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# Qualifications-Based Selection

A Guide for the Selection of Professional  
Consultant Services for Public Owners

Revised October 1993

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# 1.0 Introduction

When public officials utilize professional consultants to undertake a construction project, whether it involves a study, new construction or modifying an existing facility, the consultant's performance can influence the entire course of the project — economy, feasibility, public response, design, function efficiency, construction costs, operating costs, and maintenance costs during the life of the facility.

Some public owners do not undertake projects often enough to have experience planning for such a project, or to select a professional consultant in the most cost-effective and efficient manner.

## What is QBS?

### QBS Stands for “Qualifications-Based Selection”

QBS is a rational procedure which facilitates the selection of professional consultant services. The selection is based on qualifications and competence in relation to the scope and needs of the particular project. QBS entails a step-by-step process that will facilitate the owner's selection of a design professional on the basis of qualifications and competence in relation to the scope of the project and facilitates the development of an appropriate scope of work for a particular project. This process is straightforward and easy to implement. It is objective and fair. It can be well documented, and it is open to public scrutiny.

QBS meets the public owner's primary concerns to get the best available professional services for the taxpayers' money, and to conduct a fair and equitable selection process. QBS evolved from the public owner's need to be an “informed customer” and to have a logical, fair and objective means of selecting professional consulting services.

The term “professional consultant” is used in this document to represent any of the design professions, or combination therefore, including architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, land surveying, geotechnical and support services.

“Owner” is used in this document to represent the public user of design professional services.

Evaluation Form included. *(See Appendix 4.18, Owner's QBS Project Evaluation.)*

## History

In October 1972, the federal government enacted Public Law 92-582, covering the selection of architects and engineers based on qualifications. This bill has since been known as the Brooks Selection Bill, as it was introduced by U.S. Representative Jack Brooks of Texas. During years of use by the federal, most state governments, and numerous municipalities across the nation, the use of qualifications-based selection has proven itself to be more efficient and less costly when considering total or life-cycle costs than the use of a selection system using price as one of its primary criteria.

Effective January 1, 1990, Chapter 10 of the California Government Code, Sections 4526-4529, commencing with Section 4525 and known as the Mini-Brooks Act, mandated local agencies throughout the state of California to select applicable professional consultant services on the basis of demonstrated competence and professional qualifications. Following passage of the law, the Architects & Engineers (A & E) Conference Committee of California formed a QBS Subcommittee to provide a documented understanding of the process.

## Acknowledgments

This document has been prepared for use with assistance from the Michigan Society of The American Institute of Architects, the Architectural and Engineering Societies in Wisconsin, the American Consulting Engineers Council, the Professional Engineers in Private Practice, and the National Society of Professional Engineers. In addition, the report and workbook by The American Institute of Architects, "Qualification-Based Selection: A Process for the Selection of Architects by Public Owners," was used. The A & E Conference Committee of California gratefully acknowledges the work accomplished by these offices.

The A & E Conference Committee represents the more than 20,000 members of the following organizations:

- The American Institute of Architects, California Council;
- American Society of Civil Engineers;
- California Council, American Society of Landscape Architects;
- California Geotechnical Engineers Association;
- Association of Engineering Geologists, California Sections;
- California Society of Professional Engineers;
- Consulting Engineers and Land Surveyors of California;
- Structural Engineers Association of California.

## QBS Advisory Board

The A & E Conference Committee created the QBS Advisory Board to be a clearinghouse for requests for assistance from local public bodies and to assign QBS Advisors to assist them.

The duties of a QBS Advisor are to explain and provide assistance to public owners who wish to establish a qualifications-based professional design procurement system (QBS), resulting in the best and most complete project to meet the owner's need and desires at the least overall cost.

The assigned QBS Advisor can be a senior member of an engineering, architectural, surveying or landscape architectural firm, or other individual with experience appropriate to the type of public works project proposed. Ideally, he/she is a licensed design professional with at least ten years' experience in responsible charge.

The QBS Advisor should not influence the selection of any specific design firm. The QBS Advisor is a resource for the public owner, to assist in implementing a process for the selection of competent, qualified professionals.

## 2.0 The Law:

### **Chapter 10. Section 4526 of the California Government Code:**

**4526.** Notwithstanding any other provision of law, selection by a state or local agency head for professional services of private architectural, landscape architectural, engineering, environmental, land surveying, or construction project management firms shall be on the basis of demonstrated competence and on the professional qualifications necessary for the satisfactory performance of the services required. In order to implement this method of selection, state agency heads contracting for private architectural, landscape architectural, professional engineering, environmental, land surveying, and construction project management services shall adopt by regulation, and local agency heads contracting for private architectural, landscape architectural, professional engineering, environmental, land surveying, and construction project management services may adopt by ordinance, procedures that assure that these services are engaged on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualifications for the types of services to be performed and at fair and reasonable prices to the public agencies. Furthermore, these procedures shall assure maximum participation of small business firms, as defined by the Director of General Services pursuant to Section 14837.

In addition, these procedures shall specifically prohibit practices which might result in unlawful activity including, but not limited to, rebates, kickbacks, or other unlawful consideration, and shall specifically prohibit government agency employees from participating in the selection process when those employees have a relationship with a person or business entity seeking a contract under this section which would subject those employees to the prohibition of Section 87100.

### **Section 4526.5 Compliance with Public Contract Code Section 6106**

A state agency head entering into a contract pursuant to this chapter shall, in addition to any other applicable statute or regulation, also follow Section 6106 of the Public Contract Code.

### **Section 4527. Annual Statements of qualification and performance data; announcement of projects**

In the procurement of architectural, landscape architectural, engineering, environmental, land surveying, and construction project management services, the state agency head shall encourage firms engaged in the lawful practice of their profession to submit annually a statement of qualifications and performance data.

- (a) When the selection is by a state agency head, statewide announcement of all projects requiring architectural, landscape architectural, engineering, environmental, land surveying, or construction project management services shall be made by the agency head through publications of the respective professional societies. The agency head, for each proposed project, shall evaluate current statements of qualifications and performance data on file with the agency, together with those that may be submitted by other firms regarding the proposed project, and shall conduct discussions with no less than three firms regarding anticipated concepts and the relative utility of alternative methods of approach for furnishing the required services and then shall select therefore, in order of preference, based upon criteria established and published by him or her, no less than three of the firms deemed to be the most highly qualified to provide the services required.

- (b) When the selection is by a local agency head, the agency head may undertake the procedures described in subdivision (a). In addition, these procedures shall specifically prohibit practices which might result in unlawful activity including, but not limited to, rebates, kickbacks, or other unlawful consideration, and shall specifically prohibit government agency employees from participating in the selection process when these employees have a relationship with a person or business entity seeking a contract under this section.

**Section 4528. Negotiation of contracts**

- (a) When the selection is by a state agency head the following procedures shall apply:
  - (1) The state agency head shall negotiate a contract with the best qualified firm for architectural, landscape architectural, engineering, environmental, land surveying, and construction project management services at compensation which the state agency head determines is fair and reasonable to the State of California or the political subdivision involved.
  - (2) Should the state agency head be unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with the firm considered to be the most qualified, at a price the agency head determines to be fair and reasonable to the State of California or the political subdivision involved, negotiations with that firm shall be formally terminated. The state agency head shall then undertake negotiations with the second most qualified firm. Failing accord with the second most qualified firm, the state agency head shall terminate negotiations. The state agency head shall then undertake negotiations with the third most qualified firm.
  - (3) Should the state agency head be unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with any of the selected firms, the state agency head shall select additional firms in order of their competence and qualifications and continue negotiations in accordance with this chapter until an agreement is reached.

### 3.0 How Does Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS) Work?

QBS is a fair and rational procedure that facilitates the selection of a professional consultant on the basis of qualifications and competence in relation to the scope and needs of a particular project. One prominent Director of Public Works compares selecting a consultant to hiring an employee. Both work best as two-step processes: first, the selection is made, then the financial arrangements are agreed upon. In fact, many of the steps outlined below have similarities to employee selection procedures.

Local agency heads often adopt a formal policy and publish a procedure for the selection and use of consultants. This brings uniformity to different project selections and better orients staff, elected officials, and the community's consultants on the process by which projects will be awarded. Additional criteria may include published policy which deals with community-specific issues, such as affirmative action, local vs. non-local selection, and ensuring work is not overly funneled to only a few firms.

QBS evolves from many variables that must be tailored to fit each specific project's requirement and should include all or some of the following steps:

#### Procedures for Selection

1. The owner identifies the general services desired (scope of work).
2. The projected time frame is established.
3. A list of professional consultant firms appropriate to the project is compiled.
4. A consultant selection review group is appointed.
5. Letters of qualifications are requested from the identified firms.
6. Letters of qualifications are received and evaluated.
7. A short-list of firms to be interviewed is established.
8. A tour of the site and/or facility is arranged for short-listed firms.
9. Interviews are conducted.
10. Firms are ranked for selection.
11. All firms involved receive post-selection communications.
12. Negotiations are conducted relative to actual scope, services, fee and payment schedule. If an agreement cannot be satisfactorily negotiated with the top-ranked firm, negotiations are terminated and the owner enters into negotiations with the second-ranked firm, and so on down the line, until agreement is reached and a firm is selected.
13. A contract is executed.

This step-by-step procedure and its variations are detailed in the following sections.

### 3.1 Developing the General Description of Services Desired (Scope of Work)

To begin the selection process, the owner must briefly identify the general scope and the particular needs of the project. Just as the owner needs information about the qualifications and competence of the professional firms, the firms need to know the project requirements and goals.

The Appendix contains a recommended format for a general scope of work, as well as the schedule that should be included.

Additional items may be added as appropriate to provide guidance to the competing firms and to meet the needs of the owner. All services expected to be provided by the professional consultant, including feasibility studies, design, construction, coordination, budget development, funding strategy — should be specifically identified.

Smaller agencies should feel free to contact larger agencies for advice and assistance based on the larger agency's history and experience. The QBS Advisor can also assist in formulating the scope of work or recommend prior alternative studies to determine a more specific scope.

### 3.2 Establishing a Selection Time Frame

To keep the professional consultant selection process proceeding smoothly, owners should establish a time frame for completion of the selection process. Establishing the time frame prevents misunderstandings and last-minute "surprises" that might delay or sidetrack the process.

The time frame for each project will differ, depending upon the nature of the project, the concerns of the owner, and other factors and must allow for proper planning and administration between each step of the selection process. In some instances, a tour of existing facilities may be provided to firms before short-listing.

A sample form is included for guidance in developing a time frame. (*See Appendix 4.1, Schedule of Activities.*)

### 3.3 Compiling a List of Professionals Consultants

How does the owner identify professional consultant firms from which to request statements of qualifications? Some of the factors that should be considered are:

- The type of firm needed, e.g. architectural, engineering, surveying, or other related professionals.
- Special competence, experience or expertise within the general professional categories listed above.
- A short-list of firms that the owner can evaluate.
- The geographic location and distribution of the firms if this consideration is relevant to the project.

## Qualifications-Based Selection

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### Advertisements for Public Projects

Placing public notices of projects in newspapers and trade or professional publications is often used to advise professional firms of needed service. Such announcements will reach many in the professional consultant community, and will usually result in a large number of responses. If this approach is used, the advertisement should specify a person to contact in the owner's organization to obtain a package of information regarding the project and the information to be submitted.

Many agencies maintain a database, for use by all managers, listing firms with known expertise and others who have indicated an interest in the agency's project. A common agency practice involves letters or postcards to consultants on their list to solicit expressions of interest in the particular project. It is important that such statements of interest be available to all the agency's employees who may be preparing RFQs. Also, it is appropriate to telephone a number of firms to be sure they are aware of the advertisement.

### Directories

Most professional organizations publish directories or make mailing lists of member firms available. These often can help owners identify firms with interest and/or experience in specific types of projects. The American Institute of Architects, California Council; the California Council, American Society of Landscape Architects; American Society of Civil Engineers; Consulting Engineers and Land Surveyors of California; California Geotechnical Engineers Association; California Society of Professional Engineers; Association of Engineering Geologists, California Sections; Structural Engineers Association of California, and many other organizations maintain directories to help owners locate firms. Directories usually can be found in the reference section of the local library. Local telephone yellow pages and other kinds of community business directories also can be used to identify professional consultant firms.

### Referrals

To identify firms more selectively, a public owner may wish to contact other public owners which have recently used professional consultant services on similar projects.

How many firms should be included on the list? There is no exact formula. The owner should determine the number appropriate for the specific project and circumstances.

## 3.4 Request for Qualification Documents

A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) can be used to obtain the names and credentials of interested professional firms. Public owners also may be required to advertise for interested professional consultant firms.

It is essential that all firms receive the same materials so that all the firms' responses will be based on the same project specifications and constraints and, therefore, can be compared fairly.

A list of firms to which the RFQ is sent should be maintained and made available to facilitate consultant/subconsultant teaming and evaluation of the competition. Some agencies mail this list out as part of the RFQ package.

The QBS Advisor can provide advice on formulating the RFQ and additional data as requested.

Sample forms for this step in the QBS process are included. (*See Appendix 4.2, Request for Letters of Qualifications: Sample Memo; 4.3, Requirements for Letters of Qualifications; and 4.4, Preliminary Scope of the Work.*)

### 3.5 Selection Review Group

A selection review group should be appointed to evaluate qualifications, interview candidates and rank the firms for selection. The group should include a representative from the department responsible for administration of the consulting contract, as well as a representative from the department responsible for the project's functions and functionality. In addition, the group should include other individuals who are stakeholders in the success of the project, such as neighborhood associations, as well as qualified professional individuals who have knowledge or capabilities that are valuable in interviewing prospective consultants. On special projects, such as City Halls, City Council members or other elected officials may wish to be included in the selection review group.

Frequently, the owner does not have several people with expertise on projects with similar scope to that required for the anticipated project. In such cases, it is helpful to enlist the aid of known experts from surrounding public owners or private consultants to serve as members of the selection review group.

### 3.6 Evaluating Qualification Submittals

It is recommended that the owner establish a policy that qualifications submittals received after the deadline will not be considered.

The number of firms to be included on the short-list, and then interviewed, may vary depending on the size and scope of the project.

A sample evaluation form is provided in the appendix to assist with reviewing and short-listing firms based on their qualifications submittals. The QBS Advisor can help the owner tailor this form to meet the specific project needs. (*See Appendix 4.5, Letters of Qualification Evaluation.*)

If the owner desires, the QBS Advisor may sit in with the selection committee in an advisory capacity to answer questions and provide guidance. *The QBS Advisor should not vote or evaluate the proposals.*

A form also is included for checking references of firms in which the owner is particularly interested. References should be checked between the time qualifications submittals are received and the time the selection committee meets to develop a short-list. (*See Appendix 4.6, The Reference Check.*)

As desired, the agency may include considerations of grant requirements, knowledge of local conditions, special expertise, and equal opportunity into the evaluation process. This may require some advance research into regulations or other requirements. Candidate firms should be made aware that these factors will be considered in making the selection.

Professional consultants make their own independent business decision in responding to RFP/Qs. However, a public owner should bear in mind when requesting sketches, cost estimates, site planning, master planning and so forth at this stage, that a professional consultant is also a business person, and one of his/her most obvious costs are direct labor and expenses incurred in the development of designs and plans.

### 3.7 Establishing a Short-list of Firms to be Interviewed

Based on the evaluation of qualifications submittals and reference checks discussed in the preceding section, the owner can establish a short-list to be interviewed. Because all firms that submitted qualifications committed time and expense to pursue the project and may be holding staff commitments, the owner should promptly contact the firms **not** selected for the short-list as well as those to be interviewed. The memo sent to firms that did not make the short-list can express thanks and identify the firms that will be invited to interview. A sample memo is included. *(See Appendix 4.8, Memo to Firms the Submitted Letters/Statements of Qualifications for Firms Not Selected for Interview.)*

Firms selected for interviews should immediately be sent information regarding interview requirements. The amount of time allowed for preparation before the interview should be commensurate with the complexity of the project. A sample memo to short-listed firms is included. *(See Appendix 4.7, Memo to Short-listed Firms to be Interviewed/Tour of Facilities/and Criteria.)* This memo, along with scoring and evaluation sheets, should be tailored to meet the owner's criteria, specific priorities, and concerns.

### 3.8 Tour of the Site/Facility

In many major or complex projects, a tour of a project site or facility can be an important part of the selection process. These tours provide interested professional consultant firms with the opportunity to obtain first-hand information on the proposed project and have their questions answered.

Tours can be handled one-on-one, with the owner's representative meeting with the representative of one firm, or a group tour with all interested firms meeting for review of the site and/or facility.

Often, pre-selection conferences held at a neutral site, where all consultants/sub-consultants interested in the project may interact, is one alternative for consideration by the owner, who must also decide whether pre-selection tours for all interested firms or only to short-listed firms are appropriate. The QBS Advisor can help make this decision.

### 3.9 Interviewing the Short-listed Firms

#### Purpose

Interviews with the short-listed firms allow the owner to compare the firms' different approaches to the design process, as well as their interpretations and understanding of the specific project requirements. The owner should not expect sketches, models, or other design work for **the project at this time. The design requirements for even simple projects can be quite complex, and at this stage, the professional consultant will not be sufficiently aware of the owner's needs and requirements to be able to produce a meaningful design solution or project cost and fee information.**

The interviews allow for evaluation of the personal styles of each firm's principals and/or project managers, and their compatibility with the pre-identified criteria for the project. It is imperative that design personnel assigned to the project, as well as key representatives from the firm's sub-consultants, be present at the interview. When appropriate, it is essential for the project users to be involved in the interview, e.g., citizen, business, or other community groups which have a stake in the project. Direct interaction between the owner/user and the professional consultant/sub-consultants is essential for the development of a design that truly meets the owner's needs. The QBS Advisor may sit in on the interviews, but should not directly participate.

## Set-up

The physical set-up for the interview should be comfortable, with good acoustics and ample room. A separate waiting area should be provided for other firms to be interviewed. Equipment such as blackboards, flip charts, and audio-visual screens probably will be useful if available, although most firms will bring the equipment they need. Since equipment set-up time may cause some delays, two rooms should be used, if possible. While one firm is being interviewed in the first room, another firm can set up in the second room. This ensures that important interview time is not spent checking equipment.

Interviews are usually held in closed sessions unless applicable statutes or regulations require an open public meeting. In such cases, the firms should be notified of this in advance.

## Some Interviewing Guidelines

The following are suggested guidelines for setting up and conducting the interviews. (See Appendix 4.9, *The Interview: Questions and Score Sheets*; 4.10, *Optional Interview Form*; and 4.11, *Example — The Interview: Questions and Score Sheets*.)

- Interview only those firms short-listed to ensure that all interviewed firms have had equal opportunity to prepare presentations.
- Adequate time should be scheduled for each presentation, usually 45 minutes. A 45-minute interview is fair, reasonable, and informative for most project selection, with more time being allowed for unusual or complex projects. For example, 5 minutes for introductions and preliminary remarks by the interview chair; 20 minutes for the presentation of the qualifications; 15 minutes for questions and answers; and 5 minutes for a closing summary by the consultant. Schedule adequate time between interviews for the committee to discuss the presentation privately before beginning the next interview.
- Schedule all interviews on the same day, if possible. This permits the committee to compare all of the interviewed firms while information is fresh in their mind, and ensures consistent interview scoring. Using 45-minute interviews, an owner can schedule six in one day, including committee rating, discussion, and decision time. Overnight delays tend to influence judgments.
- The evaluation criteria for the interview scoring system should be sent to all firms as an attachment to the memo requesting qualifications.
- **While it is appropriate to question firms about their approach to the design of a project, owners should not ask for an actual design solution during the interview. Appropriate and responsive designs require considerably more interaction between owner and design professional than is possible during the selection phase. Preconceived design solutions brought to the table by either the design professional or owner rarely address the true needs of the owner's program. Considerable time and effort, however, may be expended trying to salvage preconceived ideas and make them fit the program. This actually impedes progress and prevents the exploration of more responsive solutions to identified design issues.**
- Owners may want to ask how firms plan to develop an appropriate level of compensation for their professional services. However, compensation amounts are best resolved through detailed discussions with the firm finally selected, and only after there is a comprehensive and mutual understanding of the actual scope of services. **There is no basis to finalize a fee, including the**

**use of a two-envelope system, until after a detailed and specific scope of work is negotiated.** Only then can a fair and reasonable fee be established. Good, open communication is essential to avoid misunderstandings at a later date and to ensure that the firm has included in its scope of services the owner's expectations for the project as well as all detailed requirements.

- Let all firms know when the selection decision will be made and when they will receive communication regarding their status. It is recommended that, if possible, the committee's decision be made on the same date as the interviews, after the committee has had ample time to evaluate all firms.

Technical proposals should be required only when the project is well defined, and if the significance of the project justifies the expense and time to the short-listed firms and the owner.

The process of utilizing technical proposals will add several weeks, and commensurate cost, to the preparation time for the short-listed firms. The owner also will require technically-experienced staff, as well as several additional weeks to review the technical proposals.

A technical proposal may be requested from short-listed firms. This technical proposal can be used as a forerunner to the interviews, in conjunction with, or as a substitute for the interview. The technical proposal should be requested of each of the short-listed firms. The request should include the areas to be addressed in the technical proposal. A sample request letter for the interview process is included in the Appendix. (*See Appendix 4.13, Memo to Short-listed Firm When Technical Proposal Is Requested.*)

### 3.10 Ranking the Firms in Contention for Selection

An evaluation form that includes a weight and a score for each criteria/question is useful for evaluating, ranking and, finally, selecting the most qualified firm. Each firm should be evaluated separately by each interviewer during the presentation and interview. However, members should engage in candid discussion regarding their concerns about interviewed firms that might not be reflected in the weighted scores. When all the interviews have been concluded, the head of the selection committee should compile the individual score sheets. This system provides a documented record of the selection process as support for the committee's actions. It is recommended that committee members take the time to achieve a consensus rather than just ranking and selecting by majority vote. A public owner should keep in mind that weightings and score sheets are just one tool for ranking firms in contention for selection.

A sample evaluation/ranking system is included. (*See Appendix 4.12, Group Interview Evaluation Form; 4.15, Technical Group Proposal Evaluation Form; and 4.16, Example — Group Technical Proposal Evaluation Form.*)

If technical proposals are included in the process, the results of the review should be incorporated in the evaluation process. (*See Appendix 4.14, Technical Proposal Score Sheets.*)

If requested, the QBS Advisor can sit in on the selection committee meeting to determine ranking following any interviews. *The QBS Advisor should offer guidance only and should not offer opinions or individual evaluations.*

### 3.11 Post-Selection Communications

After interviews and/or technical proposal reviews and ranking are completed, a post-selection memo should be prepared and mailed to all firms that participated in the process. (It is customary for owners to provide this information as a courtesy to the firms.) A sample post-selection memo is included in the Appendix. (See *Appendix 4.17, Memo to All Professional Design Firms that were Interviewed.*)

After a contract is awarded, a debriefing for each short-listed firm should be provided upon request. The debriefing will include information on ranking and scoring of that firm's proposal, including the firm's perceived strengths and deficiencies.

### 3.12 Negotiating an Agreement with the Selected Firm

As soon as possible after selection, the owner should begin negotiations with the firm deemed most qualified. Once the scope is completed, the consultant must then prepare his/her final cost proposal. At this point, it may be necessary for the owner to propose renegotiating the scope to get the cost to an acceptable level. Also, there may be extensive discussion regarding which fee basis (lump sum, percentage, cost plus percentage, cost plus fixed fee, etc.) will actually be used. However, the QBS process facilitates an early understanding of the project scope and requirements. If agreement on the scope of services and compensation cannot be reached, negotiations with the first-ranked firm should be terminated, and the owner should open negotiations with the second-ranked firm.

The following considerations also are suggested:

- A detailed and comprehensive scope of services should be developed jointly by the owner and the top-ranked firm. This is often accomplished through one or more meetings of the professional consultant and the owner, after which the professional consultant submits a project and work plan. The work plan should list consultants and the roles and responsibilities of all members of the design team, as well as the responsibilities of the owner.
- Once there is agreement on the work plan, the design firm should submit its proposal for compensation to initiate fee negotiations.
- A written contract should be used. The parties may wish to use the owner's standard form of agreement of the public agency, or that of The American Institute of Architects, the Engineers' Joint Contract Documents, or the standard agreement of the professional association to which the professional consultant belongs. These contracts are widely used, time-tested, and designed to coordinate the needs of the owners, contractors, and design professionals. Often, some modifications or amendments are necessary to meet the needs of both parties and competent counsel should be utilized to assist in finalizing the written contract.
- The agreement between the owner and professional consultant should ensure that both parties have the same expectations and understanding of the project requirements.

When project responsibilities of both the owner and design professional are understood and compensation is determined, an agreement to enter into a contract has been reached. The owner, through the normal written procedure or process, authorizes commencement of design services and thus completes the selection process.

The QBS Advisor may be able to offer assistance as negotiations proceed or become bogged down. However, because of the potential for conflict of interest, *the QBS Advisor must not be involved in any contract negotiations*. The QBS Advisor's role is to provide guidance for the owner's negotiation or negotiating team.

### 3.13 The Role of the QBS Advisor

There is nothing magic about qualifications-based selection. Any public owner with the time, energy and resources can develop a QBS system, either for an individual project or for continued governmental use.

The reality is that while many owners do not have the time, resources and/or motivation to develop the system, they will use QBS when a QBS Advisor is available to help show them the process and provide materials and assistance.

The QBS Advisor may be a senior professional in an architectural, engineering, surveying, geotechnical, or landscape architectural firm, or a senior professional manager in a large public works organization which routinely utilizes QBS procedures to retain consultants for studies, design, and construction. He or she should have major experience pertinent to the consulting work involved, and at least ten years experience in "responsible charge" of professional work. The QBS Advisor is process-oriented, a good listener and an articulate spokesperson and trainer.

The QBS Advisor will not attempt to influence the selection of any specific professional design firm. The QBS Advisor will help the public owner implement a process for the selection of a competent and qualified firm and serve as a resource for the owner throughout the selection process.

The status, requirements and time schedule for each individual project will vary. The following outline of the QBS procedure, as it has generally worked, is presented as a guide for the owner. It is not intended to be a definitive statement of the QBS procedure, but should be adapted and modified to suit an individual owner's needs.

*(See Appendix 4.19, QBS Advisor Evaluation Form.)*

#### **The QBS Advisor is:**

- Independent of any firm submitting a proposal for a particular project.
- Speaking for all the design professionals, including architects, engineers, planners, surveyors and landscape architects.

#### **The QBS public owner assistance program is available:**

- Out of concern for the misunderstanding that owners often have about how to select design professionals.
- To help the owner become a more informed consumer.
- To help the owner develop and use an objective selection method.

- To help the owner's selection of a design professional progress in a timely and equitable manner.
- To help the owner develop the right tools for selecting a qualified firm for the project.
- To help the owner obtain the most cost-effective and appropriate project.

### **The QBS Advisor will:**

- Meet with the owner, board, committee, staff, individual or group to provide information on what professional consultants do, and explain the advantages of the qualifications-based method of selecting a professional consultant.
- Assist with the development of materials to be used by the owner, based on the owner's individual needs and specific requirements.
- Assist with the development of the general statement of services desired (scope of work) for distribution to interested firms.
- Provide assistance on customizing materials and communications, answer questions, and provide ongoing guidance throughout the selection process.
- Assist in preparing the RFP/Q.
- Assist in the selection process (but not the selection itself).
- Assist in the negotiations. This assistance is limited to providing advice only and will not include fee estimates or indications of the appropriateness of any proposed compensation.
- Provide other resources, such as additional materials or referrals to owners who have used the QBS process, and general assistance as appropriate.

### **The QBS Advisor will not:**

- Recommend a firm or firms.
- Provide an evaluation or critique of any design professional or firm.
- Dictate the process to be used in selecting a design professional.
- Participate in the interviewing process except as an observer.
- Participate in contract negotiations between the owner and the selected design professional firm (the QBS Advisor may provide guidance only).
- Warrant or in any way be responsible to the firm and/or owner as to the timely and proper completion of the selection or process.
- Have any personal or firm interest in any proposal submitted.

### 3.14 Additional Discussion

Nothing in this workbook is intended or should be read to prohibit any member of the A & E Conference Committee of California from submitting price quotations at any time during the design professional selection process or to suggest that to do so is unethical, unprofessional, or contrary to policy. Nor should this workbook be read as in any way prohibiting any building or project owner from requesting such submissions.

The A & E Conference Committee of California does, however, advocate that public owners voluntarily adopt the qualifications-based approach to design professional selection. This workbook is not written for private, non-governmental owners.

### 3.15 Organizations with Lists of Design Professional Firms

Lists of design professional firms are available from the following organizations:

**The American Institute of Architects, California Council**

(AIACC)  
1303 J Street, Suite 200  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916/448-9082

**American Society of Civil Engineers**

(ASCE)  
2550 Beverly Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90057  
213/386-6291

**California Council, American Society of Landscape Architects**

(CCASLA)  
925 L Street, Suite 250  
Sacramento, CA 95816  
916/447-7635

**California Geotechnical Engineers Association**

(CGEA)  
P. O. Box 431  
Yorba Linda, CA 92686  
714/777-3423

**Association of Engineering Geologists, California Sections**

(AEGC)  
2500 Townsgate Road, Suite E  
Westlake Village, CA 91361  
805/373-0057

**California Society of Professional Engineers**

(CSPE)  
1005-12th Street, Suite J  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916/442-1041

**Consulting Engineers and Land Surveyors of California**

(CELSOC)  
1303 J Street, Suite 370  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916/441-7991

**Structural Engineers Association of California**

(SEAOC)  
Paul Fratessa, President  
Paul F. Fratessa Associates, Inc.  
360-22nd Street, Suite 850  
Oakland, CA 94612  
510/452-2283

## 4.0 Appendix

### Information & Example Materials

The forms and materials included are designed to provide basic formats that can be adjusted to meet specific project needs. The QBS Subcommittee of the A & E Conference Committee of California will help an owner develop a set of materials to get the selection process started.

#### **MEMOS AND MATERIALS TO BE MAILED TO THE FIRMS INVOLVED:**

1. Alert firm on owner's list of potential consultants via postcards and follow-up letters to firm which have indicated an interest in being considered for the short-list.
2. Request for letters of qualifications and enclosures:
  - Requirements for letters of qualifications.
  - Schedule of activities for the selection time frame.
  - A general statement of services desired (scope of the work).
  - Interview questions and score sheet for ranking firms
  - Group interview evaluation forms
3. Memo to firms that submitted letter of qualifications but were not selected for an interview.
4. Memo to short-listed firms for information on interview and site visitations, with enclosures:
5. Memo to short-listed firms when technical proposal is requested, with enclosures:
  - Review questions and score sheets for ranking firms.
6. Memo to all firms that were interviewed.

#### **FORMS AND INFORMATION FOR USE BY THE OWNER DURING THE SCREENING AND INTERVIEW PROCESS:**

7. Alternative interview score sheet for ranking short-listed firms.
8. Ranking form for evaluation of the letters of qualifications received.
9. Form for checking the references of firms under consideration.

## Qualifications-Based Selection

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### 4.1 Schedule of Activities

The following schedule has been established by: \_\_\_\_\_ [Owner] \_\_\_\_\_

for: \_\_\_\_\_ [Project] \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ [Date] \_\_\_\_\_
- 1) Identification of needs finalized by the owner. A scope of work in general terms developed.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 2) Identification by owner of interested and potential professional design firms to receive memo requesting letters and statements of qualifications.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 3) Memo requesting letters and statements of qualifications mailed to interested and invited firms.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 4) Letters and statements of qualifications due. *[Allow minimum of 10 days for firms to submit materials.]* Note: Before the next action date, references should be reviewed.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 5) Develop short-list of firms selected for interviews. Selection should be based on qualifications, references, and compatibility with owner's project.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 6) Memo mailed to short-listed firms advising date for interviews and pre-interview tour or tours of site and/or facilities, along with criteria to be reviewed during the interview.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 7) Memo mailed to all firms, excluding short-listed firms, informing them of firms to be interviewed and expressing appreciation for their interest.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 8) Tour or tours of facilities at *[time]* and *[location]*. *[Should be scheduled at least ten days before interviews, to allow for preparation.]*
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 9) Schedule interviews for short-listed firms, at times and locations previously communicated. The best firm for the project to be selected, based on qualifications.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 10) Contract with selected firm negotiated and implemented.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 11) Memo mailed to all firms interviewed, indicating results of interviews and expressing appreciation for their involvement.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 12) Post-selection requirements (public hearings, etc.).

## 4.2 Request for Letters of Qualifications: Sample Memo

**TO:** *[List all firms in alphabetical order]*

**FROM:** \_\_\_\_\_ *[Owner]* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ *[Individual and Title]* \_\_\_\_\_ *[Telephone Number]* \_\_\_\_\_

**RE:** Request for Statements of Qualifications

Your firm is invited to submit your statements of qualifications to become eligible for a possible interview for professional design\* services related to design and construction requirements for the \_\_\_\_\_ *[Owner]* \_\_\_\_\_. This project's \_\_\_\_\_ *[description]* \_\_\_\_\_ preliminary requirements are based on studies performed by the \_\_\_\_\_ *[Name of committee or group]* \_\_\_\_\_.

Attached to this memo are:

- 1) A list of materials and information that should be included with your statements of qualifications.
- 2) A general definition of the preliminary scope of the work.
- 3) A schedule of dates and requirements for the selection process.

For firms that are selected for an interview, a tour of the facility and site will be arranged. *[This sentence is optional.]* Your letters and statements of qualifications with \_\_\_\_\_ copies should be forwarded to the following address, and should be received no later than 5 p.m.

on \_\_\_\_\_ *[day and date]* \_\_\_\_\_, and addressed to:

\_\_\_\_\_ *[Name]* \_\_\_\_\_ *[Title]* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ *[Address]* \_\_\_\_\_

\* *[Note: Should use "architectural," "engineering," or "land surveying" in place of "professional design" or other services being sought where appropriate.]*

### 4.3 Requirements for Letters of Qualifications

\_\_\_\_\_ [Owner] \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ [Project] \_\_\_\_\_

**Your letters of qualifications should include the following information:**

- 1) Name, address, and brief history of firm.
- 2) Resumes of key personnel to be assigned to this project.
- 3) Related experience during the last two years. *[On complex and unique projects, may be extended beyond two years.]* For example:
  - a) Include projects where professional consultant services related to design work were performed.
  - b) Include examples of other projects that are similar in scope to this one.
  - c) Include examples of project budgeting, cost estimating, and results.
  - d) Include the name of the project, a contact person, and dollar amount for each example.
- 4) You are invited to include a maximum of one page *[may allow more]* of information not included above, if you feel it may be useful and applicable to this project.

#### 4.4 Preliminary Description of Services Desired (Scope of the Work)

*[The development of a description of services desired for each project should include the following information in general terms, and should be limited to one page.]*

\_\_\_\_\_ [Owner] \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ [Project Name] \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ [Project Location, Contact Person, Telephone Number] \_\_\_\_\_

Identification and involvement of groups (e.g.: boards, committees, citizens' groups, etc.):

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Description of completed studies, surveys, and preliminary feasibility work relevant to the project, and useful and available to firms that will be short-listed.

Requirements for further feasibility planning before development of plans or design work.

Project outline and general anticipated requirements. (Example: demolition, renovation, new construction, land use, environmental, waste management, etc.)

Anticipated time frame:

Projected start \_\_\_\_\_ Planned finish \_\_\_\_\_

Selection process/involvement of groups.

Other requirements:

Referendums, public hearings, etc.

# Qualifications-Based Selection

## 4.5 Letters of Qualifications Evaluation

[To the following model, you should add or delete questions as appropriate for your specific situation.]

It is suggested that the weights and values assigned be on the same scale as those used for interviewing short-listed firms, which you will do later.

Highest Number: most value / Rating column: 1-5 points / Weight column: 1-10, depending on importance to the project.

A form on the following page is provided for the person in charge of the review group to use, to summarize the results of the process, to narrow the number of firms that submitted qualifications down to the number desired for a short-list (firms to be interviewed).

### QUALIFICATIONS EVALUATION

Owner \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Project Description \_\_\_\_\_

Professional Consultant Firm \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Contact \_\_\_\_\_

	Rating	X	Weight	=	Total
1) Firm's history and resource capability to perform required services.		X		=	
2) Evaluation of assigned personnel.		X		=	
3) Related experience (as appropriate): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design Services                      • Construction Coordination</li> <li>• Demolition                              • Studies</li> <li>• Other _____</li> </ul>		X		=	
4) Budget, cost controls experience, and results.		X		=	
5) Familiarity with local area — geography and facilities.		X		=	
6) Ability to relate to project requirements.		X		=	
7) Analysis of subjective statements [one page] applicable to the project as required on the RFQ.		X		=	
8) Reference check (evaluation transfer from reference check form).		X		=	
GRAND TOTAL:					_____

Name of Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_

(continued)

(4.5 continued)

**QUALIFICATIONS EVALUATION SUMMARY**

*[To be used by the review group person in charge, to compile the evaluation results of all letters of qualifications submitted. Note: Enter the grand total for each firm's qualifications (from the respective evaluation sheets for comparative purposes) to select three to five most qualified firms to be interviewed.]*

Firms	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Reviewer 1										
Reviewer 2										
Reviewer 3										
Reviewer ____										
Reviewer ____										
Grand Totals										

List the top-ranked firms as the short-listed firms to be interviewed.



## 4.7 Memo to Short-listed Firms to be Interviewed/Tour of Facilities/and Criteria

**TO:** *[List professional consultant firms in alphabetical order]*

**FROM:** \_\_\_\_\_ *[Owner]* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ *[Individual, Title, and Telephone Number]* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ *[Project]* \_\_\_\_\_

**RE:** Interview Schedule and Requirements

The firms listed above have been short-listed and will be interviewed for the professional consultant services related to the work necessary to implement this project. *[Specify study, design, other.]*

Attached to this memo are the following:

- 1) An interview score sheet, which will be used by the \_\_\_\_\_ *[interviewing group or individual]* \_\_\_\_\_ during the interview session.
- 2) Evaluation form, which the person in charge will use to compile evaluation scores.
- 3) Copies of \_\_\_\_\_ *[name of studies or reports]* \_\_\_\_\_ compiled by \_\_\_\_\_ *[name of group]* \_\_\_\_\_, for your information and review.

Each firm will be allowed 45 minutes to present qualifications and to answer questions. The interviewers will schedule 15 minutes between interviews for informal discussion of information presented during the preceding interview. At the completion of the interviews, the interviewers will rank the firms interviewed in accordance with their determination of which firm is most competent and compatible to do the work. The firm deemed to be most qualified will then enter into negotiations for a contract to provide the necessary services. If contract terms cannot be reached, the firm ranked second will be invited in for contract negotiations.

Interviews will be held on \_\_\_\_\_ *[date]* \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ *[address]* \_\_\_\_\_ .

The order and time of interviews is:

Firm A \_\_\_\_\_(time)      Firm B \_\_\_\_\_(time)      Firm C \_\_\_\_\_(time)  
Firm D \_\_\_\_\_(time)      Firm E \_\_\_\_\_(time)

A tour of the site and/or facility will be arranged for \_\_\_\_\_ *[date]* \_\_\_\_\_. Please have your firm's representative make arrangements with the owner's representative for a time on this date.

## Qualifications-Based Selection

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### 4.8 Memo to Firms that Submitted Letters/Statements of Qualifications Not Selected for Interview

**TO:** *[List in alphabetical order all firms not asked to interview or tour the facilities]*

**FROM:** \_\_\_\_\_ *[Owner]* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ *[Individual, Title, and Telephone Number]* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ *[Address]* \_\_\_\_\_

**RE:** Status of Selection Process

\_\_\_\_\_ *[Project]* \_\_\_\_\_

The \_\_\_\_\_ *[Name of committee or group]* \_\_\_\_\_ expresses its appreciation to you and your firm for submitting your letters of qualifications. After careful consideration of all firms that submitted qualifications, the \_\_\_\_\_ *[Committee board or staff unit]* \_\_\_\_\_ decided to interview the following firms:

*[List firms in alphabetical order]*

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Although your firm was not selected for an interview, we appreciate your interest in our project, and the resources spent on the preparation of your proposal.

## 4.9 The Interview: Questions and Score Sheets

\_\_\_\_\_ [Owner] \_\_\_\_\_ [Project] \_\_\_\_\_

*[Firms invited to interview for the captioned project should be prepared to address the following issues during the course of their interview. Questions can be expanded upon as appropriate.]*

<b>CATEGORIES</b>	<b>RATING</b>	<b>WEIGHT</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1) Related project experience.	_____	x _____	= _____
2) Firm's ability and capacity to perform the work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key personnel committed to this project</li> <li>• Local office</li> </ul>	_____	x _____	= _____
3) Grasp of the project requirements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studies</li> <li>• Design</li> <li>• Knowledge of the community</li> <li>• Understanding of project</li> </ul>	_____	x _____	= _____
4) Method to be used to fulfill the required services, including design phase.	_____	x _____	= _____
5) Management approach for technical requirements. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost controls</li> <li>• Design and construction phase involvement</li> </ul>	_____	x _____	= _____
6) Use of consultants that may work on the project. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss in-house resources</li> <li>• Outside sources</li> </ul>	_____	x _____	= _____
7) Time schedule planned for this project. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability</li> </ul>	_____	x _____	= _____
8) Firm's experience and methods used for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budgeting and financial controls</li> <li>• Determining fee and compensation</li> </ul>	_____	x _____	= _____
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			= _____

**Instructions for the Interviewers**

During the interview, rate each firm on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the highest, in each of the eight categories. Enter the number under "Rating." At the completion of the interview, multiply the rating by the predetermined weight for each category, and enter the total. Add all totals to establish the grand total. The person in charge will combine all of the totals for those participating in the interview session. The preassigned weights are established with a maximum of 10 points for each category. A maximum of 400 points may be awarded, assuming all categories were weighted at 10 and the firm received the maximum 5 rating on each category.

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ Firm: \_\_\_\_\_

## Qualifications-Based Selection

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### 4.10 Optional Interview Form

To: \_\_\_\_\_ [*Interviewing Group*] \_\_\_\_\_

Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Interview Score Sheet

ISSUE	Points Awarded	Possible Points
1. Similar project experience.		10
2. Discussion of the firm's capacity to perform the work and key personnel committed to the project.		10
3. A discussion of the firm's understanding of the project needs.		20
4. Discussion of the methods the firm proposes to use in providing the required services.		10
5. A discussion of consultants that may be working with the firm on the project.		10
6. Discussion of how the firm will handle the planning, design, and construction phases of the project. Discuss design approach, construction cost controls, and involvement in the design and implementation phases of the work, knowledge of local area.		30
7. Discussion of time schedule the firm proposes to complete the necessary preliminary work, as well as a time schedule for the entire project.		10
Notes:		
<b>TOTAL</b>		100

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Firm: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4.11 Example — The Interview: Questions and Score Sheets

Hickory Valley	Landfill Monitoring Wells
<i>[Owner]</i>	<i>[Project]</i>

*[Firms invited to interview for the captioned project should be prepared to address the following issues during the course of their interview. Questions can be expanded on as appropriate.]*

CATEGORIES	RATING	x	WEIGHT	=	TOTAL
1) Related project experience.	<u>3</u>		<u>8</u>	=	<u>24</u>
2) Firm's ability and capacity to perform the work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key personnel committed to this project</li> <li>• Local office</li> </ul>	<u>5</u>		<u>8</u>	=	<u>40</u>
3) Grasp of the project requirements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studies</li> <li>• Design</li> <li>• Knowledge of the Community</li> <li>• Understanding of Project</li> </ul>	<u>4</u>		<u>10</u>	=	<u>40</u>
4) Method to be used to fulfill the required services, including design phase.	<u>4</u>		<u>8</u>	=	<u>32</u>
5) Management approach for technical requirements. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost controls</li> <li>• Design and construction phase involvement</li> </ul>	<u>3</u>		<u>7</u>	=	<u>21</u>
6) Use of consultants that may work on the project. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss in-house resources</li> <li>• Outside sources</li> </ul>	<u>3</u>		<u>5</u>	=	<u>15</u>
7) Time schedule planned for this project. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability</li> </ul>	<u>5</u>		<u>5</u>	=	<u>25</u>
8) Firm's experience and methods used for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budgeting and financial controls</li> <li>• Determining fee and compensation</li> </ul>	<u>4</u>		<u>10</u>	=	<u>40</u>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>				=	<u>237</u>

### Instruction for the Interviewers

During the interview, rate each firm on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the highest, in each of the eight categories. Enter the number under "Rating." At the completion of the interview, multiply the rating by the predetermined weight for each category, and enter the total. Add all totals to establish the grand total. The person in charge will combine all of the totals for those participating in the interview session. The preassigned weights are established with a maximum of 10 points for each category. A maximum of 400 points may be awarded, assuming all categories were weighted at 10 and the firm received the maximum 5 rating on each category.

## 4.12 Group Interview Evaluation Form

*[For use by the person in charge of the interviews, to compile all scores of professional consultant firms participating in the interview process.]*

**Note:**

Enter the grand total for each firm, as recorded by each interviewer on the interview score sheet. After all entries are made and totaled, divide the combined group total for each firm by 400 for the maximum possible score.

### Combined Group Totals

	<b>Firm A</b>	<b>Firm B</b>	<b>Firm C</b>	<b>Firm D</b>	<b>Firm E</b>
Interviewer 1	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Interviewer 2	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Interviewer 3	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Interviewer 4	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Interviewer 5	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Divide group totals by 400 for a composite score to determine the most qualified firm.

(Based on 8 categories.)

#### 4.13 Memo to Short-listed Firms when Technical Proposal is Requested

**TO:** *[List professional consultant firms in alphabetical order]*

**FROM:** \_\_\_\_\_ *[Owner]* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ *[Individual, Title, and Telephone Number]* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ *[Address]* \_\_\_\_\_

**RE:** Technical Proposal Request

The firms listed above have been short-listed. Technical proposals are requested for professional consultant services related to the work necessary to implement this project. *[Specify study, design, other.]*

Attached are:

1. A technical proposal score sheet, which will be used by the \_\_\_\_\_ *[review group or individual]* \_\_\_\_\_ .
2. Evaluation form, for use of the person in charge, to compile the evaluation scores.
3. Copies of \_\_\_\_\_ *[names of studies and reports]* \_\_\_\_\_ compiled by \_\_\_\_\_ *[name of group]* \_\_\_\_\_, for your information and review.

Technical proposals are due on \_\_\_\_\_ *[Date]* \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ *[Time]* \_\_\_\_\_, and should be addressed to \_\_\_\_\_ *[Name]* \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ *[Number]* \_\_\_\_\_ copies are to be submitted.

A tour of the site and/or facility will be arranged on \_\_\_\_\_ *[Date]* \_\_\_\_\_. Please have your firm representative make arrangements with the owner's representative for a time on this date.

## Qualifications-Based Selection

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### 4.14 Technical Proposal Scoresheets

\_\_\_\_\_ [Owner] \_\_\_\_\_ [Project] \_\_\_\_\_

Technical proposals should address the following issues.

CATEGORIES	RATING	WEIGHT	TOTAL
1) Related project experience.	_____	x _____	= _____
2) Firm's ability and capacity to perform the work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key personnel assigned to this project</li> <li>• Responsible officer</li> </ul>	_____	x _____	= _____
3) Issues of special concern.	_____	x _____	= _____
4) Technical approach to project.	_____	x _____	= _____
5) Management approach for technical requirements. Example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost controls</li> <li>• Design and construction phase involvement</li> </ul>	_____	x _____	= _____
6) Use of consultants that may work on the project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-house resources</li> <li>• Outside sources</li> </ul>	_____	x _____	= _____
7) Time schedule planned for this project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability</li> </ul>	_____	x _____	= _____
8) Firm's experience and methods used for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budgeting and financial controls</li> <li>• Determining fee and compensation</li> </ul>	_____	x _____	= _____
<b>GRAND TOTAL =</b>			_____

#### Instructions for Reviewers

During the review, rate each firm on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the highest, in each of the eight categories. Enter the number under "Rating". At the completion of the review, multiply the rating by the predetermined weight for each category, and enter the total. Add all totals to establish the grand total. The person in charge will combine all of the totals for those participating. The preassigned weights are established with a maximum of 10 points for each category. A maximum of 400 points may be awarded, assuming all categories were weighted at 10 and the firm received the maximum 5 rating on each category.

## 4.15 Group Technical Proposal Evaluation Form

*[For use by the person in charge of the interviews, to compile all scores of professional consultant firms participating in the interview process.]*

**Note:**

Enter the grand total for each firm, as recorded by each interviewer on the interview score sheet. After all entries are made and totaled, divide the combined group total for each firm by 400 for the maximum possible score.

### Combined Group Totals

	Firm A	Firm B	Firm C	Firm D	Firm E
Interviewer 1	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Interviewer 2	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Interviewer 3	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Interviewer 4	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Interviewer 5	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Divide group totals by 400 for a composite score to determine the most qualified firm.

(Based on 8 categories.)

## Qualifications-Based Selection

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### 4.16 Example — Group Technical Proposal Evaluation Form

*[For use by the person in charge of the interviews, to compile all scores of professional consultant firms participating in the interview process.]*

**Note:**

Enter the grand total for each firm, as recorded by each interviewer on the interview score sheet. After all entries are made and totaled, divide the combined group total for each firm by 400 for the maximum possible score.

#### Combined Group Totals

	<b>Firm A</b>	<b>Firm B</b>	<b>Firm C</b>	<b>Firm D</b>	<b>Firm E</b>
Interviewer 1	<u>237</u>	<u>314</u>	<u>390</u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
Interviewer 2	<u>340</u>	<u>275</u>	<u>370</u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
Interviewer 3	<u>310</u>	<u>290</u>	<u>370</u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
Interviewer 4	<u>257</u>	<u>330</u>	<u>302</u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
Interviewer 5	<u>290</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>340</u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
_____	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
_____	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
_____	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
_____	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	<u>1,434</u>	<u>1,509</u>	<u>1,772</u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

Divide group totals by 400 for a composite score to determine the most qualified firm.

Blackhawk School District - Elementary School Addition

Firm C = 4.38  
Firm B = 3.77  
Firm A = 3.58

4.17 Memo to all Professional Consultant Firms that were Interviewed

**TO:** [List all firms interviewed but not selected in alphabetical order.]

**FROM:** \_\_\_\_\_ [Owner] \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ [Individual, Title, and Telephone Number] \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ [Address] \_\_\_\_\_

**RE:** Status of Selection Process

\_\_\_\_\_ [Project] \_\_\_\_\_

The \_\_\_\_\_ [Owner] \_\_\_\_\_ has completed the selection process for professional services for the above named project. It has been our objective to select the most qualified firm to perform this service. The results of \_\_\_\_\_ [interviewers'] \_\_\_\_\_ decision ranks the firms interviewed in the following order:

Firm #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Firm #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Firm #3 \_\_\_\_\_

Firm #4 \_\_\_\_\_

Firm #5 \_\_\_\_\_

We have now entered into contract discussions and negotiations with \_\_\_\_\_ [Firm #1] \_\_\_\_\_ .

The \_\_\_\_\_ [interviewers] \_\_\_\_\_ express their appreciation for your time, effort, and interest on our behalf.

# Qualifications-Based Selection

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## 4.18 Owner's QBS Project Evaluation

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**OWNER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PROJECT:** \_\_\_\_\_ **LOCATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

To help serve public owners by providing assistance in the selection of professional consultants, the QBS Advisory Board needs your evaluation of our Qualifications-Based Selection program. Please complete this evaluation form and return it to the QBS Board.

### THE PROCESS:

Was the process used helpful to you in selecting a qualified design professional?

yes       no       somewhat

How would you rate this process?

excellent       very good       good       fair       poor

**Comments** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### THE MATERIALS:

Were the materials adequate to properly represent your project and identify enough qualified firms for you to make not only a qualified but a compatible selection?

yes       no       more or less

### PLEASE RATE THE FOLLOWING:

Request for Qualifications: letter, criteria, scope and schedule

excellent       very good       good       fair       poor

Forms for ranking proposals and reference checking

excellent       very good       good       fair       poor

The short-listed materials: letter, interview, score sheets and status memo

excellent       very good       good       fair       poor

**Comments** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4.19 QBS Advisor Evaluation

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

WERE THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE QBS ADVISOR HELPFUL?

\_\_\_\_ yes      \_\_\_\_ no      \_\_\_\_ somewhat

WHAT SERVICES WERE PROVIDED BY THE QBS ADVISOR?

\_\_\_\_ telephone assistance      \_\_\_\_ information by mail  
\_\_\_\_ face-to-face meetings      \_\_\_\_ materials developed by the QBS Advisor

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE HELPFULNESS OF THE QBS ADVISOR?

\_\_\_\_ excellent      \_\_\_\_ very good      \_\_\_\_ good      \_\_\_\_ fair      \_\_\_\_ poor

Comments

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SUGGESTIONS FOR HOW THE QBS ADVISOR/QBS PROCESS MIGHT BE IMPROVED TO BETTER ASSIST YOU.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THIS SERVICE TO OTHER OWNERS?

\_\_\_\_ yes      \_\_\_\_ no

Thank you for helping the QBS Advisory Board provide this service!

Signature of Owner's Representative (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_



## 5.0 Appendix

### Example Materials

Attached are examples of selection procedures from the Humboldt County Department of Public Works, the County of Santa Clara, and the City of Modesto.

Once again, it should be pointed out that there is no one correct procedure to follow in the selection of professional consultants by public agencies; however, the following contain elements common to good selection procedures.