

October 11, 2023

Procurement Informational Meeting Q & A

Q. How would we get on the list or pursue architectural design contracts with the MSBA?

A. There are two options: ARP and Core Program – this procurement that was just reviewed for repair and windows is for ARP; core projects please go to our website on the Designer Selection Panel page and it will provide you with additional information for core projects. To clarify, core projects are new buildings and major renovations.

Q. Does the website cater to new designers?

A. We have seen firms create opportunities through our ARP to introduce themselves to the MSBA.

Q. How do we know when to attend the Designer Selection Panel meetings?

A. Please refer to the website for the schedule.

Q. Are districts allowed to supplement multiple projects? What happens if the district decides to go with one construction package?

A. Districts file requests for needs they have. It is up to the district and project teams how to best select the project packages.

Q. Question for SDO and MSBA, is there any updated consideration to having OPMs included in the participation numbers for the various projects?

A. There have been discussions in the past but as of right now, no.

Q. Is there a reason for that?

A. The short answer is, more than half the people we talk to don't know what an OPM is. An OPM position is understood by many people but there is still a majority that doesn't know what it is.

Q. I own a small architectural firm, we find it very difficult to do any work with the MSBA because we are up against firms that are much bigger. When we looked at ARP, we saw the same designers were being selected. We don't know how to get our foot in the door as a smaller firm. Do you have any advice on this issue?

A. In our last procurement for Designers and ARP, the MSBA made sure to include in the RFR, language that allowed firms to include experience in both public and private projects. The MSBA will most likely take that same avenue this time around to consider how smaller firms would take their experience working in private projects and apply that to public projects. Please look at the RFR when it is issued and consider the opportunity to apply using both public and private experience.

Q. I didn't see boiler replacements listed in the next round of the ARP. Are boiler replacements not going to be part of this ARP? Will they return?

A. For this SOI process, we are not including boilers. Whether that changes, we would need to go through our Board of Directors and get approval from them.

Q. As a black owned, very small team, when looking at the website, this seems to be a very involved process. Is there anybody we can reach out to learn about how to go through these processes?

A. The best avenue to start would be to go through the DCAMM certification process. Becoming a DCAMM certified contractor would be beneficial. The MSBA does not have direct oversight for contractors selected for projects with local school districts.

Q. If we were to compete for an RFR, what is the process?

A. For each of the procurements, most are going to include a three-year term with the potential of an additional year. That timeline would apply to technical services, enrollment, and commissioning. As far as OPMs and Designers are concerned, there is no contract between the firm and the MSBA. The selections are entered into a pool for the districts to choose from. Depending on which procurements you are interested in pursuing, please refer to the website.

Q. How does a three-year contract work with the biannual selection?

A. Invitations are sent out in 2024 and again in 2025. In 2025 we would be inviting more districts. We will look to assign OPM and Designers based on 2024 and 2025. There will be two years of SOI invitations but volume wise more like three years. Districts in 2025 invited to stagger assigned OPMs.