

White Jr., Tyrone (ISD)

Subject: RE: Verification of Availability***

From:
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2015 12:15 PM
To:
Cc:
Subject: Verification of Availability***

We greatly appreciate your department sending us the subject statements from time to time. Your request two requests for the availability brought a concern to my mind and would like to make a comment/suggestion in reference to Geotechnical work when it is a part of the project's scope of work.

If the scope of the work identifies "geotechnical investigation," then the technical category 9.01 (drilling and subsurface investigation) needs to be included and 9.02 (geotechnical and material testing) is not enough. "Investigation" in a vast majority of the cases does not even begin without 9.01. Geo-material testing is performed primarily to assure the quality of construction during construction and should not be viewed to include the function of drilling and subsurface investigation. If it was the case, there is no need to have two independent technical categories of 9.01 and 9.02.

The need of including 9.01 along with 9.02 exists even for Design-Build projects for which the County has performed subsurface investigation and is providing bidders plans typically to 30% level including geotechnical drilling results. There are many reasons for this. The County has to provide the options of (1) design-build designer to change the design and therefore right to conduct more drilling/investigation if needed, which requires 9.01 (2) conducting additional borings if the design-build designer finds the provided report insufficient. Thirdly, to meet the license obligation on a Geotech PE that his/her design needs to be based on his/her own work; he/she needs to verify the information and agree with it, if he/she needs to use data provided by others. This means conducting at least some additional borings for verification, which requires 9.01. The only exception to this need is when the County takes the responsibility to provide the designer or builder a complete geotechnical design report by the virtue of which the designer treats the report writing geotechnical engineer as its own and therefore does not need to get any geotechnical engineer of its own. This option is usually not available to the "design-build" type project and is feasible for "design-bid-build" option.

The above description, purely on technical and project management level should not need any further justification and the County therefore should always include 9.01 whenever the scope of work identifies the work as "geotechnical investigation." The 9.02 alone is not sufficient. Nevertheless there is another important reason. There are very few firms that are certified for 9.01 and % of CBE firms is relatively higher for this specialty. On the other hand, a much larger number of firms are certified in 9.02 and the % of CBE firms is relatively small. It is therefore quite likely that by adding 9.01 along with 9.02 would increase the chances of CBE firm being chosen as a sub consultant compared to that when only 9.02 is requested. Of course this is a side effect, not the reason. It is also my observation that request for adding a category is more difficult after the NTP is issued. Including it upfront is easier to all.

This is something for your consideration. Feel free to call us if you have any questions.

Thanks.