



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of September 26, 2009**

DATE: August 11, 2009

SUBJECT: Approve an Award of Contract to three (3) entities for Engineering and Consultation Services for the Planning, Design, Construction, and Relocation of Dry Utility Systems such as Telecommunications, Electric, and Gas Facilities (Request For Proposals 87-09).

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

1. Approve the Award of Contract No. 87-09 to the following firms for Engineering and Consultation Services for the Planning, Design, Construction, and Relocation of Dry Utility Systems such as Telecommunications, Electric, and Gas Facilities for up to a three (3) year period:
 - o BC Consultants
 - o Vika.
 - o Rinker Design Associates

2. Authorize the Purchasing Agent to execute the contract documents, subject to review by the County Attorney.

ISSUES: As required by the Arlington County Purchasing Resolution, approval of the award of contracts for professional services exceeding \$50,000 require Board approval. No issues have been identified.

SUMMARY: Following the review of proposals and oral presentations in response to RFP 87-09, staff recommends the selection of three firms (BC Consultants, Vika, and Rinker Design Associates) to provide Engineering and Consultation Services for the Planning, Design, Construction, and Relocation of Dry Utility Systems such as Telecommunications, Electric, and Gas Facilities.

BACKGROUND: Many County construction projects require the alteration or relocation of existing utility systems which are not owned by the County. The alteration of these utility systems (typically electric, telecommunications, and/or gas) often adds many months or years to the project schedule, and can increase project costs by hundreds of thousands of dollars in some cases.

County Manager: _____

County Attorney: _____

Staff: Michael Collins, DES

Historically, the utility companies themselves have been the only resource available for accomplishing the complex and expensive task of relocating utility facilities. Recently, several firms have emerged which specialize in the design, management, permitting, and construction of utility relocations.

On February 11, the County Purchasing Agent received eight (8) responses to Request for Proposal (RFP) No. 87-09 for engineering services related to dry utility systems. The RFP requested that offerors present their qualifications for the provision of engineering services to include planning, design, bidding, and construction management, as well as technical consultation services related to the relocation of dry utility systems such as electric, telecommunications, and gas. The RFP specified that up to three (3) firms may be awarded a contract for these services.

In June, five (5) offerors were requested to provide an oral presentation of their qualifications to a selection panel consisting of staff from the Department of Environmental Services and the Department of Management and Finance. The selection panel has recommended that the following firms are most qualified to assist the County and be awarded a contract:

- BC Consultants
- Vika
- Rinker Design Associates

DISCUSSION: The relocation or alteration of existing electric, telecommunication, and/or gas facilities in conflict with proposed County projects have historically been very disruptive to the efficient execution of these projects. County staff has had to rely solely upon the utility companies to develop and implement a solution to any conflicts, and staff is often concerned about the apparent conflict of interest inherent in that practice. In many instances, County staff does not possess the specific experience or esoteric knowledge to effectively evaluate and challenge the methods and processes which the utility companies have required.

In the past decade, several firms specializing in the management of dry utility relocations have appeared and now frequently provide services to the private development community to ensure that the relocation of utilities required for their private developments are appropriate, economical, and expedient. These firms are extremely knowledgeable in the internal processes, design requirements, and legal constraints of each of these utility companies and have developed extensive contacts and networks of relationships. Staff has recently utilized these kinds of services on two complex jobs and found the results to be dramatically faster and cheaper than historical relocations.

The proposed “on-call” contracts will allow staff to utilize the services of these specialists on an as-needed basis and with a quick turn around for a wide range of projects and needs. Specific projects and services provided could range from the development, permitting, and bidding of a full-scale utility undergrounding project in the vein of the work along Columbia Pike, to a simple consultation and evaluation of a utility company’s proposed relocation solution on a Neighborhood Conservation project.

Utilization of multiple consultants will allow the County the flexibility to utilize the most appropriate consultant for each project considering the scope of work, necessary schedule, budget, and other factors.

DES will have the capability to issue individual or multiple task projects. The scope of work, fees and timelines, among other things will be developed within the authority of these contracts.

FISCAL IMPACT: The award of these contracts do not require a specific appropriation at this time. After the County Board appropriates funds for individual programs which may require the services performed by the firm(s) to which contracts have been awarded, then the firm(s) providing the service will be authorized to proceed. Individual project assignment fees will not exceed \$250,000 and the total contract amount will not exceed \$5,000,000 per contract term.