INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

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1. BID DOCUMENTS:

The Bid Documents consist of the Advertisement for Bids, these Instructions to Bidders, any supplements to these Instructions to Bidders, the Proposal Form and the Accounting of Sales Tax, and the proposed Contract Documents. The proposed Contract Documents consist of the Construction Contract, the Performance Bond and Payment Bond, the Conditions of the Contract (General, Supplemental, and other Conditions), Drawings, Specifications and all addenda issued prior to execution of the Construction Contract. Bid Documents may be obtained or examined as set forth in the Advertisement for Bids.

2. GENERAL CONTRACTOR'S STATE LICENSING REQUIREMENTS:

When the amount bid for a contract exceeds $50,000, the bidder must be licensed by the State Licensing Board for General Contractors and must show the Architect evidence of license before bidding or the bid will not be received by the Architect or considered by the Awarding Authority. A bid exceeding the bid limit stipulated in the bidder's license, or which is for work outside of the type or types of work stipulated in the bidder's license, will not be considered. In case of a joint venture of two or more contractors, the amount of the bid shall be within the maximum bid limitation as set by the State Licensing Board for General Contractors of the combined limitations of the partners to the joint venture.

3. QUALIFICATIONS of BIDDERS and PREQUALIFICATION PROCEDURES:

a. Any special qualifications required of general contractors, subcontractors, material suppliers, or fabricators are set forth in the Bid Documents.

b. The Awarding Authority may have elected to prequalify bidders. Parties interested in bidding for this contract are directed to the Advertisement for Bids and Supplemental Instructions to Bidders to determine whether bidders must be prequalified and how they may obtain copies of the Awarding Authority's published prequalification procedures and criteria.

c. Release of Bid Documents by the Architect to a prospective bidder will not constitute any determination by the Awarding Authority or Architect that the bidder has been found to be qualified, prequalified, or responsible.

4. PREFERENCE to RESIDENT CONTRACTORS:
(If this project is federally funded in whole or in part, this Article shall not apply.)

a. In awarding the Contract, preference will be given to Alabama resident contractors and a nonresident bidder domiciled in a state having laws granting preference to local contractors shall be awarded the Contract only on the same basis as the nonresident bidder's state awards contracts to Alabama contractors bidding under similar circumstances.

b. A nonresident bidder is a contractor which is neither organized and existing under the laws of the State of Alabama, nor maintains its principal place of business in the State of Alabama. A nonresident contractor which has maintained a permanent office within the State of Alabama for at least five continuous years shall not thereafter be deemed to be a non-resident contractor so long as the contractor continues to maintain a branch office within Alabama.

5. EXAMINATION of BID DOCUMENTS and the SITE of the WORK:

Before submitting a bid for the Work, the bidders shall carefully examine the Bid Documents, visit the site, and satisfy themselves as to the nature and location of the Work, and the general and local conditions, including weather, the general character of the site or building, the character and extent of existing work within or adjacent to the site and any other work being performed thereon at the time of submission of their bids. They shall obtain full knowledge as to transportation, disposal, handling, and storage of materials, availability of water, electric power, and all other facilities in the area which will have a bearing on the performance of the Work for which they submit their bids. The submission of a bid shall constitute a representation by the bidder that the bidder has made such examination and visit and has judged for and satisfied himself or herself as to conditions to be encountered regarding the character, difficulties, quality, and quantities of work to be performed and the material and equipment to be furnished, and as to the contract requirements involved.

6. EXPLANATIONS and INTERPRETATIONS:

a. Should any bidder observe any ambiguity, discrepancy, omission, or error in the drawings and specifications, or in any other bid document, or be in doubt as to the intention and meaning of these documents, the bidder should immediately report such to the Architect and request clarification.

b. Clarification will be made only by written Addenda sent to all prospective bidders. Neither the Architect nor the Awarding Authority will be responsible in any manner for verbal answers or instructions regarding intent or meaning of the Bid Documents.

c. In the case of inconsistency between drawings and specifications or within either document, a bidder will be deemed to have included in its bid the better quality or greater quantity of the work involved unless the bidder asked for and obtained the Architect's written clarification of the requirements before submission of a bid.

7. SUBSTITUTIONS:

a. The identification of any product, material, system, item of equipment, or service in the Bid Documents by reference to a trade name, manufacturer's name, model number, etc. (hereinafter referred to as "source"), is intended to establish a required standard of performance, design, and quality and is not intended to limit competition unless the provisions of paragraph "d" below apply.

b. When the Bid Documents identify only one or two sources, or three or more sources followed by "or approved equal" or similar wording, the bidder's proposal may be based on a source not identified but considered by the bidder to be equal to the standard of performance, design and quality as specified; however, such substitutions must ultimately be approved by the Architect. If the bidder elects to bid on a substitution without "Pre-bid Approval" as described below, then it will be understood that proof of compliance with specified requirements is the exclusive responsibility of the bidder.

c. When the Bid Documents identify three or more sources and the list of sources is not followed by "or approved equal" or similar wording, the bidder's proposal shall be based upon one of the identified sources, unless the bidder obtains "Pre-bid Approval" of another source as described below. Under these conditions it will be expressly understood that no product, material, system, item of equipment, or service that is not identified in the Bid Documents or granted "Pre-Bid Approval" will be incorporated into the Work unless such substitution is authorized and agreed upon through a Contract Change Order.

d. If the Bid Documents identify only one source and expressly provide that it is an approved sole source for the product, material, system, item of equipment, or service, the bidder's proposal must be based upon the identified sole source.

e. Procedures for "Pre-bid Approval". If it is desired that a product, material, system, piece of equipment, or service from a source different from those sources identified in the Bid Documents be approved as an acceptable source, application for the approval of such source must reach the hands of the Architect at least ten days prior to the date set for the opening of bids. At the Architect's discretion, this ten day provision may be waived. The application for approval of a proposed source must be accompanied by technical data which the applicant desires to submit in support of the application. The Architect will give consideration to reports from reputable independent testing laboratories, verified experience records showing the reputation of the proposed source with previous users, evidence of reputation of the source for prompt delivery, evidence of reputation of the source for efficiency in servicing its products, or any other pertinent written information. The application to the Architect for approval of a proposed source must be accompanied by a schedule setting forth in which respects the materials or equipment submitted for consideration differ from the materials or equipment designated in the Bid Documents. The burden of proof of the merit of the proposed substitution is upon the proposer. To be approved, a proposed source must also meet or exceed all express requirements of the Bid Documents. Approval, if granted, shall not be effective until published by the Architect in an addendum to the Bid Documents.

8. PREPARATION and DELIVERY of BIDS:

a. DCM Form C-3: Proposal Form:

(1) Bids must be submitted on the Proposal Form as contained in the Bid Documents; only one copy is required to be submitted. A completed DCM Form C-3A: Accounting of Sales Tax must be submitted with the Proposal Form.

(2) All information requested of the bidder on the Proposal Form must be filled in. The form must be completed by typewriter or hand-printed in ink.

(3) Identification of Bidder: On the first page of the Proposal Form the bidder must be fully identified by completing the spaces provided for:

- **(a)** the legal name of the bidder,
- **(b)** the state under which laws the bidder's business is organized and existing,
- **(c)** the city (and state) in which the bidder has its principal offices,
- **(d)** the bidder's business organization, i.e., corporation, partnership, or individual (to be indicated by marking the applicable box and writing in the type of organization if it is not one of those listed), and
- **(e)** the partners or officers of the bidder's organization, if the bidder is other than an individual. If the space provided on the Proposal Form is not adequate for this listing, the bidder may insert "See Attachment" in this space and provide the listing on an attachment to the Proposal Form.

(4) Where indicated by the format of the Proposal Form, the bidder must specify lump sum prices in both words and figures. In case of discrepancy between the prices shown in words and in figures, the words will govern.

(5) All bid items requested in the Proposal Form, including alternate bid prices and unit prices for separate items of the Work, must be bid. If a gross sum of bid items is requested in the Proposal Form, the gross sum shall be provided by the bidder.

(6) In the space provided in the Proposal Form under "Bidder's Alabama License", the bidder must insert his or her current general contractor's state license number, current bid limit, and type(s) of work for which bidder is licensed.

(7) The Proposal Form shall be properly signed by the bidder. If the bidder is:

- **(a)** **an individual**, that individual or his or her "authorized representative" must sign the Proposal Form;
- **(b)** **a partnership,** the Proposal Form must be signed by one of the partners or an "authorized representative" of the Partnership;
- **(c)** **a corporation,** the president, vice-president, secretary, or "authorized representative" of the corporation shall sign and affix the corporate seal to the Proposal Form.

As used in these Instructions to Bidders, "authorized representative" is defined as a person to whom the bidder has granted written authority to conduct business in the bidder's behalf by signing and/or modifying the bid. Such written authority shall be signed by the bidder (the individual proprietor, or a member of the Partnership, or an officer of the Corporation) and shall be attached to the Proposal Form.

(8) Interlineation, alterations or erasures on the Proposal Form must be initialed by the bidder or its "authorized representative".

b. DCM Form C-3A: Accounting of Sales Tax

A completed DCM Form C-3A: Accounting of Sales Tax must be submitted with DCM Form C-3: Proposal Form. Submission of DCM Form C-3A is required, it is not optional. A proposal shall be rendered non-responsive if an Accounting of Sales Tax is not provided.

c. Bid Guaranty

(1) The Proposal Form must be accompanied by a cashier's check, drawn on an Alabama bank, or a Bid Bond, executed by a surety company duly authorized and qualified to make such bonds in the State of Alabama, payable to the Awarding Authority.

(2) If a Bid Bond is provided in lieu of a cashier's check, the bond shall be on the Bid Bond form as stipulated in the Bid Documents.

(3) The amount of the cashier's check or Bid Bond should not be less than five percent of the contractor's bid, but is not required to be in an amount more than ten thousand dollars.

d. Delivery of Bids:

(1) Bids will be received until the time set, and at the location designated, in the Advertisement for Bids unless notice is given of postponement. Any bid not received prior to the time set for opening bids will be rejected absent extenuating circumstances and such bids shall be rejected in all cases where received after other bids are opened.

(2) Each bid shall be placed, together with the bid guaranty, in a sealed envelope. On the outside of the envelope the bidder shall write in large letters "Proposal", below which the bidder shall identify the Project and the Work bid on, the name of the bidder, and the bidder's current general contractor's state license number.

(3) Bids may be delivered in person, or by mail if ample time is allowed for delivery. When sent by mail, the sealed envelope containing the bid, marked as indicated above, shall be enclosed in another envelope for mailing.

9. WITHDRAWAL or REVISION of BIDS:

a. A bid may be withdrawn prior to the time set for opening of bids, provided a written request, executed by the bidder or the bidder's "authorized representative", is filed with the Architect prior to that time. The bid will then be returned to the bidder unopened.

b. A bid which has been sealed in its delivery envelope may be revised by writing the change in price and date on the outside of the delivery envelope over the signature of the bidder or the bidder's "authorized representative". In revising the bid in this manner, the bidder must only write the amount of the change in price on the envelope **and must not reveal the bid price.**

c. Written communications, signed by the bidder or its "authorized representative", to revise bids will be accepted if received by the Architect prior to the time set for opening bids. The Architect will record the instructed revision upon opening the bid. Such written communication may be by facsimile if so stipulated in Supplemental Instructions to Bidders. In revising the bid in this manner, the bidder must only write the amount of the change in price **and must not reveal the bid price.**

d. Except as provided in Article 12 of these Instructions to Bidders, no bid shall be withdrawn, modified, or corrected after the time set for opening bids.

10. OPENING of BIDS:

a. Bids will be opened and read publicly at the time and place indicated in the Advertisement for Bids. Bidders or their authorized representatives are invited to be present.

b. A list of all proposed major subcontractors and suppliers will be submitted by Bidders to the Architect at a time subsequent to the receipt of bids as established by the Architect in the Bid Documents but in no event shall this time exceed twenty-four (24) hours after receipt of bids. If the list includes a fire alarm contractor and/or fire sprinkler contractor, Bidders will also submit a copy of the fire alarm contractor's and/or fire sprinkler contractor's permits from the State of Alabama Fire Marshal's Office.

11. INCOMPLETE and IRREGULAR BIDS:

A bid that is not accompanied by data required by the Bid Documents, or a bid which is in any way incomplete, may be rejected. Any bid which contains any uninitialed alterations or erasures, or any bid which contains any additions, alternate bids, or conditions not called for, or any other irregularities of any kind, will be subject to rejection.

12. BID ERRORS:

a. Errors and Discrepancies in the Proposal Form. In case of error in the extension of prices in bids, the unit price will govern. In case of discrepancy between the prices shown in the figures and in words, the words will govern.

b. Mistakes within the Bid. If the low bidder discovers a mistake in its bid, the low bidder may seek withdrawal of its bid without forfeiture of its bid guaranty under the following conditions:

(1) <u>Timely Notice</u>: The low bidder must notify the Awarding Authority and Architect in writing, within three working days after the opening of bids, that a mistake was made. This notice must be given within this time frame whether or not award has been made.

(2) <u>Substantial Mistake</u>: The mistake must be of such significance as to render the bid price substantially out of proportion to the other bid prices.

(3) <u>Type of Mistake</u>: The mistake must be due to calculation or clerical error, an inadvertent omission, or a typographical error which results in an erroneous sum. A mistake of law, judgment, or opinion shall not constitute a valid ground for withdrawal without forfeiture.

(4) <u>Documentary Evidence</u>: Clear and convincing documentary evidence of the mistake must be presented to the Awarding Authority and the Architect as soon as possible, but no later than three working days after the opening of bids.

The Awarding Authority's decision regarding a low bidder's request to withdraw its bid without penalty shall be made within 10 days after receipt of the bidder's evidence or by the next regular meeting of the Awarding Authority. Upon withdrawal of bid without penalty, the low bidder shall be prohibited from (1) doing work on the project as a subcontractor or in any other capacity and (2) bidding on the same project if it is re-bid.

13. DISQUALIFICATION of BIDDERS:

Any bidder(s) may be disqualified from consideration for contract award for the following reasons:

a. Collusion. Any agreement or collusion among bidders or prospective bidders in restraint of freedom of competition to bid at a fixed price or to refrain from bidding or otherwise shall render the bids void and shall cause the bidders or prospective bidders participating in such agreement or collusion to be disqualified from submitting further bids to the Awarding Authority on future lettings. (See § 39-2-6, Code of Alabama 1975, for possible criminal sanctions.)

b. Advance Disclosure. Any disclosure in advance of the terms of a bid submitted in response to an Advertisement for Bids shall render the proceedings void and require re-advertisement and rebid.

c. Failure to Settle Other Contracts. The Awarding Authority may reject a bid from a bidder who has not paid, or satisfactorily settled, all bills due for labor and material on other contracts in force at the time of letting.

14. CONSIDERATION of BIDS:

a. After the bids are opened and read publicly, the bid prices will be compared and the results of this comparison will be available to the public. Until the final award of the contract, however, the Awarding Authority shall have the right to reject any or all bids, and it shall have the right to waive technical errors and irregularities if, in its judgment, the bidder will not have obtained a competitive advantage and the best interests of the Awarding Authority will be promoted.

b. If the Bid Documents request bids for projects or parts of projects in combination or separately, the Bid Documents must include supplements to, these Instructions to Bidders setting forth applicable bid procedures. Award or awards will be made to the lowest responsible and responsive bidder or bidders in accordance with such bid procedures.

15. DETERMINATION of LOW BIDDER by USE of ALTERNATES:

a. The Awarding Authority may request alternate bid prices (alternates) to facilitate either reducing the base bid to an amount within the funds available for the project or adding items to the base bid within the funds available for the project. Alternates, if any, are listed in the

Proposal Form in the order in which they shall cumulatively deduct from or add to the base bid for determining the lowest bidder.

b. If alternates are included in the Proposal Form, the Awarding Authority shall determine the dollar amount of funds available and immediately prior to the opening of bids shall announce publicly the funds available for the project. The dollar amount of such funds shall be used to determine the lowest bidder as provided herein below, notwithstanding that the actual funds available for the project may subsequently be determined to be more or less than the expected funds available as determined immediately prior to the time of the opening of bids.

c. If the base bid of the lowest bidder exceeds the funds available and alternate bid prices will reduce the base bids to an amount that is within the funds available, the lowest bidder will be determined by considering, in order, the fewest number of the alternates that produces a price within the funds available. If the base bid of the lowest bidder is within the funds available and alternate bid prices will permit adding items to the base bid, the lowest bidder will be determined by considering, in order, the greatest number of the alternates that produces a price within the funds available.

d. After the lowest bidder has been determined as set forth above, the Awarding Authority may award that bidder any combination of alternates, provided said bidder is also the low bidder when only the Base Bid and such combination of alternates are considered.

16. UNIT PRICES:

a. Work Bid on a Unit Price Basis. Where all, or part(s), of the planned Work is bid on a unit price basis, both the unit prices and the extensions of the unit prices constitute a basis of determining the lowest responsible and responsive bidder. In cases of error in the extension of prices of bids, the unit price will govern. A bid may be rejected if any of the unit prices are obviously unbalanced or non-competitive.

b. Unit Prices for Application to Change Orders. As a means of predetermining unit costs for changes in certain elements of the Work, the Bid Documents may require that the bidders furnish unit prices for those items in the Proposal Form. Unit prices for application to changes in the work are not a basis for determining the lowest bidder. Non-competitive unit prices proposed by the successful bidder may be rejected and competitive prices negotiated by the Awarding Authority prior to contract award. Unit prices for application to changes in the work are not effective unless specifically included and agreed upon in the Construction Contract.

17. AWARD of CONTRACT:

a. The contract shall be awarded to the lowest responsible and responsive bidder unless the Awarding Authority finds that all the bids are unreasonable or that it is not in the best interest of the Awarding Authority to accept any of the bids. A responsible bidder is one who, among other qualities determined necessary for performance, is competent, experienced, and financially able to perform the contract. A responsive bidder is one who submits a bid that complies with the terms and conditions of the Advertisement for Bids and the Bid Documents. Minor irregularities in the bid shall not defeat responsiveness.

b. A bidder to whom award is made will be notified by telegram, confirmed facsimile, or letter to the address shown on the Proposal Form at the earliest possible date. Unless other

time frames are stipulated in Supplemental Instructions to Bidders, the maximum time frames allowed for each step of the process between the opening of bids and the issuance of an order to proceed with the work shall be as follows:

(1)	Award of contract by Awarding Authority	30 calendar days after the opening of bids
(2)	Contractor's return of the fully executed contract, with bonds and evidence of insurance, to the Awarding Authority	15 calendar days after the contract has been presented to the contractor for signature (from the Lead Design Professional)
(3)	Awarding Authority's approval of the contractor's bonds and evidence of insurance and completion of contract execution	20 calendar days after the contractor presents complete and acceptable documents to the Architect
(4)	Notice To Proceed issued to the contractor along with distribution of the fully executed construction contract to all parties.	15 calendar days after final execution of contract by the Awarding Authority, by various State Agencies if required and by the Governor if his or her signature on the contract is required by law

The time frames stated above, or as otherwise specified in the Bid Documents, may be extended by written agreement between the parties. Failure by the Awarding Authority to comply with the time frames stated above or stipulated in Supplemental Instructions to Bidders, or agreed extensions thereof, shall be just cause for the withdrawal of the contractor's bid and contract without forfeiture of bid security.

c. Should the successful bidder or bidders to whom the contract is awarded fail to execute the Construction Contract and furnish acceptable Performance and Payment Bonds and satisfactory evidence of insurance within the specified period, the Awarding Authority shall retain from the bid guaranty, if it is a cashier's check, or recover from the principal or the sureties, if the guaranty is a bid bond, the difference between the amount of the contract as awarded and the amount of the bid of the next lowest responsible and responsive bidder, but not more than $10,000. If no other bids are received, the full amount of the bid guaranty shall be so retained or recovered as liquidated damages for such default. Any sums so retained or recovered shall be the property of the Awarding Authority.

d. All bid guaranties, except those of the three lowest bona fide bidders, will be returned immediately after bids have been checked, tabulated, and the relation of the bids established. The bid guaranties of the three lowest bidders will be returned as soon as the contract bonds and the contract of the successful bidder have been properly executed and approved. When the award is deferred for a period of time longer than 15 days after the opening of the bids, all bid guaranties, except those of the potentially successful bidders, shall be returned. If no award is made within the specified period, as it may by agreement be extended, all bids will be rejected, and all guaranties returned. If any potentially successful bidder agrees in writing to a stipulated extension in time for consideration of its bid and its bid was guaranteed with a cashier's check, the Awarding Authority may permit the potentially successful bidder to substitute a satisfactory bid bond for the cashier's check.

END of INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS