

Section 00200

INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

1. DEFINITIONS

A. Terms used in these Instructions to Bidders which are defined in the Standard General Conditions of the Construction Contract (General Conditions) have the meanings assigned to them in the General Conditions. Other terms used in the Bidding Documents and not defined elsewhere have the following meanings, which are applicable to both the singular and plural thereof:

1. Bidder: One who submits a bid directly to the Owner.
2. Successful Bidder: The most qualified, responsible and responsive bidder to whom the Owner makes an award.
3. Bidding Documents: The Notice to Bidders, Instructions to Bidders, Supplementary Conditions to General Conditions, Special Conditions (Underground Utilities), Special Conditions to the Agreement, Proposal and the Proposed Contract Documents (including Addenda issued prior to receipt of Bids).

2. PREPARATION OF BIDS

A. Complete sets of bidding documents must be used in preparing bids. Neither the Owner nor Engineer assumes any responsibility for errors or misinterpretations resulting from the use of incomplete sets of bidding documents. Copies of bidding documents are made available only for the purpose of obtaining bids on the work and do not confer a license or grant for any other use.

3. QUALIFICATIONS OF BIDDERS

- A. Each bidder must submit with the bid a Financial and Experience Statement. The statement shall be filed with the proposal in a separate sealed envelope marked "Financial and Experience Statement".
- B. Financial statements from the three most qualified bidders will be retained by the Owner until award of the contract. **NO FINANCIAL STATEMENT WILL BE READ ALOUD AT THE BID OPENING.** Upon award of the contract, the statements of all unsuccessful bidders will be returned.
- C. Additional written evidence of qualifications, such as financial data, previous experience, present commitments, and other such data as may be called for by the OWNER.

4. EXAMINATION OF CONTRACT DOCUMENTS AND SITE

A. It is the responsibility of each Bidder before submitting a Bid to (a) examine the Contract Documents thoroughly, (b) visit the site to become familiar with local conditions that may

- affect cost, progress, performance, or furnishing of the Work, (c) consider federal, state and local Laws and Regulations that may affect cost, progress, performance or furnishing of the Work, (d) study and carefully correlate Bidder's observations with the Contract Documents, and (e) notify ENGINEER of all conflicts, errors, or discrepancies in the Contract Documents discovered by the Bidder.
- B. Information and data reflected in the Contract Documents with respect to Underground Facilities at or contiguous to the site is based upon information and data furnished to OWNER and ENGINEER by owners of such Underground Facilities or others, and OWNER does not assume responsibility for the accuracy or completeness thereof unless it is expressly provided otherwise in the Supplementary Conditions.
- C. Provisions concerning responsibilities for the adequacy of data furnished to prospective Bidders on subsurface conditions, underground facilities, and other physical conditions, and possible changes in the Contract Documents due to differing conditions appear in Paragraphs 4.02, 4.03, and 4.04 of the General Conditions.
- D. Before submitting a Bid, each Bidder will, at Bidder's own expense, make or obtain any additional examinations, investigations, explorations, tests, and studies, and obtain any additional information and data which pertain to the physical conditions (surface, subsurface, and Underground Facilities) at or contiguous to the site or otherwise which may affect cost, progress, performance, or furnishing of the Work, and which Bidder deems necessary to determine its Bid for performing and furnishing the Work in accordance with the time, price, and other terms and conditions of the Contract Documents.
- E. On request in advance, OWNER will provide each Bidder access to the site to conduct such explorations and tests as each Bidder deems necessary for submission of a Bid. Bidder shall clean up and restore the site to its former condition upon completion of such explorations.
- F. Failure to perform such investigations during the Bid period shall not relieve Bidder from responsibility for investigations, interpretations and proper use of available information in preparation of Bidder's proposal.
- G. The lands upon which the Work is to be performed, rights-of-way, and easements for access thereto and other lands designated for use by CONTRACTOR in performing the Work are identified in the Contract Documents. All additional lands and access thereto required for temporary construction facilities or storage of materials and equipment are to be provided by CONTRACTOR. Easements for permanent structures or permanent changes in existing structures are to be obtained and paid for by OWNER unless otherwise provided in the Contract Documents.
- H. The submission of a Bid will constitute an incontrovertible representation by Bidder that Bidder has complied with every requirement of this Article 4, that without exception the Bid is premised upon performing and furnishing the Work required by the Contract Documents and such means, methods, techniques, sequences, or procedures of

construction as may be indicated in or required by the Contract Documents, and that the Contract Documents are sufficient in scope and detail to indicate and convey understanding of all terms and conditions for performance and furnishing of the Work.

6. INTERPRETATION OF DOCUMENTS AND ADDENDA

- A. All questions about the meaning or intent of the Contract Documents must be submitted to the Engineer in writing at least ten (10) days prior to the opening of bids. Interpretations or clarifications considered necessary by ENGINEER in response to such questions will be issued by Addenda at least 48 hours prior to Bid Opening.
- B. Any interpretation of the Contract Documents will be made only by Addendum duly issued, and a copy of such addendum will be made available to each prospective bidder recorded by ENGINEER as having received a set of Contract Documents. Each Bidder is responsible for obtaining Addenda. Only questions answered by formal written Addenda will be binding. Oral and other interpretations or clarifications will be without legal effect.
- C. Addenda may also be issued to modify the Contract Documents as deemed advisable by OWNER and ENGINEER.

7. BID SECURITY

- A. Each Bid shall be accompanied by Bid security made payable to OWNER in an amount of five percent of the Bidder's maximum Bid price and in the form of a bid bond, cashier's check, or certified check. Bid Bond shall have a "B+" rating from Best's Key Rating Guide, and shall be duly authorized by the State of Texas to execute Bid Security.
- B. The Bid security of the Successful Bidder will be retained until such Bidder has executed the Agreement and furnished the required contract security, whereupon the Bid security will be returned. If the Successful Bidder fails to execute and deliver the Agreement and furnish the required contract security with 15 calendar days after the Notice of Award, OWNER may annul the Notice of Award and the Bid security of that Bidder will be forfeited. The Bid security of other Bidders whom OWNER believes to have a reasonable chance of receiving the award may be retained by OWNER until the earlier of the seventh day after the Effective Date of the Agreement or the forty-sixth day after the Bid opening, whereupon Bid security furnished by such Bidders will be returned. Bid security with Bids which are not competitive will be returned within 7 days after the Bid opening.

8. CONTRACT TIME

- A. The number of days within which, or the dates by which, the Work is to be substantially completed and also completed and ready for final payment (the Contract Time) are set forth in the Agreement.

9. LIQUIDATED DAMAGES

- A. Provisions for liquidated damages, if any, are set forth in the Agreement.

10. SUBSTITUTE OR "OR EQUAL" ITEMS

- A. The Contract, if awarded, will be on the basis of materials and equipment described in the DRAWINGS or specified in the Specifications without consideration of possible substitute or "or equal" items. Whenever it is indicated in the Drawings or specified in the Specifications that a substitute or "or equal" item of material or equipment may be furnished or used by CONTRACTOR if acceptable to ENGINEER, application for such acceptance will not be considered by ENGINEER until after the Effective Date of the Agreement. The procedure for submission of any such application by CONTRACTOR and consideration by ENGINEER is set forth in Paragraph 6.05 of the General Conditions and may be supplemented in the General Requirements (Division 1).

11. SUBCONTRACTORS, SUPPLIERS AND OTHERS

- A. If the Supplementary Conditions require the identity of certain Subcontractors, Suppliers, and other person and organizations (including those who are to furnish the principal items of material and equipment) to be submitted to OWNER in advance of the specified date prior to the Effective Date of the Agreement, the apparent Successful Bidder, and any other Bidder so requested, shall within 7 days after the Bid opening, submit to OWNER a list of all such Subcontractors, Suppliers, and other persons and organizations proposed for those portions of the Work for which such identification is required. Such list shall be accompanied by an experience statement with pertinent information regarding similar projects and other evidence of qualification for each such Subcontractor, Supplier, person, or organization, either may, before the Notice of Award is given, request the apparent Successful Bidder to submit an acceptable substitute without an increase in Bid price.
- B. If apparent Successful Bidder declines to make any such substitution, OWNER may award the Contract to the next lowest Bidder that proposes to use acceptable Subcontractors, Suppliers, and other persons and organizations. The declining to make requested substitutions will not constitute grounds for sacrificing the Bid security of any Bidder. Any Subcontractor, Supplier, other person, or organization listed and to whom OWNER or ENGINEER does not make written objection prior to the giving of the Notice of Award will be deemed acceptable to OWNER and ENGINEER subject to revocation of such acceptance after the Effective Date of the Agreement as provided in Paragraph 6.06.B of the General Conditions.
- C. In Contracts where the Contract Price is on the basis of Cost of Work Plus a Fee, the apparent Successful Bidder, prior to the Notice of Award, shall identify in writing to OWNER those portions of the Work that such Bidder proposes to subcontract and after the Notice of Award may only subcontract other portions of the Work with OWNER'S written consent.
- D. No CONTRACTOR shall be required to employ any Subcontractor, Supplier, other person, or organization against whom CONTRACTOR has a reasonable objection.

12. BID FORMS

- A. All Bids shall be completely filled out on the specified bid forms without modification or provisions unless otherwise required.
- B. The Bids shall be completed in duplicate. The original shall be filed with the OWNER and the Bidder shall keep the duplicate.
- C. The Bids must be clearly and legibly filled out in ink or typed. In case of ambiguity or lack of clearness in stating the prices tendered or the condition of the Bid, the OWNER reserves the right to consider the most favorable construction thereof or to reject the Bid from further consideration.
- D. All Bids must be officially executed. Bids by Corporations must be executed in the corporate name by the president or vice president (or other corporate officer, accompanied by evidence of authority to sign) and the corporate seal must be affixed and attested by the secretary or assistant secretary. The corporate address and state of incorporation must be shown below the signature. Bids by partnerships must be executed in the partnership name and signed by a partner, whose title must appear under the signature, and the official address of the partnership must be shown below the signature. All business entity names must be registered with the Secretary of State of Texas and appropriate office of registration.
- E. The Bid shall contain an acknowledgement of receipt of all Addenda (the numbers of which must be filled in on the Bid Form).

13. SUBMISSION OF BIDS

- A. Bids shall be submitted at the time and place indicated in the Notice to Bidders, and shall be enclosed in an opaque sealed envelope marked with the Project title, name and address of the Bidder and containing Bid security and other required documents. Bids will be securely kept unopened, until the specified time. The bids received after the specified time will not be considered. All incomplete Bids shall be considered non-responsive. If the Bid is sent through the mail or other delivery system, the sealed envelope shall be enclosed in a separate envelope with the notation "BID ENCLOSED" on the face of it.

14. MODIFICATION AND WITHDRAWAL OF BIDS

- A. Bids may be modified or withdrawn by an appropriate document duly executed (in the manner that a Bid must be executed) and delivered to the place where Bids are to be submitted at any time prior to opening of Bids.
- B. If, within 24 hours after Bids are opened, any Bidder files a duly signed, written notice with OWNER and promptly thereafter demonstrates to the reasonable satisfaction of OWNER that there was a material and substantial mistake in the preparation of its Bid,

that Bidder may withdraw its Bid and the Bid security will be returned. Thereafter, that Bidder will be disqualified from further bidding on the Work to be provided under the Contract Documents.

15. OPENING OF BIDS

- A. Bids will be opened and read aloud publicly. An abstract of the amounts of the base Bids and major alternates (if any) will be made available to Bidders within 7 calendar days after the date of Bid opening.

16. BIDS TO REMAIN SUBJECT TO ACCEPTANCE

- A. The apparent Successful Bid and the next two lowest Bids will remain subject to acceptance for 60 calendar days after the day of the Bid opening. All other Bids will be released and the Bid security returned within 7 days. OWNER may, in its sole discretion, release any Bid and return the Bid security prior to that date.

17. AWARD OF CONTRACT

- A. Contract will be awarded on basis of low Base Bid. Selection of alternates or deductive Bid Items by the OWNER will not be used to displace the low Bidder.
- B. The Owner reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive any and all informalities not involving price, time or changes in the Work, to negotiate contract terms with the Successful Bidder, and to disregard all non conforming, non-responsive, unbalanced or conditional Bids. Also, OWNER reserves the right to reject the Bid of any Bidder if OWNER believes that it would not be in the best interest of the Project to make an award to that Bidder, whether because the Bid is not responsive or the Bidder is unqualified or of doubtful financial ability or fails to meet any other pertinent standard or criteria established by OWNER. Discrepancies in the multiplication of units of Work and unit prices will be resolved in favor of the unit prices. Discrepancies between the indicated sum of any column of figures and the correct sum thereof will be resolved in favor of the correct sum.
- C. In evaluating Bids, OWNER will consider the qualifications of the Bidders, whether or not the Bids comply with the prescribed requirements and such alternates, unit prices, and other data, as may be requested in the Bid Form or prior to the Notice of Award.
- D. OWNER may consider the qualifications and experience of Subcontractors, Suppliers, and other persons and organizations proposed for those portions of the Work as to which the identity of Subcontractors, Suppliers, and other persons and organizations must be submitted as provided in the Supplementary Conditions. OWNER also may consider the operating costs, maintenance requirements, performance data, and guarantees of major items of materials and equipment proposed for incorporation in the Work when such data is required to be submitted prior to the Notice of Award.

- E. OWNER may conduct such investigations as OWNER deems necessary to assist in the evaluation of any Bid and to establish the responsibility, qualifications, and financial ability of Bidders, proposed Subcontractors, Suppliers, and other persons and organizations to perform and furnish the Work in accordance with the Contract Documents to OWNER'S satisfaction within the prescribed time.
- F. Alternate bid items are included in the Bid Form. The Successful Bidder will be determined based on either the low Base Bid (Part C of the Bid), or the low Base Bid Plus Alternate Bid (Part E of the Bid), at the discretion of the OWNER.
- G. If the Contract is to be awarded, OWNER will give the Successful Bidder a Notice of Award within 60 calendar days after the day of the Bid opening.

18. CONTRACT SECURITY

- A. Paragraph 5.1 of the General Conditions and the Supplementary Conditions set forth OWNER'S requirements as to performance and payment Bonds. When the Successful Bidder delivers the executed Agreement to OWNER, it must be accompanied by the required performance and payment Bonds.

19. INSURANCE CERTIFICATES

- A. The CONTRACTOR shall provide and maintain a minimum coverage as defined in the Contract Documents (Article 5 of the General Conditions). The companies providing the coverage shall be acceptable to the OWNER (Certificate of Insurance Section 00620).

20. SIGNING OF AGREEMENT

- A. When OWNER gives a Notice of Award to the Successful Bidder, it will be accompanied by the required number of unsigned counterparts of the Agreement with all other written Contract Documents attached. Within 15 calendar days thereafter, CONTRACTOR shall sign and deliver the required number of counterparts of the Agreement, and attached documents to OWNER with the required Bonds. Within 10 calendar days thereafter, OWNER shall deliver one fully signed counterpart to CONTRACTOR. Each counterpart is to be accompanied by a complete set of the Drawings with appropriate identification.

21. PRE-BID CONFERENCE

- A. A pre-bid conference will be held at the time and place indicated in the Invitation to Bid (Section 00100). Representatives of OWNER and ENGINEER will be present to discuss the Project. All prospective bidders are encouraged to attend and participate in the conference. ENGINEER will notify all prospective Bidders of record of any such Addenda as ENGINEER considers necessary in response to questions arising at the conference.

22. SALES TAX

- A. Owner is exempt from Texas sales and use taxes pursuant to Texas Tax Code §151.309 as a political subdivision of the State of Texas. OWNER shall provide CONTRACTOR with a completed Texas Sales and Use Tax Exemption Certification as evidence of the applicability of such exemption and, accordingly, CONTRACTOR shall not collect Texas sales and use taxes from OWNER with respect to this Contract. CONTRACTOR and all Subcontractors to CONTRACTOR shall issue a Texas Sales and Use Tax Exemption Certification with respect to, and shall not pay Texas sales and use taxes on, all purchases of the following items that are exempt from Texas sales and use taxes pursuant to Texas Tax Code §151.311: (i) tangible personal property that will be incorporated into OWNER'S realty; (ii) tangible personal property that is necessary and essential for the performance of this Contract and is consumed entirely on the job site; and (iii) taxable services for use in the performance of this Contract that are performed at the job site and are either integral to the performance of this Contract or expressly required to be provided by this Contract. In addition, CONTRACTOR and all Subcontractors to CONTRACTOR (i) shall not include any provision for Texas sales and use taxes with respect to such exempt items in any bid or contract amount, and (ii) shall pass on to OWNER cost savings due to the exempt status of such exempt items. CONTRACTOR'S contracts with all Subcontractors to CONTRACTOR shall include the foregoing provision regarding the exemption from Texas sales and use taxes.

END OF SECTION