

February 2001 Monthly Report

Introduction

During the month of February, NJEDA continued to focus its efforts on expediting the Abbott school districts' health and safety projects, while at the same time, finalizing the processes and procedures to undertake individual facilities projects as they are approved by the New Jersey Department of Education (DOE). No less important are the necessary policies and procedures to undertake predevelopment activities and the costs associated with these activities. NJEDA continued the complex process of coordinating its internal departments and the necessary outside agencies to develop plans to effectively undertake such activities.

The NJEDA's procedures to implement its Affirmative Action program also took center stage. We are in the process of finalizing a proposed set of regulations and procedures that, we believe, will redefine and measurably improve equitable employment and business opportunities in public works contracting in the state of New Jersey.

And, finally, our job would not be done if we did not focus on the necessary public communications for the school construction program: presentations, meetings in-district, updating our website and responding to hundreds of calls and e-mail inquiries from all segments of the education and contracting communities.

The following are specific highlights of our activities.

1. [Procedures for Affirmative Action Program](#)
2. [Abbott Districts' Health and Safety Projects Advance](#)
3. [Plans Underway for Scheduling Abbott Facilities Projects](#)
4. [Predevelopment Policies and Procedures](#)
5. [School Facilities Conferences](#)

I. **Procedures for Affirmative Action Program**

A final draft of the procedures for the implementation of a new program of Affirmative Action for NJEDA-managed school construction projects, called the "Equitable Employment and Fair Business Opportunities Procedures," was sent on February 28, 2001 to more than 100 stakeholders for their review and comment. This group includes individuals, businesses, community groups, school districts and elected officials. Their comments and suggested amendments are due no later than March 23, 2001 so that Affirmative Action regulations and procedures can be adopted at the April 10, 2001 Board of Directors meeting.

The Regulations and implementing Procedures provide for the funding and development of pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training programs within the very neighborhoods that our School Construction Program will serve. Abbott district residents will be actively recruited for these training programs. Incentives have been developed so that contractors meeting State-mandated affirmative action hiring goals with workers from the Abbott districts or from NJEDA-sponsored pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs will receive an enhanced rating under the performance evaluation process. This will translate into additional points during the bid or proposal evaluation process.

In addition, the proposed procedures support the development and enhancement of emerging small businesses, particularly those businesses located in Abbott school districts, through entrepreneurial training, mentoring, small business assistance programs, subcontracting incentives and set-asides.

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II. **Abbott Districts' Health and Safety Projects Advance**

- A. Design Consultants Awarded Contracts for Summer 2001 Roofing Projects During February, the Abbott Selection Committees, coordinated by the Contract Procurement Division, reviewed and ranked 64 proposals that were submitted by professional design firms for 15 health and safety scopes of work. This group of projects primarily entails emergency roof replacements in ten Abbott school districts with total estimated costs of construction of \$35 million. Contracts for this group of projects have been awarded to eight design firms. A spreadsheet summarizing this information is attached as Exhibit "A."
- B. Oversight and Management of Health and Safety Projects A Request for Proposals (RFP) has been developed to procure the professional services of two project management firms to provide project and construction management services, oversight, direction, coordination and reporting in connection with the Abbott districts' health and safety roofing projects detailed on Exhibit "A". In addition, an agreement for these services, referred to as the "Project Management Services Agreement," has been finalized and will be included with the RFP. We anticipate issuing the RFP in March/April 2001.

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III. **Plans Underway for Scheduling Abbott Facilities Projects**

As the health and safety projects get underway, NJEDA is developing a concurrent process to undertake projects that are part of the Abbott Districts' five-year, long-range facilities plans. One of the determining factors for prioritizing projects will be how far these projects have progressed. The NJEDA sent a "Works in Progress" questionnaire to each Abbott district requesting information concerning the status of projects that are contained in the districts' long-range plans. The "Works in Progress Questionnaire For Abbott Districts' School Projects" is attached as Exhibit "B."

In addition, this month meetings have been set with NJEDA, DOE and the Abbott Districts to discuss priorities for implementation of their five-year, long-range facilities plans.

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IV. **Predevelopment Policies and Procedures**

The DOE regulations allow the NJEDA to cover the costs of preliminary planning prior to or coincident with the Abbott districts' applications to the DOE for specific project approvals. Such "predevelopment" expenses can include site analysis and acquisition, architectural and engineering services for educational specifications and schematic design work; and, temporary classroom units needed for swing space while construction of additional classrooms is underway.

NJEDA's Real Estate and School Finance and Construction Divisions are working closely with the Division of Law and the Departments of Education and Transportation to develop the necessary processes and procedures for land acquisition. In addition, it is anticipated that the policies and procedures for undertaking predevelopment activities and their associated costs will be finalized shortly.

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V. **School Facilities Conferences**

Presentations concerning the NJEDA's implementation of the school construction program were made at the following conferences:

Workforce Development and School Construction February 2, 2001, Rutgers University, Livingston Student Center, Piscataway, NJ This presentation focused on the opportunities for businesses and workers under the NJEDA's Affirmative Action program.

Paterson/Passaic Community Schools Conference February 8, 2001, Patterson, NJ This presentation focused on the necessary planning process to achieve schools as

"centers of communities"

New Jersey Business and Industry Program "How to Participate in New Jersey's Multi-Billion School Construction Program" February 21, 2001, Forsgate Country Club, Jamesburg, NJ Presentations focused on the progress of NJEDA's school construction program and specifically, its procurement policies for design and construction professionals.

Presentation in Jersey City School District February 24, 2001 This presentation focused on the business opportunities available to small construction contractors under the school construction program.

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Prepared by Barbara J. Bohi, March 13, 2001