



Final Report of Working Team 3C Accomplishments and Additional Recommendations

**Accomplishments address the key steps in the
“Consultant Contract Program Collaboration Project-Final Report April 2010”**

Desired Outcome: Increase the Consistency and Transparency of Consultant Selection Processes

**Strategy 3C: Establish systems that support consistent implementation
of the ways that consultants are selected within MnDOT.**

3C Working Team Membership:

Randy Geerdes, Chair - ACEC/MN
Dale Grove – ACEC/MN
Gene East – MnDOT
Joe Pignato – MnDOT

Dawn Thompson, Chair – MnDOT
Mark Hagen – MnDOT
Kevin Cullen – ACEC/MN
Brad Hamilton – MnDOT

Key Steps and Subsequent Actions/Improvements
<p style="text-align: center;">~Create a quality assurance and quality control process with oversight~ ~Provide additional checks and balances for districts regarding selections~</p> <p>The “MnDOT Professional/Technical (P/T) Competitive Selection Process Updated Guidance” was developed by MnDOT at the direction of MnDOT leadership and as a result of the Consultant Contract Collaboration Project, on-going consultant and MnDOT staff feedback and a collaborative review between MnDOT and consultants on recent large competitive selections. Previously, MnDOT staff involved in the competitive selection process was guided by Contract Administrator and Project Manager training, as well as on-going individual/day-to-day training from the Consultant Services Section.</p> <p>The updated guidance can be found at: www.dot.state.mn.us/consult/training.html. The 3C working team reviewed, analyzed, and provided input on the updated guidance and has determined that several sections address this key step (and others below). At present, the guidance focuses mainly on “large” project selections over \$800K. The guidance requires these controls with large projects and encourages the implementation of most of them as best practices for smaller projects as well. Many of the practices are already being utilized for all sizes of projects.</p> <p>The following sections and highlights of the updated guidance demonstrate greater quality assurance and quality control and additional checks and balances for districts in the competitive selection process:</p> <p><i>Selection Committee</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A member of the Manager’s Plan (MnDOT bargaining unit for upper level managers) must serve on the selection committee. • For contracts over \$800K: A Manager from the initiating District/Office must serve on the selection committee • For contracts over \$800K: At least 50% of the selection committee must be a Manager • For contracts over \$800K: Consultant Services Director will serve on the selection committee or will designate a person to participate and/or audit the selection process

RFP/ Announcement Development

- For contracts over \$800K: The RFP/Announcement must have review and concurrence from Consultant Services prior to certification.

Division Director Review (for contracts over 800K)

- See entire section of Updated Guidance

Partial Debriefings

- The Contract Administrator will solicit feedback from the selection committee if there are vague comments that need clarification or more detail. For example, the comment, “The work plan was weak.” Why was it weak? What was missing?
- For contracts over \$800K: The comments and scores must be sent to Consultant Services for review before they are distributed to the responders.

~Periodically attend selection committees & debriefings & provide feedback & guidance on the process~

The following section of the “MnDOT Professional/Technical (P/T) Competitive Selection Process Updated Guidance” addresses this key step:

Selection Committee

- For contracts over \$800K: Consultant Services Director will serve on the selection committee or will designate a person to participate and/or audit the selection process.

~Develop a tracking system that documents direct selection contracts and a step-by-step process that makes the process easier to understand and implement~

The working team has addressed this key step by creating the “Pre-Qualification Direct Select Form.” The form is a tool for MnDOT Districts, Offices and Consultant Services to utilize in order to: 1) Document the Direct Select Process; 2) Verify proper work type selection for each contract; and 3) Provide MnDOT leadership selection approval for Pre-Qualification Program contract direct selections. Training in the use of this document has been completed for the appropriate MnDOT District and Office staff and was become a required step in the Pre-Qualification Direct Select contracting process as of February 1, 2011.

As an extension of this improvement and to provide greater transparency for the process, the working team recommended that MnDOT post a list of all executed contracts on the web. As of February 1, 2011 MnDOT posts a report listing executed contracts on the Consultant Services web site every month.

~Consistently define and communicate project parameters, RFP requirements, selection criteria, expectations for proposal content, and scoping criteria based on selection criteria~

The following section of the “MnDOT Professional/Technical (P/T) Competitive Selection Process Updated Guidance” addresses this key step:

Selection Committee

- For contracts over \$800K: The selection committee must be established and approved before the development of the RFP/Announcement.

RFP/Announcement Development

- For contracts over \$800K: Before Certification, the Contract Administrator will facilitate a meeting with the approved selection committee members to review the RFP and/or Announcement, specifically the proposal content, scope and scoring criteria. In order to ensure consistency and

uniformity, the discussion will include sharing of lessons learned and knowledge transfer among selection committee members. The selection committee must come to consensus regarding the proposal content, scope and the scoring criteria.

- For contracts over \$800K: The RFP/Announcement must have review and concurrence from Consultant Services prior to certification.

~Establish a way for MnDOT project leaders to share documented project parameters with applicable project managers, contract administrators, and selection committee members~

The working team believes that the “MnDOT Professional/Technical (P/T) Competitive Selection Process Updated Guidance” does briefly address this key step.

Selection Committee

There must be no more than 50% of committee members from any District or Office

RFP/Announcement Development

- For contracts over \$800K: Before Certification, The Contract Administrator will facilitate a meeting with the approved selection committee members to review the RFP and/or Announcement, specifically the proposal content, scope and scoring criteria. In order to ensure consistency and uniformity, the discussion will include sharing of lessons learned and knowledge transfer among selection committee members. The selection committee must come to consensus regarding the proposal content, scope and the scoring criteria.

Working Teams Recommendation for Continued Improvements

It is the working team’s recommendation that additional efforts be made to achieve more consistency throughout the department regarding the scope of services listed in RFPs and/or Announcements. The team identified two items that need further work/collaboration and that the team determined to be beyond the scope of their charge and influence.

1. The consultant working team members expressed their concern with the inconsistency between districts regarding the scope of services/technical information included in the RFP and/or Announcement. Some districts include everything that could possibly be necessary within the project scope and others include only minimal information. The working team agrees it is important to achieve more consistency within this area; however, the team also agrees, due to the technical nature of this task, it does not fall within the charge of this working team. The working team recommends this issue be addressed either during the Peer Review/Exchange or a new working team be developed to address this technical issue
2. An additional concern was discussed within the team regarding the need to ensure that the proposal content match the rating criteria listed in the RFP and/or Announcement. It was concluded that this issue could be addressed at District Coordinators meetings and through additional training efforts and guidance development within MnDOT. It is recommended that these training efforts and guidance be shared with the ACEC/MnDOT Collaboration Team.