SPR PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PROJECT NUMBER:
00456

PROJECT TITLE:
Managing the Construction Bidding Process, a Move to Simpler Construction Plan Sets

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:
Daniel S. Turner
Civil & Environmental Engineering
University of Alabama
Box 870205
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0205
(205) 348-9925
dturner@coe.eng.ua.edu

PROJECT OBJECTIVE:
This project is a study of the basic tool in managing the project selection process, the role of construction plans and bidding documents. It is intended to provide better management by leading the involved parties through a process to simplify the current plans.

PROJECT ABSTRACT:
This project will be conducted to provide a better management tool for contracting construction projects, by investigating whether plans and bid documents can be reasonably simplified. It will consist of a series of facilitated workshops for the primary parties involved in contracting transportation projects. A project steering group will be formed of high-level managers from the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), the highway contractors’ and paving contractors’ professional organizations, materials suppliers and others. The research team will provide background information such as reviews of similar projects conducted by other state highway agencies (if they exist) and the results of a literature review, and will lead the group in defining the appropriate content of construction documents in Alabama. Final recommendations may be tested by ALDOT through a pilot project.

PROJECT TASK DESCRIPTIONS:
1) Conduct literature review
2) Identify similar studies by calling state highway agencies
3) Form an advisory committee/stakeholder group
4) Conduct a series of facilitated meetings between the stakeholders
5) Formulate recommendations
6) Conduct another series of facilitated meetings to refine the recommendations
7) Include the final recommendations in a final report
8) Conduct technology transfer (if desired by ALDOT)

MILESTONES AND DATES:
Startup – Jan 19, 2000
Start tasks 1-3 – Jan 19, 2000
Start task 4 – Mar 15, 2000
Start task 5 – Jul 1, 2000
Start task 6 – Oct 1, 2000
Start task 7 – Nov 1, 2000
Start task 8 (if needed) – Nov 15, 2000
Conclude project – Apr 30, 2001

TOTAL BUDGET:
18-month project: ALDOT (SPR funds) $49,064; total budget $49,064.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT:
A graduate student will work on this project, especially the literature review and telephone calls to other state highway agencies.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER RESEARCH PROJECTS:
This project is not related to any other UTCA projects, nor have other research projects been identified that are similar to this effort.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES:
The final report will be one technology transfer effort. Depending upon the degree of success of the project, it is also possible that a conference presentation or a paper for a refereed journal could be produced. Also, if the project is successful, ALDOT may elect to conduct a comprehensive pilot project (training of ALDOT designers, consultants, contractors, material suppliers, etc.; plus a statewide mock bid exercise) to distribute the new plan preparation guidelines.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT:
This project has the potential of reducing the time and effort required to produce construction plan sets, saving production labor (and funds). The project also has the potential to simplify the plans and the process, which might minimize consequent errors by designers and contractors and thus reduce costs from changes and delays.

TRB KEYWORDS:
Construction management, construction plans, plan preparation, bid documents, tender.