



March 24, 2015

TO: David Parrish – Assistant City Manager
Kenney McDowell – Director, Engineering & Inspections Department

FROM: Ted Partrick – Engineering Manager, Engineering & Inspections Department

SUBJECT: Construction Engineering & Inspections
Consultant Selection
Michael Baker Engineering, Inc.

Summary

Consultants selected to provide construction engineering and inspections services on City projects are required to be prequalified by the NCDOT and to have sufficient qualified staff to fully inspect projects at all times during construction. Firms were solicited through the NCDOT and City of Greensboro websites, and sixteen firms responded. Selection of six of the firms for on-call contracts was completed in March 2013 with agreements effective in June 2013.

Background

The Transportation Department has successfully obtained federal funding for many intersection improvements and new sidewalks through the efforts of the GUAMPO. Following the ARRA projects in 2009-2010, two of which were Greensboro transportation projects, NCDOT began a comprehensive effort to ensure that all FHWA project acquisition standards are applied to federally funded projects. It was made clear to the local agencies (Greensboro and others) that a significant increase in the use of full-time on-site inspectors was going to be required. The Departments of Transportation and Engineering & Inspections decided that the only economical alternative was to use grant funds to contract with private consultants. The grant funds used for construction contracts always include funding for inspections, so no new funds were needed.

Engineering & Inspections used its first private firms to meet the inspections requirements in 2011. Four local firms (Greensboro, High Point, Winston-Salem), including one MBE firm, were awarded contracts based on the qualifications they submitted. This was a program to provide new opportunities to local engineering firms. Following an internal review of the performance of the firms on those contracts, the Engineering Division determined that the staffing levels in the local firms was not deep enough to meet the needs of the City or NCDOT. Critical factors included lack of current inspections knowledge, lack of redundancy in staff or ability to maintain full-time inspectors, and lack of construction management experience in an NCDOT environment. None of the firms had previous contracts for construction inspection with NCDOT.

A second round of solicitation with advertisement through the NCDOT and City websites was completed in 2013. NCDOT's website is their primary means of soliciting professional services and reaches the biggest relevant market. The new solicitation included more detailed specifications on the level of service

expected of the successful firms. Sixteen firms submitted their qualifications, and all were evaluated by the selection team. With the Engineering Manager, the team was composed of the City's Construction Engineer, the Construction Inspections Supervisor, the Chief Design Engineer, and the Senior Project Manager. Six on-call consultants were selected in March 2013, including one HUB certified WBE. All six consultants had extensive experience with inspections on NCDOT contracts.

Michael Baker Engineering, Inc., was one of the six consulting firms selected. The size of the firm, the local office and staffing resources, the amount of experience working with NCDOT statewide and locally, the qualifications of the inspectors and managers, and their level of interest all made Michael Baker a top contender. Michael Baker was selected in December 2014 to provide the construction engineering and inspections services on the Downtown Greenway Phases 2e/3a/3c project for the same reasons. Their performance on the recent E. Wendover Sidewalk Project, a large and difficult contract, was very professional and recommended them for this greenway project. The construction of the new bi-ped greenway along Fisher, Eugene and Smith Street will be the most complex project yet using a consultant on a federally funded project, so selection of the consultant was a critical decision.

THP