

How to Select an Engineering or Architectural Company for Your Project



West Virginia Qualifications Based Selection
(QBS) Council



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by the

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(QBS) Council**

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The West Virginia Qualification Based Selection (QBS) Council is comprised of the American Council of Engineering Companies of West Virginia, the West Virginia Society of Professional Engineers, and American Institute of Architects-West Virginia, and advocates the use of Qualifications Based Selection because it is the most widely recommended method for obtaining quality engineering and architectural services, and quality design is more likely to result in a constructed project that is highly economical to build, maintain and operate over its useful life. Chapter 5G of the WV Code, passed by the WV Legislature in 1990, mandates the use of a QBS-type procedure by all state and local government entities.

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WHAT IS QBS?

QBS is short for Qualifications Based Selection process. QBS is a process that enables the project owner to obtain the services of a highly qualified engineering, architectural or design professional at a fair and reasonable cost. QBS is an investment in quality that will result in substantial savings over the life of the project.

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD DESIGN

It is no exaggeration to say that the most important ingredient of any construction project is its design. The quality of design is the single most important factor in determining a project's "lifecycle cost" — the initial cost of construction, plus the ongoing costs for operation and maintenance.

The QBS process recognizes that design professionals play a critical role in the public construction process and that procurement of engineering and architectural services is a very specialized type of procurement. Since design services represent only a small percentage of the overall construction cost, it is in the best interest of the taxpayer that the most qualified firms are selected for public projects.

Design is one of the very first steps in the construction process, but it dictates everything that follows: the size and layout of the facility; type of construction materials; capacity of mechanical and electrical systems; energy efficiency; and other factors. Not even the best contractor using the finest of construction materials can overcome the failings of a poor design.

Professional design services — engineering or architecture — represent only a small percentage of the construction budget, and a far smaller percentage of life-cycle cost, so it makes sound economic sense to ensure your consulting engineer or architect has the experience and qualifications needed to deliver a high-quality design.

This manual will explain, in detail, how to select and retain a consulting professional engineer, architect, or other "design professional", using the QBS process.

While the primary purpose of this manual is to assist cities, municipalities, public service districts, school boards and other "public agencies," private construction owners and other design professionals can reap the same benefits from the use of QBS. Throughout this manual, the terms "owner" and "public agency" are used interchangeably to refer to public construction project owners.

WHY USE QUALIFICATIONS BASED SELECTION?

Construction of any physical facility is a complicated and highly technical process. Yet, at the outset of most construction projects, owners do not fully comprehend the complexities of the projects they envision and the wide range of design and construction services that will be required in order to transform their vision into reality.

The consulting engineer or architect takes the owner's general concepts and transforms them into technical documents — plans and specifications — that are used by the construction contractor to build the owner's facility.

In the construction process, the professional engineer or architect serves as the agent of the owner, representing the owner's interests in day-to-day dealings with contractors, suppliers, equipment manufacturers and others providing goods and services on the project. The engineer or architect is also the owner's "eyes and ears" on the construction site. Obviously, it is vital that the owner and engineer share a professional relationship characterized by trust, respect and effective communication.

Qualifications-Based Selection fosters this type of relationship by bringing the owner and engineer or architect together as a team, enabling them to define the project in detail and agree upon the services that will be required to make the project a reality. No wonder, then, that QBS is the most widely endorsed method for selecting a professional consulting engineer.

Since 1972, all agencies of the federal government have been required to follow the Brooks Act (the QBS procedure for selecting design professionals). In 1990, the West Virginia legislature passed "Chapter 5G of the West Virginia Code", included in Appendix A, which mandates the use of a QBS-type procedure by all state and local government entities.

The American Bar Association recommends the use of Qualifications-Based Selection by state and local governments, saying:

"The principal reasons supporting this procedure for engineering and architectural services, are the lack of a definitive scope of work for such services at the time the selection is made and the importance of selecting the best qualified firm. In general, the engineer or architect is engaged to represent the State's interests and is, therefore, in a different relationship with the State from that normally existing in a buyer-seller situation. For these reasons, the qualifications, competence and availability of the three most qualified firms are considered initially, and price negotiated later."

The American Public Works Association, agrees, saying:

*"Competitive bidding for engineering and architectural services is **not** in the best public interest because it may lead to the employment of the least qualified rather than the best qualified, as should be the objective. The sole objective of bidding is low cost. Only when the services or a product can be described in exact detail, where all parties can bid on the same basis for comparison, should bidding be considered. Professional services in engineering, law, architecture, and medicine — to name a few — are not recognized as being amenable to detailed specifications."*

HOW QUALIFICATIONS-BASED SELECTION WORKS

The QBS process involves three distinct phases:

Phase I — Selection of the Most Qualified Engineer or Architect

The project owner prepares a basic description of the project to be built or the problem to be solved, then invites engineering or architectural firms to submit statements of qualifications to be considered for the contract. Interested firms are rated objectively on the basis of their qualifications and ultimately; the most qualified firm is identified and offered the opportunity to enter contract negotiations.

Phase II — Definition of the Scope of Service

The selected engineering or architectural firm meets with the owner to discuss the proposed project in detail. These discussions enable the engineer or architect to write a detailed scope of service, a document that specifies exactly the various tasks the engineer or architect will perform on behalf of the owner.

Phase III — Fee and Contract Negotiation

Once the scope of services is agreed upon, the engineer or architect develops a fee proposal for the owner's consideration. If the fee proposal is agreeable, the two parties enter into a contract. If the fee proposal is not acceptable, the two parties agree on revisions to the scope of work and budget, then enter into a contract for the project.

The following pages describe each of these phases in detail.

PHASE I – SELECTION OF THE MOST QUALIFIED ENGINEER OR ARCHITECT

STEP 1: PREPARE A PRELIMINARY PROJECT DESCRIPTION

To begin the selection process, prepare a brief written description of the project. This helps interested engineering or architectural firms decide whether they are capable and qualified to perform the services needed. When the preliminary project description is properly written and communicated, it saves time, money, and effort for both the owner and the interested firms.

The preliminary project description should include:

- The project name or identification and planned location.
- Project details, including intended size, function, capacity, and other general requirements. Is the project a renovation or modernization? Will it involve demolition, additions, new construction, or energy or land use studies?
- Project budget and anticipated funding sources.
- Anticipated project schedule, including completion of design work, beginning of construction, and planned project completion date.
- Unique requirements or restrictions such as zoning or environmental problems.
- Specific services to be provided by the engineer or architect, such as feasibility studies, program development, design, construction observation or management, budget development.

A blank form to assist you in developing a preliminary project description is included in the back of this manual as Appendix B.

STEP 2: REQUEST SUBMISSION OF QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS

Once the preliminary description of the project has been prepared, interested and qualified engineering or architectural firms should be invited to submit statements of their professional qualifications.

Chapter 5G of the WV Code requires every public agency to announce its intent to contract for engineering and architectural services. However, the law provides for two methods for making this announcement depending on the anticipated total project cost.

For projects where total project cost is \$250,000 or greater, the public agency is required to publish a Class II legal advertisement and may wish to send the announcement to professional organizations such as the American Council of Engineering Companies of West Virginia, West Virginia Society of Professional Engineers or American Institute of Architects-West Virginia for wider distribution. A sample ad is included as Appendix C.

For projects where the total cost is less than \$250,000, the public agency may, although not required to, utilize the process described above, or mail the announcement directly to a pre-selected group of firms. See Appendix D.

No matter which form of announcement the public agency utilizes, documentation of the announcement should be kept on file at least until project completion.

The contract announcement should include:

- The preliminary project description.
- The project owner's name and the name, address and phone number of the project contact person.
- A list of information each firm should include in its statement of qualifications, such as the names of firm owners, number of years in business, the types of services offered, background on key technical personnel, similar projects designed by the firm, projects underway, etc.
- The deadline for submitting statements of qualifications. Please allow adequate time in your project schedule for submission of statement of qualifications (a minimum of two weeks is suggested).

See Appendix E for a model of an invitation to submit statements of professional qualifications.

STEP 3: EVALUATE STATEMENTS OF QUALIFICATIONS

When the deadline for submission of statements of qualifications has passed, the owner should then evaluate the qualifications of those firms that responded and narrow the field of interested firms to a "short list" of three to five firms.

Each firm that submitted a statement of qualifications should be evaluated on the basis of its experience on similar projects, expertise of its key professional staff, its physical equipment and facilities, references, and other factors of importance to the owner.

This evaluation should be conducted by a committee, consisting of at least three members, appointed by the owner. Again, some local governments may have specific ordinances or policies regarding the makeup of selection committees. The most important consideration is that the person or persons performing the evaluation are fair and competent and capable of making rational decisions.

A sample of a scoring sheet like that normally used in the evaluation of the statements of qualifications is provided as Appendix F.

Frequently, an owner will attach more importance to certain firm qualifications than others (for instance, experience on similar projects might be most important). This form can be tailored to meet those concerns simply by assigning a higher arithmetic weight to those factors that are of greatest significance to the owner.

Before meeting to perform the evaluations, the owner should check the references of each firm under consideration. This check should not be limited to the references supplied by the firms. A model form to aid in the checking of references is included as Appendix G.

Based upon the evaluation of the statements of qualifications and reference checks, lesser-qualified firms can be disqualified, leaving a short-list of three to five firms for further consideration. For most projects it is recommended that three firms be short-listed. For a very large project, a short list of four or five firms may be desired.

The short-listed firms should be officially notified that they have been selected for further consideration. A model of a memorandum that informs the short-listed firms of their selection for further consideration is included as Appendix H. As a courtesy, the owner should also send a letter of thanks to those firms not selected for further consideration.

STEP 4: EVALUATE AND RANK THE SHORT-LISTED FIRMS

Once the short-list of firms selected for further consideration is complete, the owner begins the next step in the selection process: evaluation and ranking of the short-listed firms.

PRE-INTERVIEW

Generally, it is to the benefit of the owner to allow the short-listed firms to tour the project site prior to the interview. Touring the site gives the firms the opportunity to obtain information about the proposed project that can help them prepare better proposals and aids them in preparing for interviews.

Tours work best when a representative of the owner meets independently with representatives of each firm. On larger projects, a group tour for all short-listed firms may be more expeditious. Care should be taken to give all firms equal opportunity prior to the interview.

At this time, the owner should also make available to all of the short-listed firms any feasibility studies, surveys, or other preliminary information that could help the firms in the preparation of their presentation.

INTERVIEWING SHORT-LISTED FIRMS

By interviewing representatives of the short-listed firms, the owner has the opportunity to compare each firm's interpretation and understanding of the project and the various technical approaches that the firms may propose to accomplish the project.

Interviews also give the owner an important insight into each firm's management style and communications abilities. For this reason, the owner should require that all short-listed firms send managers or principals, as well as the key engineers, architects and other professionals who will be responsible for the work, to these interviews.

The following are suggested guidelines for setting up and conducting the interviews:

The physical setup for the interview should be comfortable, with good acoustics and sufficient room. A separate area should be provided for firms waiting to be interviewed. Equipment such as blackboards, flip charts, and audiovisual screens will be useful if available. Most firms, however, will bring their own equipment to present their information. Time should be allowed between interviews for setup time.

Generally, the agenda for each interview includes a presentation by the design firm, followed by a question-and-answer period. If the owner wishes to deviate from this format, or specify time limits for the presentation portion of the interview, the design firms should be so advised when they are notified of their short-listing.

Allow approximately 45 minutes for each interview and at least 15 minutes between interviews. This will allow ample time for representatives of the engineering or architectural firms to make their presentations and for you to ask questions. This should also allow sufficient time for selection committee members to discuss the presentations among themselves before beginning the next interview. The time allowed for interviews should be tailored to the complexity of the project.

Schedule all of the interviews on the same day. This enables the committee to compare all of the interviewed firms while information is fresh in their minds and ensures consistent interview scoring.

Most interviews are held in a closed session. If ordinances or regulations require that the interviews be conducted publicly, the firms should be notified of this requirement.

While it is appropriate to question firms about how they would approach the design of a project, owners should not ask for an actual design solution during the interview. Appropriate and responsive designs require considerably more interaction between the owner and design professional than is possible during the interview. If either the owner or the design professional comes to the interview with a preconceived solution, considerable time and energy will have been spent to get to this point. This may inhibit further creativity and prevent other, perhaps better, solutions from being explored.

Owners should not discuss fees for professional services during the interview process. Specific fee amounts will be resolved later, during detailed discussions with the firm selected, after there is a comprehensive and mutual understanding of the actual scope of services to be performed. This ensures that the owner's requirements for the project are taken into account in the development of the scope of services, rather than having the scope and fee developed solely by the design firm.

THE FINAL RANKING PROCESS

After interviews have been conducted, each firm should be evaluated independently by each member of the selection committee. It is critical that this evaluation be as fair and impartial as possible, and for this reason it is helpful to rate each firm by using a standard form that lists the significant selection criteria.

A model evaluation form is included as Appendix I. Again, this form should be tailored to reflect the owner's priorities in terms of which criteria are most important.

When conducting the evaluations, each committee member ranks the firms, highest to lowest, according to their total scores. The chairman should then collect the evaluation sheets from the members of the committee. Each firm's scores are then tallied and averaged, and the firms are then ranked, from the highest average score to the lowest. A model tally sheet for the evaluation forms is included as Appendix J.

The firm that is rated most highly overall should be notified that it has been selected to receive the contract, pending agreement on the scope of service and the fee for those services. The other short-listed firms should be notified of the final ranking, as well. A model memorandum to short-listed firms, announcing the final selection, is included as Appendix K.

At this point, the owner is ready to proceed to the next phase of the QBS process.

PHASE II – DEFINITION OF THE SCOPE OF SERVICE

From the moment the most qualified firm has been identified, the owner and the selected firm begin working together as a team. They start by sitting down together to discuss the project in detail and to gain a better understanding of one another.

The engineer or architect will want to learn about the owner's priorities and objectives for the project. Is the most important objective to keep the initial construction cost as low as possible? Or is very high dependability (i.e., low risk of failure or interruption of service) more important? Is it imperative that the design and construction time be kept to a minimum to realize operational benefits more quickly, or is it more important to design and construct the facility to ensure that long-term operating costs are minimized? Are there unique social, environmental or political issues involved in the project? Is it possible the facility will be expanded or modified in the future?

While it is vital that the engineer or architect has a full and detailed understanding of the owner's goals and objectives, it is just as important for the owner to understand exactly what can and cannot be expected as a result of the engineer's or architect's work.

This exchange, which can take several days on a major project, leads to the development of the detailed scope of service, the written document that specifies the services to be provided by the engineer or architect. This document is the foundation of the contract between the two parties.

PHASE III – FEE AND CONTRACT NEGOTIATION

ESTABLISHING ENGINEERING OR ARCHITECTURAL FEES

When the detailed scope of service is agreed upon, the engineer or architect is in a position to develop and submit a detailed fee proposal to the owner.

Consulting engineers or architects use basically four different methods to calculate fees for their services. No matter which of these fee methods is used, the owner has a right to expect that the engineer or architect will be able to fully document the proposed fee.

The lump sum or fixed-fee is perhaps the most common fee structure in use today. As its name implies, under a fixed-fee arrangement, the owner and engineer or architect agree in advance on the total compensation that will be paid for the agreed-upon services. This fee basis is best used when all of the project tasks and required services are well defined and can be mutually agreed upon during negotiation.

While the lump sum fee basis may provide the highest comfort level for the owner, because engineering or architectural-costs are fixed at the outset of the project, it should be recognized that the lump sum fee must be renegotiated if the engineer or architect is required to perform additional work not included in the original scope of service, or conversely, should the original scope of service be reduced.

Another frequently used fee structure is time-plus-expense. Most firms have developed a standard hourly fee rate for each of their professional employees. Project fees are estimated by multiplying the estimated number of hours the professional will spend on the project times the standard hourly rate. This number is then multiplied by a factor to cover the firm's indirect costs for items such as rent, computer design equipment and software, telephones, taxes, fringe benefits and other items of "overhead," plus profit.

Frequently, time-plus-expense contracts will provide for a "not-to-exceed" maximum fee. Should the original scope of services change, the "not-to-exceed" maximum will be revised.

Under the per diem fee method, the owner agrees to pay the engineer or architect a predetermined fee for each day, or part of a day, the engineer or architect devotes to the service of the owner. Per-diem compensation is most frequently employed when the work is personal, of a limited time duration or somewhat irregular. This could include consultation in highly specialized areas, such as appraisals, feasibility studies, investigation of conditions, collection of data, court or public hearing testimony.

A variant of the per diem method of compensation is the retainer. Generally, an owner will employ a consulting engineer or architect on a retainer basis to be assured of having quick access to the services of a selected individual engineer or firm. Smaller municipalities will frequently use the retainer method of compensation to contract for services of a consulting engineer or architect to serve as city or town engineer. Compensation is based on a fixed sum, paid monthly, or on some other mutually agreeable basis, with additional compensation at hourly rates for additional time spent at the request of the owner.

THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS

If the fee proposed by the engineer or architect is more than the owner has budgeted, the parties sit down together to review options for modifying the scope of services, in order to reduce the fee. The engineer or architect informs the client of any risks or problems that might result from any changes in the scope of services, and a revised fee is agreed upon. This kind of an open, communicative relationship greatly enhances the odds for a successful project.

On occasion, two parties negotiating in good faith will be unable to reach a contract agreement. This happens infrequently because, by its very nature, the QBS process fosters excellent communication and understanding between the owner and engineering or architectural firm. If an impasse is reached, however, the owner should terminate discussions with the first-ranked firm and invite the firm ranked second on the short-list to enter into contract discussions. If an agreement cannot be reached with the second ranked firm, the owner should terminate discussions and invite the third ranked firm to enter negotiations. At no time should the owner reenter negotiations with a firm with whom negotiations have been terminated.

THE CONTRACT FORM

It is standard practice today for the project owner and engineer or architect to enter into a written contract for professional services. While some public agencies feel it is in their best interest to draft their own contract forms, generally it is wise to consider use of a standard contract form, such as those developed by the Engineers Joint Contract Documents Committee or the American Institute of Architects. The EJCDC and AIA documents are widely used, have been tested in courts throughout the United States over several decades, and are generally regarded as fairly protecting the interests of the owners, engineers, architects and contractors.

QUALIFICATIONS BASED SELECTION IS FLEXIBLE

Qualifications-Based Selection is a comprehensive process, but it need not be burdensome. In fact, the great virtue of the system is that it can be adapted to any project, large or small, regardless of complexity.

Small projects: total cost less than \$250,000.

You can tailor each step in the process to meet your needs and your timetable. For instance, on a small project, with total project cost less than \$250,000, the preliminary project description might be very brief, perhaps only a few paragraphs. And rather than sending out formal invitations to submit statements of qualifications, you might simply telephone three or four recommended firms, fax them the preliminary project description and ask them to submit statements of qualifications. On projects of greater urgency, you may want to request submission of statements of qualifications from three reputable firms, then proceed directly to selection, scope definition and execution of a contract. As noted previously, neither project site tours nor interviews are necessary on all projects.

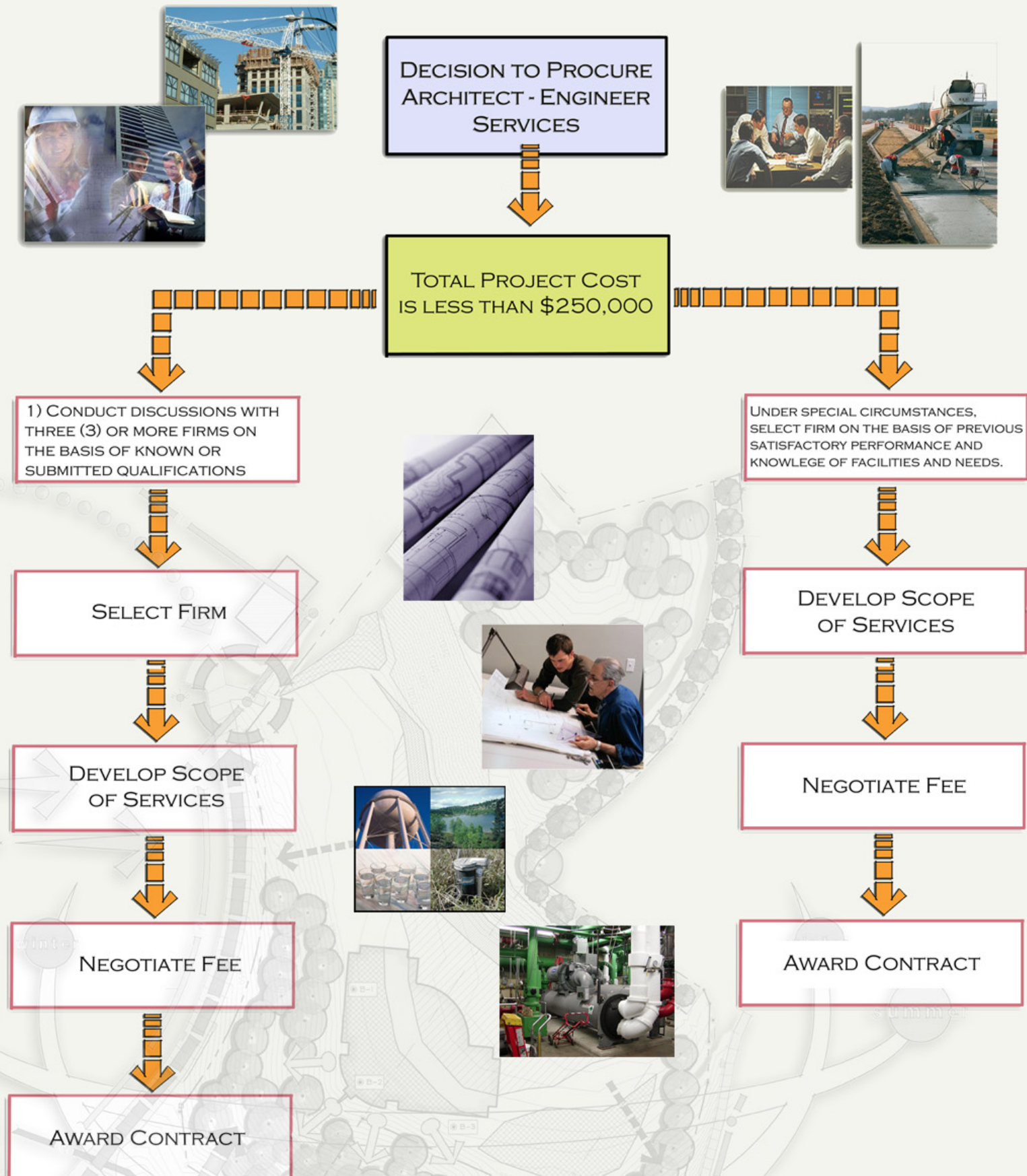
Large projects: total cost more than \$250,000.

Larger and perhaps more complex projects, may require the project description to be more detailed than that required for smaller, less complex, projects. On projects of greater urgency, you may want to have a detailed scope of services prepared in addition to the project description in order to allow the process to be expedited.

The point is, QBS is a flexible, reliable process which is widely recommended because it enables you to obtain quality engineering and architectural services at a fair and reasonable cost. This investment in quality will *save* you money over the life of your project.

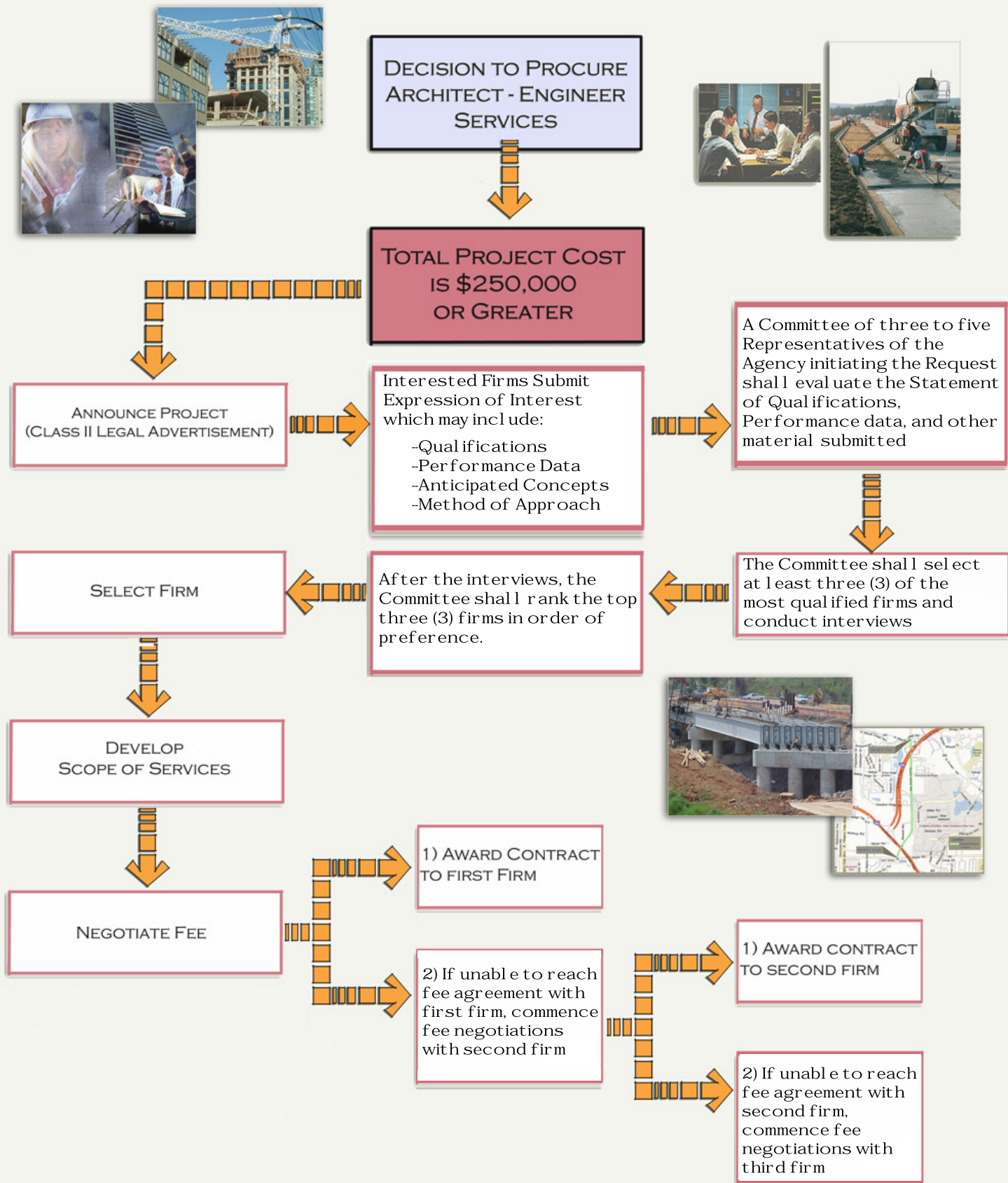
West Virginia QBS Process Flow Chart

For Projects Less Than \$250,000



West Virginia QBS Process Flow Chart

For Projects \$250,000 or Greater



QUALIFICATIONS BASED SELECTION MEANS QUALITY

Our society is becoming more and more conscious of the need to build quality into everything we do, everything we produce. We have come to learn that simply paying a low price for something isn't enough; we expect to get value for the price we pay.

Dr. W. Edwards Deming, one of the fathers of the quality management initiative in American industry, said it this way in the fourth of his 14 rules for quality improvement:

"End the practice of awarding business on the basis of price tag. Instead, minimize total cost. Move toward a single supplier for any one item, on a long-term relationship of loyalty and trust. "

This quotation, in a nutshell, describes the philosophy behind Qualifications-Based Selection. Engineers and architects are licensed professionals, just as are lawyers and doctors. To remain in practice, they must build long-term, trusting relationships with their clients, and this is possible only by providing a high quality service at a fair and reasonable cost.

It is said that "Some people know the price of everything and the value of nothing." By using Qualifications-Based Selection, you can be assured of receiving true value at a fair and reasonable price, and that translates into a quality project.

CHAPTER 5G. PROCUREMENT OF ARCHITECT-ENGINEER SERVICES BY STATE AND ITS SUBDIVISIONS.

ARTICLE 1. PROCUREMENT OF ARCHITECT-ENGINEER SERVICES.

§5G-1-1. Declaration of legislative policy.

The Legislature hereby declares it to be the policy of the state, and its political subdivisions, to procure architectural or engineering services or both on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualification for the type of professional services required.

§5G-1-2. Definitions.

As used in this section:

- (a) The term "agency" means all state departments, agencies, authorities, quasi-public corporations and all political subdivisions, including cities, counties, boards of education and public service districts.
- (b) The term "architectural and engineering services" includes those professional services of an architectural or engineering nature as well as incidental services that members of those professions and those in their employ may logically or justifiably perform.
- (c) The term "director of purchasing" means any individual assigned by any agency to procure the services of architects and engineers.
- (d) The term "firm" or "professional firm" means any individual, firm, partnership, corporation, association or other legal entity permitted by law to practice the professions of architecture and engineering.

§5G-1-3. Contracts for architectural and engineering services; selection process where total project costs are estimated to cost two hundred fifty thousand dollars or more.

In the procurement of architectural and engineering services for projects estimated to cost two hundred fifty thousand dollars or more, the director of purchasing shall encourage such firms engaged in the lawful practice of the profession to submit an expression of interest, which shall include a statement of qualifications and performance data, and may include anticipated concepts and proposed methods of approach to the project. All such jobs shall be announced by public notice published as a Class II legal advertisement in compliance with the provisions of article three, chapter fifty-nine of this code. A committee of three to five representatives of the agency initiating the request shall evaluate the statements of qualifications and performance data and other material submitted by interested firms and select three firms which, in their opinion, are best qualified to perform the desired service: *Provided*, That on projects funded wholly or in part by school building agency moneys, in accordance with sections fifteen and sixteen, article nine-d, chapter eighteen of this code, two of said three firms shall have had offices within this state for a period of at least one year prior to submitting an expression of interest regarding a project funded by school building agency moneys. Interviews with each firm selected shall be conducted and the committee shall conduct discussions regarding anticipated concepts and proposed methods of approach to the assignment. The committee shall then rank, in order of preference, no less than three professional firms deemed to be

the most highly qualified to provide the services required, and shall commence scope of service and price negotiations with the highest qualified professional firm for architectural or engineering services or both. Should the agency be unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with the professional firm considered to be the most qualified, at a fee determined to be fair and reasonable, price negotiations with the firm of second choice shall commence. Failing accord with the second most qualified professional firm, the committee shall undertake price negotiations with the third most qualified professional firm. Should the agency be unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with any of the selected professional firms, it shall select additional professional firms in order of their competence and qualifications and it shall continue negotiations in accordance with this section until an agreement is reached: *Provided, however,* That county boards of education may either elect to start the selection process over in the original order of preference or it may select additional professional firms in order of their competence and qualifications and it shall continue negotiations in accordance with this section until an agreement is reached.

§5G-1-4. Contracts for architectural and engineering services; selection process where total project costs are estimated to cost less than two hundred fifty thousand dollars.

In the procurement of architectural and engineering services for projects estimated to cost less than two hundred fifty thousand dollars, competition shall be sought by the agency. The agency shall conduct discussions with three or more professional firms solicited on the basis of known or submitted qualifications for the assignment prior to the awarding of any contract: *Provided,* That if a judgment is made that special circumstances exist and that seeking competition is not practical, the agency may, with the prior approval of the director of purchasing, select a firm on the basis of previous satisfactory performance and knowledge of the agency's facilities and needs. After selection, the agency and firm shall develop the scope of services required and negotiate a contract.

**Preliminary Project Description
(Model Form)**

Name of Project _____

Project Owner _____

Project Location _____

Contact Person _____ Title _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Description of Proposed Project _____

Total Budget (if known) _____

Source of Financing (if known) _____

Project Schedule:

Planned Date of Design Startup _____

Planned Date of Design Completion _____

Planned Date of Construction Startup _____

Planned Date of Construction Completion _____

Special Restrictions or Conditions (if known)

Professional Services Anticipated _____

(SAMPLE AD)
(Total Project Cost \$250,000 or more)

Request for Professional Engineering Services

The (agency/owner) is accepting Statement of Qualifications from qualified professional engineering consulting firms detailing the firm's qualifications, technical expertise, management and staffing capabilities, references, and related prior experience for (project description). **The total cost of such project is anticipated to cost \$250,000 or more.** Professional services may include, but are not limited to: (scope of services).

Procurement of said services will be in accordance with Chapter 5G-1-3 of the WV Code. Interested firms must submit (#) copies of all requested information to (contact/address/deadline).

Attention is directed to the fact that the proposed project(s) may be undertaken with a variety of Federal and State funds (state sources if known) and that all work will be performed in accordance with the regulations issued by such agencies and the State of West Virginia pertaining thereto.

The selected firm will be required to comply with Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 11246, Section 109 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1974, Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, Conflict of Interest Statement and Access to Records provisions and all other requirements as they relate to HUD-funded projects.

The (agency/owner) shall evaluate the statements of qualifications and performance data and other material submitted by interested firms and select a minimum of three firms which, in their opinion, are best qualified to perform the desired services. Interviews with each firm selected shall be conducted, which may include discussions regarding anticipated concepts and proposed methods of approach. The (agency/owner) shall rank, in order of preference, these three professional firms deemed to be the most highly qualified to provide the services required, and shall commence scope of services and price negotiations with the highest qualified professional firm for engineering services.

Should the (agency/owner) be unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with the professional firm considered to be the most qualified, at a fee determined to be fair and reasonable, price negotiations with the firm of second choice shall commence. Failing accord with the second most qualified professional firm, the committee shall undertake price negotiations with the third most qualified professional firm. Should the (agency/owner) be unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with any of the selected professional firms, it shall select additional professional firms in order of their competence and qualifications and it shall continue negotiations in accordance with these procedures until an agreement is reached.

The (agency/owner) will afford full opportunity to women-owned and minority business enterprises to submit a show of interest in response to this request and will not discriminate against any interested firm or individual on the grounds of race, creed, color, sex, age, handicap or national origin in the award of this contract.

(SAMPLE AD)
(Total Project Cost under \$250,000)

Request for Professional Engineering Services

The (agency/owner) is accepting Statement of Qualifications from qualified professional engineering consulting firms detailing the firm's qualifications, technical expertise, management and staffing capabilities, references, and related prior experience for (project description). **The total cost of such project is anticipated to cost less than \$250,000.** Professional services may include, but are not limited to: (scope of services).

Procurement of said services will be in accordance with Chapter 5G-1-3 of the WV Code. Interested firms must submit (#) copies of all requested information to (contact/address/deadline).

Attention is directed to the fact that the proposed project(s) may be undertaken with a variety of Federal and State funds (state sources if known) and that all work will be performed in accordance with the regulations issued by such agencies and the State of West Virginia pertaining thereto.

The selected firm will be required to comply with Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 11246, Section 109 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1974, Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, Conflict of Interest Statement and Access to Records provisions and all other requirements as they relate to HUD-funded projects.

The (agency/owner) will afford full opportunity to women-owned and minority business enterprises to submit a show of interest in response to this request and will not discriminate against any interested firm or individual on the grounds of race, creed, color, sex, age, handicap or national origin in the award of this contract.

Invitation to Submit a Statement of Professional Qualifications (Model Form)

TO: *(List all firms that receive the invitation)*

FROM: *(Project owner)*
(Owner's representative and title)

SUBJECT: *Invitation to Submit Statement of Professional Qualifications*

Your firm is invited to submit its statement of professional qualifications to become eligible for an interview that could lead to a design commission for our project. Attached is a list of information that should be included in your statement of qualifications, along with a preliminary project description.

It is our intention to review the statements of qualifications and select *(insert number)* firms for further consideration. The short-listed firms will be given tours of the project site and granted interviews prior to final selection of a design consultant.

Your statement of qualifications should be delivered to the following address no later than 5 p.m. on *(date)*. Statements received after this deadline will not be considered.

Statements of qualifications should be transmitted to:

Name _____

Title _____

Address _____

Evaluation Form for Statements of Qualifications (Model Form)

Name of Project _____

Name of Design Firm _____

Name of Evaluator _____

Criteria	Rating*	Weight**	Score
I. Firm and Individual Qualifications			
• Firm's number of years in business	x	(0-5)	=
• Firm's background and experience on similar projects	x	(0-5)	=
• Experience of firm's current personnel on similar projects	x	(0-5)	=
II. Proximity to Project Site	x	(0-5)	=
III. Capacity to Perform Work			
• Ability to meet proposed schedule	x	(0-5)	=
• Firm's equipment & facilities	x	(0-5)	=
IV. References			
• Quality of design	x	(0-5)	=
• Technical innovation	x	(0-5)	=
• Meeting schedules & deadlines	x	(0-5)	=
• Controlling Costs/adhering to budget	x	(0-5)	=
• Communications/cooperation	x	(0-5)	=
V. Past Performance (if any) for this Public Agency	x	(0-5)	=
Total Score		=	

* *Suggested rating scale: 1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent, 5 = Superior*

** *These weighting factors should be adjusted for each project, according to the needs and priorities of the public agency.*

**Design Firm Reference Check
(Model Form)**

Name of Design Firm _____

Project Referenced _____

Owner _____ Person contacted _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

1. What was the type of project? _____

2. When was your project completed? _____

3. What services did the firm provide? (Design, construction observation, etc.)

4. Name of firm's representative you worked with most closely. _____

5. Was the project successful? _____
a. If no, why? _____

6. Would you hire the firm again? _____

7. Other? _____

**Memo to Firms Selected
for Further Consideration
(Model Form)**

TO: *(Name of firm selected for further consideration)*

FROM: *(Project owner's representative)*

SUBJECT: *(Project name)*

Your firm has been short-listed and will receive further consideration for a contract to provide _____ services on our project.
(engineering, architectural, etc.)

The other firms selected for further consideration are:

1) _____

2) _____

(The following language may be included if interviews or site tours are planned.)

We would like to interview representatives of each of the short-listed firms. Each firm will be allowed 30 - 60 minutes to make its presentation and answer questions. The interview for your firm is scheduled for _____ on _____ at _____.
(date) (time) (location)

Your interview team should consist of at least one principal of the firm and/or the person who would serve as the project manager for our project

All firms will be provided an opportunity to tour the project site prior to the interview .
To arrange a tour, please call me no later than _____.
(date)

Evaluation Form for Short-Listed Firms (Model Form)

Name of Project _____

Name of Design Firm _____

Name of Evaluator _____

	Maximum Points	Points Awarded
1. Grasp of Project Requirements Firm's analysis, interview preparation and level of interest.	20	
2. Design Approach/Methodology Technical alternatives, creativity and problem-solving ability.	20	
3. Project Management Proposed Project schedule and cost controls.	15	
4. Key Project Personnel Qualifications Experience of project manager and other key personnel.	15	
5. Firm Responsiveness Plan Progress reports, general attitude and ability to communicate.	15	
6. Interview Score Did the firm respond effectively to issues and questions raised during the interview?	15	
	TOTAL	

Final Evaluation
Tally Sheet
(Model Form)

	Points Awarded		
	Firm A	Firm B	Firm C
Interviewer 1.....			
Interviewer 2.....			
Interviewer 3.....			
Interviewer 4.....			
Interviewer 5.....			
Total Score			
Average Score			

**Memo to Short-Listed Firms,
Announcing Final Selection
(Model Form)**

TO: *(List alphabetically all short-listed firms.)*

FROM: *(Project Owner's Representative)*

SUBJECT: *(Project Name)*

After evaluating the technical proposals submitted for this project *(and interviewing representatives of each of the short-listed firms)*, we have ranked the firms in the following order:

1)_____

2)_____

3)_____

Throughout this process, it has been our objective to select the firm most qualified to provide the services we require. Accordingly, we have entered into contract negotiations with

_____.

(most highly ranked firm)

Please accept our most sincere thanks for the time and effort you have expended on our behalf. Perhaps we will have the opportunity to work together on another project in the future.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS ON QUALIFICATIONS-BASED SELECTION

The American Bar Association Model Procurement Code

American Bar Association
Section of Public Contract Law
1800 M Street, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036
www.abanet.org

Selection & Use of Engineering & Architectural Consultants: Guidelines for Public Agencies

American Public Works Association
106 West 11th Street, Suite 1800
Kansas City, MO 64105-1806
www.apwa.net

Management of Public Works Construction Projects

American Public Works Association
106 West 11th Street, Suite 1800
Kansas City, MO 64105-1806
www.apwa.net

Council on Federal Procurement of Architectural and Engineering Services (COFPAES)

1760 Reston Parkway, Suite 515
Reston, VA 20190
www.cofpaes.org

National Society of Professional Engineers

1420 King St.
Alexandria, VA 22314
www.nspe.org

The American Institute of Architects

1735 New York Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20006-5292
www.aia.org

American Council of Engineering Companies

1015 15th St. NW
Washington, DC 20005-2605
www.acec.org

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www.aia WV.org

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