

Initial Report-I-15 Corridor Fencing
Idaho Transportation Department
Best Value

January 13, 2015
Idaho Transportation Department
Initial Report for SEP (Special Experimental Project)14
I-15 Corridor Fence Removal and Replacement
Bonneville, Jefferson, Clark and Camas Counties
ITD Project A012(451)

A. Introduction

The Idaho Transportation Department submits this initial report under the provisions of Special Experimental Project Number 14 (SEP 14) for the use of innovative contracting practices. This initial report includes a description of the scope of the I-15 Corridor fencing project, a brief history of the contract selection process for fencing services, industry comments on the process and lessons learned to date.

Approval to use the Best Value alternative delivery process was given by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on October 24, 2012. The Department prepared the Request for Proposals and advertised in July 2013.

A three member selection team consisting of ITD employees evaluated and scored the submitted RFPs. Four RFPs were submitted. All four proposers were invited for oral interviews. The selection team evaluated and scored the oral interviews and the scores were combined with the RFP scores. The Department issued an Intent to Award on August 22, 2013.

B. SCOPE

The scope of work for the I-15 corridor fence replacement project consists of the removal and replacement of approximately 46 miles of fencing along interstate 15. The work includes the complete removal and replacement of woven wire fence and removal and replacement of damaged and rusted T posts.

C. History

Development of the Request for Proposal.

After approval of the SEP 14, the project team finalized the RFP. The evaluation criteria in the RFP were developed to illicit responses from the prospective proposers that would allow the Selection Team to evaluate the proposers and determine which could provide the most value to the Department.

The Department adopted a scoring methodology developed by the Arizona State University, Performance Based Studies Research Group. The Department also secured the services of Kirsten Hurtado from the Arizona State University, Performance Based Studies Research Group. This department is headed by Dr. Dean Kashiwagi, PhD, PE. The scoring method was based on a 1, 5, & 10 scoring system.

A “10” represents that the vendor provides significantly higher value than the average vendor (clearly shows differential, clearly shows that the vendor has expertise doing this type of work)

A “5” represents that the vendor is about average/meets your expectations (or there is insufficient information to make a clear decision)

A “1” represents that the vendor is significantly below the average (shows deficiency, provides no evidence to prove expertise doing this type of work)

The evaluator must describe/explain reason for any “1” or “10” rating. The evaluator may attach addition pages if necessary

This scoring method reduces the impact of an individual Selection Team Member’s scores that differ significantly from the average scores. The scoring process was described in detail in the RFP.

D. Advertisement

The Department advertised the I-15 Corridor Fence Replacement project on July 12, 2013 and July 19, 2013. The RFP was made available in both a printed and electronic form. The RFP included General Information, Submissions Instructions, Proposal Format Requirements, Evaluation Information, Construction Special Provisions, Terms and Conditions, and proposers required submittal forms. The following exhibits were provided:

FHWA-1273
Evaluation Model
ITD 0914 Steel Certification Form

Once the project was advertised, all contact between the Department and prospective proposers was through the purchasing agent listed on the RFP. One addendum was issued on July 30, 2013.

E. Proposals Received

Four Proposals and Statements of Qualifications were submitted. All submittals were reviewed to make sure they complied with the requirements described on the RFP.

Evaluation of the RFP

The Selection Team was comprised of three ITD employees, an Engineer, a Supply Operations Manager and a Buyer. The Selection Team was not involved in the formulation of the Construction Special Provisions.

A Selection Team kickoff meeting was held August 8, 2013 to distribute the proposer's submittals and provide team member's guidance on the selection process. All submittals were "blind". Selection Team members did not know the proposers that the submittals belonged to. Selection Team members evaluated each submittal to the criteria listed below. A maximum total score of 1000 could be achieved, including interview points.

Evaluation Criteria and Possible Points

- Cost, Maximum Score: 250
The proposer was asked to provide a cost per linear foot; proposer's estimated linear foot and grand total.
The proposer was also asked to provide the cost of any value added options.
- Interviews, Maximum Score: 325
The proposer was invited to an oral interview.
- Risk Assessment Plan Score :175
- Value Assessment Plan Score: 100
- Past Performance Information-Prime Contractor (Firm) Score : 75
- Past Performance Information-Fencing Contractor Score: 75

The interviews were conducted after the Evaluation Team scored the Risk Assessment Plan, Value Assessment Plan and Past Performance Information.

Interviews were held with 4 vendors. The order of interviews was determined randomly. Each firm was limited to a total of forty minutes. An Evaluator Team member timed each segment of the interviews. The evaluator asked each firm the questions generated by the Selection Team. A total of 19 questions were asked of all firms. As time permitted, additional questions related to the project were asked by Selection Team members. The maximum score achievable on the oral interview was 325 points. Oral interview scores were added to the scoring matrix to determine the final score and rank order of each potential contractor.

The proposers Contract Manager was asked twelve questions ranging from experience, involvement in the preparation of the submittal, extent of examination of the existing fence, controllable/uncontrollable risks, the proposed schedule of events of the project, and how they will interface with the stakeholders.

The proposers Superintendent was asked seven questions ranging from experience, involvement in the preparation of the submittal, extent of examination of the existing fence, controllable/uncontrollable risks, are they present at the job site during the entire project, and the anticipated milestone of the project.

The Selection Team submitted their scores to the ITD Business and Support Management purchasing agent prior to the Selection Team meeting held on August 15, 2013. The team was presented with the combined scores and was given the opportunity to provide comments and discuss final scores. After a thorough discussion, agreement was reached.

The Selection Teams rankings of the all the firms were presented to the ITD District 6 Engineer. The District Engineer concurred with the rankings and the firms were notified via US Mail within 5 business days after the final interview.

A brief outline of the project milestones is given below:

Advertisement for RFP	July 12, 19, 2013
Proposer Best Value Education Conference	July 22, 2013
Issuance of Addendum No 1	July 30, 2013
Selection Team Kick Off Meeting	August 8, 2013
Proposer Interviews	August 14, 2013
Evaluation Team Pre-Award Meeting	August 15, 2014
ITD District 6 Engineer Presentation	August 19, 2014
Notice of Intent to Award	August 22, 2014

After the contract was issued, firms submitting proposals were given the opportunity for a debriefing.

The successful firm submitted all required bonds, documentation, and work schedules.

F. Lessons Learned

This is the second Best Value project undertaken by ITD. The following summary presents feedback from various selection team members. These comments will be considered by the Department as potential process improvements for future Best Value projects.

- a) Provide a list of what ITD wants covered in the oral interview presentations. Provide the list to the firms with their invitation to interview. This suggestion met with mixed responses. While some members agreed, others felt that

evaluating what the potential contractors elected to present was an important part of the selection process.

- b) Questions should be provided to the firms prior to oral presentation/interview. This suggestion was also met with mixed responses. Evaluating how the potential contractor's key personnel work together, think on their feet and interact is a part of the interview process along with their presentation. Providing the questions to the firms in advance would remove that component of the evaluation.
- c) It was suggested that ITD accompany the proposers on the initial inspection of the fence. This also met with mixed responses. The fence is static and a visual inspection was adequate for the proposer for estimating purposes.
- d) The Best Value process is new to a large part of the vendor community. The Best Value Education Conference needs to be geared more towards the project being discussed and less generic.

G. Lesson Learned from the Selected Contractor

Washburn Fence is a family owned corporation with past alternative delivery experience.

While ITD was focused on complete fence replacement, Washburn Fencing offered a Value Added alternative of leaving in place fence posts that were not damaged and not in need of replacement. With the implementation of the Value Added alternative, ITD will realize a 24% reduction in estimated costs of the project. These cost savings will be used to increase the amount of fence indicated in the original scope of work.

F. Industry Comments

No Industry Comments were received.

H. Conclusion

ITD believes that it has developed a well thought out Best Value alternative delivery process. As ITD does more Best Value projects, the selection process will be refined and improved based on experience and lessons learned.

Developing the RFP and aligning project specific questions that allow firms to present their qualification and strengths is one of the most important steps in a successful qualifications based selection.

The number of responses exceeded ITD's expectations and they were very competitive.