



**DAKOTA COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT**

**GUIDE TO BIDDING
TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS**

It is Dakota County's policy to provide all contractors and subcontractors, with equal access to procurement opportunities.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Purpose of Guide to Bidding	1
Applicable Requirements for Transportation Projects	1
Prequalification of Bidders.....	2
eGram - Dakota County’s Bid Information Web Site	2
Before Bidding.....	3
Requirements.....	3
Business Registration	3
Bid Bonds.....	3
Minnesota Tax ID #.....	4
Federal Tax ID #.....	4
INFORMATION	4
Advertisements for Bids.....	4
Plan Holder Lists.....	4
MnDOT’s Standard Specifications for Construction.....	5
Ways to Bid County Projects.....	5
Electronic Bidding Process	5
Downloading project documents.....	5
Submitting a bid	5
Additional bidding requirements	6
Creating a ConneX Account.....	7
Frequently Asked Questions	8
Computer Requirements.....	8
What kind of computer and software do I need?.....	8
What Internet browsers can be used?.....	8
How Do I Sign Bids And Ensure That They Are Secure?.....	8
How do I sign my bid?	8
How do I ensure that my bids are secure?.....	8
Who can read my bid?	8
Can I make changes to my bid and submit a bid more than once?	9
Will I know if my bid changes are accepted?	9
Can I withdraw a bid?.....	9
Could my bid be lost?.....	9
Is the System reliable?	9
How do I know if an addendum has been issued?.....	9
Will support for the electronic bid system be available?	9
What Happens Once Bids Are Opened?	10
Other Areas That Contractors Should Be Aware Of.....	10
Regulated Activities.....	10
Asbestos	10
Asbestos removal	10
Electricians	10
Erosion Control.....	10
Dakota County.....	11
Moving Buildings.....	11
Water Quality	11
Federal and State Licenses	11
Other Highway Construction Resources	11

Purpose of Guide to Bidding

This *Guide to Bidding* is designed to lead contractors and subcontractors through Dakota County's bidding process for highway construction and maintenance projects and answers questions such as: What is required? How do I bid on projects? What happens once the bids are opened? Where can I find online information?

This guide covers only projects that are advertised and administered by Dakota County Transportation.

The County advertises its transportation projects:

- in the Rosemount Town Pages
- on the county web site:
www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/DoingBusiness/BidProposalsInformation;
and
- on <https://eadvert.dot.state.mn.us/>

Other government agencies (federal, state, and municipal) also advertise their highway construction and maintenance projects through some of the same resources. These government agencies have their own bidding processes.

One way to identify Dakota County projects in an advertisement is to look for the bid opening location and/or where to obtain plans and proposals.

Applicable Requirements for Transportation Projects

Parts of a project's requirements are determined by the source of the funds. For example, if project funds are solely from Dakota County, the County's contract compliance requirements are applicable. If State and/or Federal monies are included in the project, the state's contract compliance requirements may be applicable.

Review the plans and proposals specific to the project you are bidding to determine which requirements are applicable.

In the case of any discrepancies, the project bid documents supersede information contained in this guide.

Prequalification of Bidders

Dakota County has no prequalification requirements for submitting bids on construction projects. It is the bidder's responsibility to determine if their firm is able to meet the requirements of a project as specified before submitting a bid. However, after bids have been opened, the low bidder(s) may be required to provide a written statement before award of bid(s), showing their experience and the amount of capital and equipment available for doing the proposed work.

eGram - Dakota County's Bid Information Web Site

<https://egram.co.Dakota.mn.us>

Contractors, subcontractors, suppliers, and plan rooms can find the following bid information on the eGram web site:

- current projects as advertised "Projects in Bidding"
- current awarded projects "Projects in Construction"
- general bidding requirements
- forms
- addenda for projects
- bid totals (as read)
- detailed bid abstracts
- plan holder lists
- electronic files of plans and proposals
- project notices

Sponsor: Dakota County Transportation Department

Contact: erin.borchert@co.dakota.mn.us

In addition, Dakota County utilizes the following web sites:

- eAdvert: <https://eadvert.dot.state.mn.us/> - Advertises projects.
- ConneX: <https://connex.mn.uccs.com> - Sign up for username/password and PIN number for access to Dakota County web sites and to submit a bid.
- BidVault: <https://bidvault.mn.uccs.com> - For Electronic Bidding.

Before Bidding

REQUIREMENTS

Dakota County requires contractors to meet certain requirements to make sure that their bids are acceptable and legitimate.

NOTICE

Businesses debarred under Part 20, Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations are ineligible to bid on, subcontract for, or supply materials or services for any state, county, maintenance, or municipal project. Check the Web site: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/pre-letting/prov/sequence.html> to determine if there are any debarred businesses.

Business Registration

All businesses must comply with the requirements of doing business in Minnesota as directed by the Office of the Secretary of State.

Out-of-state businesses must obtain a “Certificate of Authority” from the Office of the Secretary of State to conduct business in Minnesota.

Necessary forms and other information can be obtained from the Minnesota Secretary of State:

Website: <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/index.aspx?page=1>

Mail or in person: Office of Secretary of State
Retirement Systems of Minnesota Building
60 Empire Dr., Suite 100
Saint Paul, MN 55103

Phone: In the Metro Area 651-296-2803 (9:00 AM to 4:00 PM)
In Greater MN 1-877-551-6767 (9:00 AM to 4:00 PM)

Fax: 651-297-7067

Bid Bonds

All bids must be accompanied by a proposal guaranty (bid bond or certified check) of five percent of the bid price. Bid bonds ensure that only legitimate bids are submitted.

The proposal guaranty may be either a bid bond or certified check made out to the Dakota County Treasurer. Bid bonds can be submitted electronically with electronic bids using Surety 2000.

Minnesota Tax ID #

All contractors doing business in Minnesota must have a Minnesota tax identification number. To obtain a number, contact the Internal Revenue Service at:
<https://www.mndor.state.mn.us/er/ctrl/WelcomeController> or call 1-800-652-9094 toll-free.

Federal Tax ID #

All contractors doing business in Minnesota must have a federal tax identification number. To obtain a number, contact the Internal Revenue Service at:
<http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=98350,00.html>

INFORMATION

Advertisements for Bids

Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) advertises local construction projects for agencies on their bid letting web site at: <http://bidlet.dot.state.mn.us/advertisement.aspx>.

Dakota County advertises transportation projects for a minimum of three weeks before the scheduled bid date.

WARNING

Bidders should log into eGram under their own names to ensure that they receive all documents and addenda issued after the project ad date. Bidders are responsible for acknowledging all addenda. Failure to acknowledge addenda will cause the rejection of your bid. Dakota County will not be responsible for bidders receiving addenda unless they appear on the County's official plan holders list.

Plan Holder Lists

Plan holder lists show all businesses that have registered as a plan holder for particular projects. To obtain plan holder lists check the web site at:
<https://egram.co.Dakota.mn.us/>

Only registered plan holders will be allowed to bid on projects.

WARNING

Contractors should be familiar with the Standard Specifications and Project Special Provisions prior to submitting a bid.

MnDOT's Standard Specifications for Construction

The Plan and Proposal will indicate which edition of the Minnesota Standard Specifications for Construction will govern the project. The Standard Specifications for Construction can be viewed at: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/pre-letting/spec/index.html>

Copies may be purchased from MnDOT upon request by mail or in-person at the:

Maps and Manual Sales Counter
Room 110 Transportation Bldg.
Mail Stop 260
395 John Ireland Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

For information call: 651-366-3017

Ways to Bid County Projects

All bids for Dakota County Transportation projects must be submitted electronically via BidVault. Hard copy Plans and Proposals are available for viewing only at the Dakota County Transportation Department, 14955 Galaxie Ave., 3rd Floor, Apple Valley, MN 55124. For electronic bidding questions, contact Erin Borchert either by phone at 952-891-7908 or by email at erin.borchert@co.dakota.mn.us.

ELECTRONIC BIDDING PROCESS

Downloading project documents

1. All Bidders will need a User ID, Password, and Personal Identification Number (PIN). Users with an existing ConneX account can **Log in with ConneX** with their **User ID & Password**. See *Creating a ConneX Account* if you do not have an existing account.
2. Download the Plans and Proposals from the Dakota County eGram site at <https://egram.co.dakota.mn.us>; **Note:** You are only allowed to bid if you download all plans, proposals, addendums, and register as a plan holder (select "Yes" to be added to the plan holder list prior to downloading files).

Submitting a bid

1. **Bid is submitted electronically** through BidVault at <https://bidvault.mn.uccs.com>. Log in with your ConneX User ID & Password.
2. Select the Project Number to bid on the project.
3. Obtain Bid Key for project bidding from the BidVault server. Each project has its own unique Bid Key. You will need this key each time you wish to access your online bid.
4. Enter item bid values.

5. Submit an electronic bid bond through Surety 2000 (or you may submit a hard copy prior to bid opening date and time).
6. Submit electronic bid.
7. Digitally sign the bid by entering your PIN. The bidder must use an electronic signature (PIN) on the bid to conform with MN Statute § 161.32, subd. 1b. The bid must also comply with the requirements of the BidVault web site.

Until the time of the Bid Opening, your company agent is the only one who can see your bid in BidVault.

Additional bidding requirements

In addition to submitting the bid electronically through BidVault, other items are required to complete your bid submittal (see the Proposal for project specific requirements):

1. Complete, sign, and submit the following documents prior to the bid opening:
 - Proposal title sheet
 - Notice to Bidders – Specifications (if applicable)
 - Stipulation for Foreign Iron or Steel Materials (if applicable)
 - Form CM 32-34 (if Federal)
 - Non-Collusion Affidavit
 - Bid Bond Form 21816
 - Equal Employment / Anti-Discrimination sheet
 - Tennessee Notice
 - Responsible Contractor Certification
 - Form 21126D

Submit these documents using one of the following methods:

- Submit the signed original documents to the Dakota County Transportation Facility located at 2800 160th Street West, Rosemount, MN 55068. They must be received prior to the bid opening time and date in a sealed envelope bearing the inscription of the project number and the Bidder's name; or
- Email copies of the signed documents prior to the bid opening time and date to HwyBidding@co.dakota.mn.us including the project number in the subject line and submit the signed original documents within three business days after the bid opening to Dakota County – Bidding, 2800 160th Street West, Rosemount, MN 55068.

2. Submit a bid bond using one of the following means:
 - Electronic Bid Bond – Contact Surety2000 to obtain an electronic bid bond and bid bond code. Bid bond codes are submitted with the electronic bid. Bonding agents can contact <http://www.surety2000.com> for accounts or questions.
 - Paper Bid Bond/Certified Check – Submit the original paper bid bond or certified check using one of the following methods:
 - Submit prior to the bid opening time and date to the Dakota County Transportation Facility located at 2800 160th Street West, Rosemount, MN 55068.
 - Email a copy prior to the bid opening time and date to HwyBidding@co.dakota.mn.us including the project number in the subject line and submit the signed original documents within three business days after the bid opening to Dakota County – Bidding, 2800 160th Street West, Rosemount, MN 55068.
3. Acknowledge receipt of each Addendum prior to the bid opening time and date in your electronic bid using BidVault and on Form 21126D included with the bid submittal documents.

WARNING

Failure to complete, sign, and/or submit any of the bid submittal items listed above will result in rejection of that bid.

CREATING A CONNEX ACCOUNT

1. Enter the ConneX website: <https://connex.mn.uccs.com> to sign up for account.
2. Choose an existing organization to join or create a new organization.
3. Follow the guided interface to set up an account/organization and read the notes under each step for extra information or guidance.
4. Log into created account
5. Edit any user detail changes – i.e., Password changes, phone number changes. At least one individual will need to be setup with Approval Rights (or a PIN) in order to approve the bid.
6. Add Organization Details under **My Organization** – New Contractor or pick existing contractor
7. Save Details at the bottom of My Organization Page
8. Select Agency you wish to have **eGram Access** to: i.e.; Dakota County (this will be a one-time request).

9. After Request Access is sent to Dakota County, you will receive an email granting access to Dakota County's eGram site.

Frequently Asked Questions

COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS

What kind of computer and software do I need? No software needs to be downloaded; but it is required to have Internet capabilities on a device running Windows 7 or newer, or Apple OSX.

What Internet browsers can be used? Internet using Windows Explorer 9.0 or newer, Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, or Safari.

HOW DO I SIGN BIDS AND ENSURE THAT THEY ARE SECURE?

How do I sign my bid?

All access rights and users for your company are under your company's control. You set up your company and users on the ConneX website. Each person authorized to sign the Bid for your company will be issued a PIN Number along with a username and password. For your protection, you should not share your PIN Number with others as the PIN number identifies who signed and submitted your bid.

How do I ensure that my bids are secure?

The issue of security and data privacy is addressed by data encryption, digital signatures and redundant backup systems.

Who can read my bid?

Until the bids are opened, only your authorized bidders can see the bid. The software program uses an encryption code and other security methods which prohibit anyone, including Dakota County and the service provider, from reading your bid. At the bid letting, the bids are released so that Dakota County can read the bid, but cannot alter the bid in any way. When the bids are opened on bid day, you will receive an email.

Bids will be opened when the time on the BidVault server reaches the specified time on bid date. The server time of the BidVault server will be shown in the upper right hand corner on all screens.

Can I make changes to my bid and submit a bid more than once?

Yes. If you submit multiple bids before the deadline, only the last submission will be retained and passed on to Dakota County.

When you make changes to your bid, an authorized person must resign the bid. This ensures that the changes to your bid are accepted.

Will I know if my bid changes are accepted?

the user who submitted the bid will receive an email that the bid has been opened. When you make changes to your bid, an authorized person must resign the bid. This ensures that the changes to your bid are accepted. ***If you do not resign the bid, the bid will be flagged as “Not Complete” and will not be accepted.***

Can I withdraw a bid?

Yes. You may withdraw your electronic bid on the BidVault web page. If you request to have your bid withdrawn before the bid opening deadline, your bid will not be passed to Dakota County. If you wish to withdraw your paper bid, you must contact Erin Borchert, Dakota County Transportation Department, before the bid opening deadline.

Could my bid be lost?

No. The data is backed up on multiple servers.

Is the System reliable?

Dakota County requires that the bid submittal service is always accessible. To accomplish this, the service provider will have redundant servers, access lines, backups, and backup power sources.

How do I know if an addendum has been issued?

Every user account in the organization is informed about addendums. Only organizations registered as a plan holder for the project will receive notifications.

Will support for the electronic bid system be available?

Yes. You will have access to telephone, E-mail and fax support from Dakota County. Presently telephone service is provided between the hours of 8:00AM and 4:30 PM.

NOTE: If you lose your Bid Key and have to request a new one, your previous Bid will be voided and deleted. All bid information must then be reentered and resubmitted.

WHAT HAPPENS ONCE BIDS ARE OPENED?

1. At the bid opening, the user who signed the bid will receive an email that your Bid has been opened. At this point, your bid is now closed and no changes can be made to it.
2. The bid time and date on the BidVault server screen is the official time of the Bid Opening.
 - a. Your Bid is date and time stamped to the last time your bid was submitted. If you change your bid and do not resubmit it, the changes will not be officially submitted or accepted. You can make changes to your bid (and save it) as you are developing your bid. Your Bid *is not officially submitted until you sign your bid*.
3. Bid totals are posted on eGram.

Other Areas That Contractors Should Be Aware Of

Regulated Activities

Some construction projects require special licenses or permits. These requirements should be specified in the plans and proposals. Contact the appropriate agency for regulated activities you might encounter on a project.

Asbestos

Removing, enclosing, encapsulating or applying asbestos-containing material
Dept. of Health 651/201-4620
<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/asbestos/index.html>

Asbestos removal

Pollution Control Agency 651/296-6300
http://www.pca.state.mn.us/programs/asbestos_p.html

Electricians

Electrical Licensing and Inspection Phone: (651) 284-5064
<http://www.electricity.state.mn.us/>

Erosion Control

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits
http://www.pca.state.mn.us/programs/inpdes_p.html

Dakota County

Environmental Resources

www.dakotacounty.us

Moving Buildings

License as a building mover

Municipal requirement

Water Quality

Permits for:

Alteration of Public Waters

Construction of Dams, Shorelines and Waterways

Changing the Course, Current or Cross Section of Protected Waters

Temporary Water Appropriation

Dept. of Natural Resources 651-296-6157 or 888-646-6367

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/permits/water/index.html>

Federal and State Licenses

Information about federal, state and local licenses, as well as assistance in securing them

Assistance to businesses of any size in securing licenses and permits

License Minnesota

<http://www.state.mn.us/portal/mn/jsp/home.do?agency=commerce>

Other Highway Construction Resources

Minnesota construction web sites not specific to Dakota County:

Minnesota Materials Management Division Construction Contract Solicitations on

QuestCDN.com:

http://qap.questcdn.com/qap/projects/prj_browse/ipp_prj_browse.html?group=77&provider=604226

Other public agencies:

<http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/process/admin/page2List.asp>