusion in an addendum. However, if the question clearly requires modification or expansion of the information provided in the documents, the response must be included in an addendum. Potential bidders are directed from the OCP site to [the DDOT's DTAP site](#) (District Transportation Access Portal) for downloading the bid documents (Plans, Specifications & Estimate (PS&E)). The potential bidders are recorded by the DDOT's DTAP site. All bid document holders, not just those in attendance, receive the addendum from OCP. Questions, which could not be answered at the Pre-Bid Conference, are addressed in an addendum. Responses that will be addressed by addendum should be clearly recorded. An appointed recorder should provide concise yet comprehensive minutes.



4.1.2 Bid and Pre-Award Processing

The DDOT team should provide technical support to OCP during the bid opening process. On the day of bid opening there should be clear understanding of the process. Bidders may have the bids returned to them upon written request any time prior to the designated time for bid opening. Once the designated time has passed bids will not be returned. Under no circumstances are bids accepted after the designated time for opening; they remain sealed and are returned to the bidder. In order to maintain an orderly process during bid opening, a clock showing the correct time should be clearly visible and the bidder names should be announced. The OCP will administer the opening of bids.

Bid tabulation sheets should also be prepared. Typically, the bid tabulation sheet will show the title of the contract or contracts to be opened, space for names of bidders, columns for noting receipt of bid bond and acknowledgment of receipt of addenda, a column for base bid and columns for each bid alternate.

At the time of bid opening it should be announced that time for receipt of bids has passed and no further bids will be received. The Contract Specialist from OCP will then declare that this is the time and place for opening of bids for designated contract(s), welcome all attendees, make any required formal announcements and proceed with the opening of bids.

The Contract Specialist will take the opened bid, read out the name of the bidder, declare that bid bond is included and receipt of addenda acknowledged and then clearly read out the base bid amount, followed by the amount(s) of any alternate(s) and/or substitutions. These amounts should be entered on to the bid tabulation sheet. Discussions about the acceptability of the bids as they are read should be avoided.

At the close of the bid opening all bids should be collected and forwarded to the CO. Upon request, bid bonds should be returned to any bidder who is not in contention for an award. All bids are considered good for a period of sixty (60) days after the bid opening or as specified in the bid documents.

The DDOT team should assist the CO in reviewing bid prices and determining compliance with other requirements of the bid documents. Bid analysis guidance can be found on the FHWA website:

<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/construction/cqit/award.cfm>.

Bid Evaluation sheets should be prepared. If it is a lump sum contract without alternates, there is usually little to evaluate other than conformance with the Instructions to Bidders. Bids shall be

reviewed and compared against each other and against the Engineer's Estimate to determine the bid range, the difference between the apparent low bidder and second lowest bid, and significant differences among bid items. The DDOT team shall determine if the lowest bid is responsible and responsive and prepare an engineer's recommendation.

If the contract is a unit price contract, the Bid Evaluation form should list all the bid items and quantities down the side and the bidders along the top so that each unit price can be compared. Evaluation of unit price bids requires more care and a good understanding of the project and bidding strategies.

The purpose of this exercise is to determine if unusual bid patterns exist. Although the analysis can be done manually, the use of a computer to analyze the data and to monitor bidding activity has become prevalent. While many DOTs have their own bid analysis system, the majority of the DOTs are using the Bid Analysis and Management System / Decision Support System, (BAMS/DSS), a module within the AASHTO Trns-port® software package. The BAMS is a comprehensive system comprised of five modules, which includes the Decision Support System containing the collusion detection capabilities. The use of a computer program is intended only to provide information to indicate whether further investigation is warranted.

However, the final analysis should not preclude the use of engineering judgment. In analyzing bids, the following should be considered:

- Is the bid mathematically unbalanced? Are the unit bid prices in reasonable conformance with the engineer's estimate and other bids?
- If awarded, what effect will unbalanced bid items have on the total contract amount?
- If quantities are incorrect, will the contract cost be increased when the quantities are corrected?
- On items where the quantities may vary, will the lower bidder remain as low bidder?
- If the bid is unbalanced, will the unbalance have a potential detrimental effect upon the competitive process or cause contract administration problems after award?

4.2 CONTRACT AWARD AND EXECUTION

OCP will make the final evaluation of the bid and execute the contract for construction. A written Notice of Award is prepared and issued to the successful contractor. A Pre-Award Conference may be held with the successful contractor. The purpose of the Pre-Award Conference is to finalize any issues/questions about the bid and the contract. The CM should provide technical support to the OCP during the Pre-Award Conference.

Commencement of the work is not permitted prior to execution of the contract. The contract documents may stipulate limited commencement of work by Notice of Award. Official Notice of Award occurs when the OCP sends the contractor a written notification with the actual contract document. This would normally be followed by the Notice to Proceed (NTP) letter prepared by the DDOT team responsible for the project and executed by the Contracting Officer. Generally, the Notice to Proceed signifies the commencement of the contract time. The CM and its staff should be aware of the procedures for commencement of work and be fully set up on site ready to administer the contract from its inception.

4.3 CONSTRUCTABILITY REVIEWS

The constructability reviews are completed before the bidding process. The CM team still shall perform constructability reviews for each element of the construction work. The constructability review shall be an independent and structured review of construction documents by the CM team to determine that:

- the work requirements are clear,
- the documents are coordinated,
- the ease with which the project can be built using industry-accepted means and methods as designed,
- the documents assist in construction and project administration to reduce negative impacts to the project.

When issues are identified as a result of constructability reviews, the CM team shall inform the CA for required contractual modifications ahead of commencement of construction activities.

4.4 BASE SCHEDULE APPROVAL

Before issuing the Notice-to-Proceed (NTP) date, the CA and CM team shall ensure that the Contractor submits the baseline project schedule. The baseline project schedule shall use the Critical Path Method (CPM) and indicate all major activities of work required under the Contract, from Notice-to-Proceed to Contract Completion Date. The activities included shall be detailed in order to demonstrate a logical progression of the elements of the work. The schedule shall include sufficient detail in order to explain the relationships among the aspects of the work including but not limited to mobilization, submittal process, material ordering and delivery, phasing of the work, maintenance of traffic, subcontract work, utility work, and other important aspects of the project. The schedule shall include any special project requirements for MOT phasing, utility coordination and installation, submittal review, material

procurement, and other significant elements to the project schedule. The baseline project schedule shall demonstrate the completion of all work within the contract time.

When the Contractor submits the baseline project schedule for review and approval, the CM team shall review and return comments and expected NTP date for incorporation to the final version of the baseline project schedule. After incorporation of review comments and provided NTP date, the Contractor shall submit the final version of the baseline project schedule for approval at least one week before the provided NTP date. Once the CM team verifies incorporation of the review comments and expected NTP date in the baseline project schedule, NTP is issued along with the approval of the baseline project schedule.

4.5 PRE-CONSTRUCTION CONFERENCE

Prior to issuing the NTP date, the DDOT team leader should schedule and chair a Pre-Construction Conference. The Construction Manager shall participate and maintain minutes of the meeting. In addition to the team leader and the Construction Manager, attendees should include: the FHWA Division Area Engineer, the contracting professional from OCP, representative from the pertinent DDOT engineering departments, the Engineer of Record, public utilities, community advisory groups, historic preservation groups, federal government agencies, the Contractor and assigned subcontractors. The Construction Manager should complete a checklist of attendees to be notified. The purpose of the meeting is to introduce all the participants in the project and to discuss actions necessary to the successful start, prosecution, and completion of the contract. Items to be discussed should be listed on a prepared agenda issued to the participants. Agenda items should include the general checklist items as shown in Appendix, with appropriate additions/deletions as warranted by the contract at hand.

The Pre-Construction Conference is important for setting the tone for the relationships and to prepare the groundwork for the efficient administration of the contract. The Contractor should be urged to come to the meetings with a written list of any questions, requests, or suggestions to be addressed at the meeting. Detailed minutes should be recorded, and an action list should be included and attached for subsequent actions agreed upon at the meeting. The Pre-Construction Conference minutes will constitute an important contract record and appropriate care should be given to their preparation and distribution.

Adequate meeting time should be allotted to discuss all items on the agenda. Matters requiring a subsequent response should be clearly recorded in the meeting minutes with action assigned to a specific person and a date by which a response must be made.

4.6 NOTICE TO PROCEED AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

The Contract Specialist from OCP will issue the documents required to start construction, a written Notice to Proceed (NTP, as shown in Appendix), after a contract is executed. The NTP will indicate the official date of beginning work. The contract work can begin immediately if the Contracting Officer indicated that signing and receiving the contract also served as the NTP. Work shall not commence until the NTP is given.

4.7 PREPARATION OF ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEM

DDOT continuously improves the electronic document controls system. DDOT desires to access any construction information at any given time. Therefore, the CM team shall maintain construction documentation every day. Every paper copy such as material delivery tickets shall be scanned daily and uploaded in the DDOT document control system for the project. The documentation shall be complete and accessible at all times. The current requirements for electronic documentation are located in Appendix. The DDOT team will set up the current DDOT document control system for the project before issuing a Contract to a CM consultant. The CM team shall follow these requirements and get familiar with the current DDOT document control system prior to the construction NTP date.