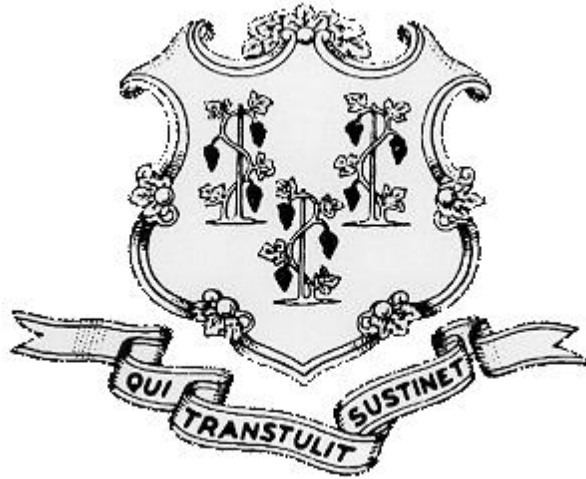


**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC**  
**AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**



**Professional Services**  
**Selection Process**

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**COMMISSIONER**

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## **Preamble**

The following professional services selection guideline has been prepared to ensure fairness and equal opportunity to all firms and to secure the highest possible measure of professional service for a fair and reasonable fee. The DECD funds recipient, “client”, may submit an alternative quality based selection process to DECD for review and approval. The client may also seek authorization from DECD to utilize existing DAS contracts for the project related services.

## **Development of a Scope of Services**

The client is responsible for the preparation of a scope of services. DECD reserves the right to review the scope of services prior to finalization. The scope of services shall include the following:

- A description of the intended project with clearly articulated goals & objectives, to include a description of the site, overview and background information
- A statement of purpose to describe the extent of services you are looking for including any preferences, conditions or requirements regarding approaches, data quality, and reporting requirements to accomplish the established objectives
- Funding program requirements
- A description of the professional services to be provided
- A description of the outcomes & performance standards and deliverables to be produced by the professional
- Any special expertise or unusual services that might be required
- Directions for access to relevant records (such as previously prepared environmental reports, mapping or other relevant project specific documentation)
- A time schedule for the overall project, including the selection process to retain a firm

## **Development of Request for Qualifications (RFQ)**

- The Client may want to consider if combining the RFQ and RFP into a one step selection process is the preferred approach for the project.

The client shall prepare a formal Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the proposed project, which shall prescribe the manner, conditions, and requirements of the response submissions. The RFQ shall request respondents to indicate their interest in the project and illustrate their relevant project experience and overall capabilities to perform the required services. The RFQ should include a minimum of the following:

- The scope of services
- The manner in which the firms qualifications shall be submitted which shall include the firms brochure, and relevant resume(s)
- An hourly rate and expense schedule
- Contact information for not less than three professional references
- A list of selection criteria (e.g. professional competence, experience on similar projects, insurance coverage, ability to perform the required service within the overall time schedule)
- The location and address where the responses are to be submitted
- The time schedule for receipt of responses, date and time

DECD reserves the right to review the RFQ prior to finalization.

### **Advertisement Procedure for Services Valued Under \$50,000**

The developer/client/municipality should solicit responses from interested firms by newspaper legal notice advertisements or direct solicitation via letter, fax or email. Trade publications may also be used to advertise the RFQ. A minimum of three responses should be received. Otherwise, justification should be provided. DECD reserves the right to request and inspect this documentation.

### **Advertisement Procedure for Services Valued Over \$50,000**

The client shall invite responses from interested firms by advertisements inserted at least once in one or more newspapers having a general circulation in the state. The advertisement shall be placed in the legal notices section. The RFQ may be placed in the major trade journals and distributed to professional societies and provided directly to firms. The Client shall affirmatively seek small, minority, and women owned businesses. The Client should provide DECD with record copies of the documentation

### **Selection Committee**

The Client shall establish a selection committee to screen and evaluate RFQ responses, select the qualification firms and request fee proposals, interview qualified firms, and make final selection. The committee should be assembled prior to the release of the RFQ.

### **Review of Responses and Selection**

The committee shall screen all responses received for compliance with the RFQ. Responses that do not comply with the intent of the RFQ will not be considered in the selection process.

The Committee shall establish evaluation criteria and forms for the purpose of evaluating and ranking each respondent's qualifications. The evaluation forms shall be finalized prior to the receipt of the proposals. Below are the suggested evaluations criteria:

- Proposed scope of work
- Qualifications and experience of personnel to be assigned to the project team
- Ability to provide the services within proposed project schedule time constraints
- Firm's awareness of project's issues, opportunities, and constraints
- Project team's composition and experience on similar projects
- Quality and performance of past services
- Hourly fees and expense schedule
- References feed back record

The committee shall review the responses and rank the firms according to their qualifications and criteria important to the project. The committee should develop a "short list" of the top three to five firms, which, in their judgments, are deemed to be most qualified to perform the required professional services.

Copies of the Statements of Qualification (SOQs) shall be provided to DECD at DECD's request. DECD reserves the right to participate and/monitor the selection committee deliberations, interview and selection process.

If fewer than five responses are received, then all qualified respondents could be considered eligible for further consideration.

## **Request for Fee Proposal**

The client shall notify the short listed firms of their selection and request each firm to submit their fee proposal for complete services based on the scope of services, as amended if necessary. The request shall stipulate the date and time for receipt of the fee proposals. The request shall also indicate the terms and conditions of the contract and the required time frame for providing professional services. Those firms not selected to submit fee proposals shall be so notified.

## **Review of Fee Proposals**

The evaluation of each of the fee proposals by the selection committee and client, shall consider the overall ranking of the firm and the fairness and reasonableness of the proposed fee. In determining fair and reasonable compensation to be paid, the committee shall consider:

- The scope of services,
- The professional competence of the professional firm,
- The technical merits of the proposal,
- The ability of the firm to perform the required services within the time and budgetary limits of the contract,
- The fee for which the services are to be rendered.

All proposals are to be considered confidential information until such time as the final selection is made and the contract is formally executed. The selection committee should select the most competitive fee proposals for final selection following an interview.

If there is a significant disparity among the fee proposals the client shall request each firm to substantiate their proposal during the interview, as appropriate. If the review reveals that the overall scope of services has been misinterpreted or lacks sufficient clarity, then the committee shall issue appropriate clarification to each firm and request a resubmission of proposals.

## **Interview Process**

The client shall arrange an interview of the top firms. The firms should be provided at least one-week advance notice of a date and time for their interview. Those firms not selected shall be so notified.

Prior to the interviews the committee shall prepare an evaluation form with predetermined selection criteria to allow interviewers to uniformly and independently evaluate the firms. The evaluation form may include the following:

- Project team management plan.
- Experience of project team.
- Location and quality of office facilities.
- Project control measures to monitor schedule and budget.
- Availability of staff, based on firm services load.
- Project approach.
- Quality of services of similar projects.
- Awards and past client recommendations.
- Financial stability of firm.
- Overall team rating.

The interviewed firms shall be allotted the same amount of time for their interview. The committee members evaluate and rate each firm during and/or immediately following each interview. After all interviews are completed the members should reassess their initial evaluation of each firm in comparison to the other firms' evaluations. The committee shall rank the firms in order of overall preference.

### **Final Selection**

The committee shall select the firm, which in accordance with the selection criteria, is most qualified to perform the required design services. The selection committee should provide a formal written recommendation of selection to the client.

### **Contract Execution**

The selected firm shall be notified of its selection. Those firms not selected shall be so notified. The selected firm shall be requested to prepare and submit the applicable contract along with the required certificates of insurance.

For architectural and engineering contracts, the contract form should be the current edition of the appropriate American Institute of Architects (AIA) or Engineers Joint Contract Document Committee (EJCDC) document. These documents should be used in their entirety.

### **Review of Contract**

A copy of the fully executed contract and certificates of insurance shall be submitted to the Department of Economic and Community Development. DECD reserves the right to review professional services contracts prior to finalization. DECD also reserves the right to review any subsequent amendments thereafter.

### **Records Maintenance**

The client shall maintain all records of the selection proceedings in a safe and secure manner. Such records shall be made available to the Department of Economic and Community Development upon request.

### **Modifications of the Selection Process**

DECD approval is required for any modification or change to the selection process.