

DESIGN / BID / BUILD IOWA'S PUBLIC SECTOR DELIVERY METHOD

The term design / bid / build is used to refer to a specific project delivery method. It refers here solely to a method of project delivery in which the owner procures design and construction documents from an independent designer, uses competitive bidding to get prices for all work required to build the project as specified, and then selects a contractor to build the project on the basis of a responsive low bid received from a responsible contractor.

An important feature of a design / bid / build method is that it intentionally separates the design phase, bidding phase and the construction phase so that each is performed independently. This creates important consequences in the roles and responsibilities of the owner, designer and the contractor. There is a sequential chain of events in design / bid / build contracts. The owner first enters into a contract with a designer, which prepares the building design and the necessary documents for construction. Next, the owner selects a general contractor through a competitive bidding process. The general contractor in turn selects subcontractors, (usually through competitive pricing) to perform parts of the work. Subcontractors may employ sub-subcontractors for specialty work. General contractors, subcontractors and sub-subcontractors may all provide labor and they may all purchase materials from suppliers. The designer has no contract with any contractor, but acts as the agent of the owner for design services and for contract administration during construction.