

Issues affecting competitiveness raised in discussions Aug 10

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Software

- "Bentley" design software currently required by FLW for A&E work which is expensive and not the common tool. Hence it is an up front cost driver for the small firm unless they can borrow a license from another.
 - o A suggested alternative is the standard "Revit" software

Subcontractors

- Missouri State law requires that a General Contractor must stay with the subcontractors it uses in its proposal. The Corps does not and so firms are being dumped by the General after award for a cheaper contractor.
- The General Contractors have no allegiance to the subs and will go out for new sub contractor bids after they win the award

Specifications

- Despite specifications that are used for the bid contractors are dealing with surprises on what the Corps expects on the project.

Stuck in the middle

- The Corps doesn't have room for the mid-sized contractor. Anything that is not set aside is available for large businesses. There is no room for mid-sized companies to compete.
- Intermediate sized projects are too rare for those companies that are not qualified as "big"

FedBizOps

- The usability of announcement (RFP) in FedBizOps works mostly for General Contractors. It doesn't work for the subs; can direct mailings to the subs be organized?
 - o In later discussions there are intelligent queries that the small contractors can set up in FedBizOps and UM's Mary Love or Bill Stuby can help set those up.

Service Disabled Small Business

- Can service disabled veteran small business take advantage of direct negotiations?

Design work

- The Corps' centers for standardization and MAATOC contracts eliminate all design opportunities for the A&E firms

Insurance Bonds

- Bonds are 100% for bid and for performance, that is too high for small businesses

- A two year grace period is in place for small business that allows bonding initially but once you are out of that period small business cannot afford to bond.
- An A&E design firm was required to have a \$2M bond for landscaping. Seems excessive and burdensome.

Bidders not disclosed

- In a recent project the Corps disclosed 2/3 bidders but did not disclose one. Why?
 - o The policy was explained based on bid being 'unresponsive'

Others

- Several issues were raised to me one-on-one concerning bonds, Bacon-Davis wages for bricklayers, and I forget. You are welcome to add them to the mix by reply email to Tupper.