



**PREPARING FOR THE BUSY
CONSTRUCTION SEASON**

Tips to Simplify
Project Planning
and Execution



Introduction

The spring and summer months are a marathon of construction, repairs and maintenance for owners, contractors and other stakeholders managing facilities and infrastructure components. These seasons offer longer days, warmer weather and fewer scheduling challenges for decision-makers in all sectors. The flipside, though, is this puts more pressure on procurement officials and facility managers to plan, procure and execute projects in time to capitalize on these ideal conditions. There's no time to waste.

Stakeholders must carefully prepare for the spike in construction activity by identifying their top-priority projects and ensuring each has sufficient funding and support.

The Unique Challenges of Procuring Construction



It takes an incredible amount of time and effort to write Scopes of Work for every project in order to put them out on the street for bids. And one of the biggest hurdles facility and infrastructure owners have is finding qualified contractors to respond to their bids, especially during peak construction months. Even when owners are getting responses to their bids, there's the question of quality - Are these bids accurate, timely and reasonable? No one wants to feel taken advantage of, especially when budgets and timelines are tight.



A lot of work goes into making a construction project successful, long before the first crew shows up. Traditional competitive bidding for all projects is extremely time-consuming and costly. And for smaller projects, there can be an extremely disproportionate procurement burden relative to job size and scope, particularly if your agency is short-staffed. Coordinating and managing hundreds of projects throughout the year is cumbersome enough, so why add extra pressure to your staff when project timelines are condensed?

3 Prep Tips

1. Define the End Point, But Be Aware of Potential Detours

Defining desired outcomes, project benchmarks and clear objectives is needed to establish measurable standards of success. It also helps all stakeholders understand why a construction project is important for supporting the mission of your organization. Once the desired end has been communicated to stakeholders, you can build a timeframe for project completion.

However, you also need to consider all the other events and activities going on in your community that could impact your projects: Summer classes and sports practices will still happen during your roof repairs. That annual music festival will still come to town, whether or not your highway project is finished. Take stock of the circumstances surrounding your projects, including arrangements and accommodations that must be made for groups that use your facilities during construction and any external events that might delay work.

As we all know, even the best-planned projects carry some risk: The contractor might not hit your deadlines. Seasonal storms could disrupt a project. As a project owner, you must be ready to adjust. You can do that by building a list of potential risks months before the project begins and creating contingency plans for each risk. You may not need any of those contingencies. But if you have them, you'll be able to respond when things go awry.



2. Review Your Scopes of Work for Clarity

It's easy to spend so much time in the details of a project that you get too close to it. This tunnel vision can make it difficult to clearly articulate plans and needs to colleagues and vendors. Seeing paperwork with fresh eyes is incredibly difficult – especially after several rounds of review – but it's also necessary, specifically when it comes to the Scope of Work. A clear Scope of Work reduces disputes and miscommunications, resulting in projects that move seamlessly along your timeline.

When developing a Scope of Work, it's important to sweat the small stuff and consider every single task. If an action is mandatory, the statement of work should use the words "shall" or "must." You may also include photographs, drawings and additional visual aides to create clarity and prevent confusion. It is better to over-explain than to leave open the possibility of a misunderstanding. Do everything in your power to ensure your Scope of Work leads the reader to one specific conclusion, leaving no room for interpretation. Ambiguity is your enemy, and the best weapon against it is specificity.

SCOPE OF WORK EXAMPLE

Roof Replacement and HVAC RenovationS

This project involves demolition and disposal of the existing roof and installing new roof as per documents, and the HVAC renovations described on drawings provided by client. Proposal is based on issued plans and specs. All work will be done during regular business hours, in accordance with NESHAP, EPA, OSHA, Federal and State regulation.

1. Dispose of the existing roof.
2. Install Coated fiberglass base ply.
3. Polyisocyanurate insulation as specified in approved adhesive.
4. 1/8" tapered Polyisocyanurate board.
5. 1/4" Glass faced gypsum roof board.
6. New fully adhered single ply roof assembly.
7. Remove existing three units and reinstalling them after raising the curbs.
8. Raise of gas pipes as necessary.
9. Remove and replace existing screen panels around AC units
10. Removal of one rooftop unit.
11. Furnish and install (2) rooftop units as described on plans
12. Demolish and replace ducts as required.
13. Provide Site Security for after hours work.
14. Perform additional Electric and mechanical work as described on documents provided by client
15. Clean up and haul off all debris properly and safely.

3. Explore Various Project Delivery Methods

Once you have defined the project Scope of Work, you'll need to determine the appropriate delivery method. When choosing a method, consider the important factors of cost, time, project complexity and your desired level of involvement. There is no perfect, one-size-fits-all approach to construction projects. Some delivery methods work better with certain types of projects than others. Each method has advantages and disadvantages, but the approach selected can have a major impact on the success of a project. Here are a few project delivery methods to consider:

TRADITIONAL BIDDING

With the most common approach – also referred to as design-bid-build – the owner hires an architect or engineer to design the project and prepare the drawings and specifications. Two contracts are typically drawn up: one between the owner and the architect or engineer, and another between the owner and the contractor. This method is ideal for large-scale projects and if you have a several months' time to solicit bids.

DESIGN-BUILD

In this delivery method, the owner enters into a contract with one provider to design and build the project. The owner develops the overall project specifications and requirements, requests proposals from firms or teams and usually follows a best value type of selection process to choose the entity that will be responsible to design and build the project. One of the advantages of the design-build process is that the project can be phased. It is often used for large or complex projects or when an accelerated, phased schedule is beneficial.

CONSTRUCTION MANAGER AT RISK

Also referred to as CM at Risk, this procurement method lets the owner choose a construction manager, and the parties agree to a guaranteed maximum price for the work. The Construction Manager engages the necessary contractors and manages the entire project to completion. CM at Risk provides a single point of responsibility for construction and is ideal for large-scale projects on a shorter timeline.

JOB ORDER CONTRACTING

With Job Order Contracting (JOC), multiple projects can be completed over the duration of one long-term contract, as opposed to the single-project contracts used in the three previous methods. Owners take bids from contractors at the beginning of the contract and can then access their services for many projects throughout the life of the contract. The JOC method is perfect for a variety of construction projects, including repairs, renovations and maintenance work, especially when short timelines or fixed budgets are involved. JOC, however, isn't typically an ideal choice for complex, new construction.

Explore What Types of Projects Are Perfect for JOC

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

George Washington University, DC

George Washington University (GW) recognized that the highly trafficked Mitchell Hall corridors needed urgent upgrades and decided to use some of its deferred maintenance budget to make necessary improvements before the fall semester. With less than 45 days before the new fall semester began and the hall fully occupied by summer program students, GW turned to Job Order Contracting for this time sensitive project. The awarded JOC contractor was able to complete the renovations to all nine floors, which included replacing fluorescent lighting with energy-efficient LED lighting, upgrading interior finishes and unexpected mold remediation, in just 35 days.

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Town of Irondequoit, NY

For residents and visitors looking for a place to slow down and reconnect, Irondequoit offers Camp Eastman, wooded grounds with large cabins and lodges available for rent. However, the town heard plenty of complaints from renters about the state of the cabin decks - chipped paint, nails sticking out far enough to catch an ankle or toe and warped wood. Irondequoit decision-makers needed the work on the cabins completed quickly, between summer camps and Irondequoit's annual Oktoberfest celebration, and turned to Job Order Contracting. From the joint scope meeting in early June, to construction start in late July, all the way to the finish in early October, the awarded JOC contractor and the town worked together to ensure the project ran smoothly.

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Parma City Schools, OH

Four of the 14 schools in the Parma City School District needed roof maintenance to receive long-term warranties and prolong crucial parts of the structure. These projects had to be completed during the summer break; there was no way to execute them around a working school full of students, faculty and staff. The time crunch meant the district could not send projects out for bid in the traditional way, so Parma City Schools turned to JOC. A purchase order was issued on May 31, work began on July 5 and the projects were completed on August 14, well in time for the school year.

When Resources are Tight, Look to Alternatives

The procurement process can be a major bottleneck in the construction timeline. JOC's single solicitation eliminates the need to separately bid each project, so it is an easy and expedited construction sourcing option to keep in your procurement toolbox during the busy season.

By establishing upfront contracts with contractors readily available to perform work, prequalified contractors will be ready to begin as soon as the project is identified.



Job Order Contracting solutions are available through cooperative purchasing networks. Agencies can procure construction services just like they buy other supplies. [Explore how you can benefit from the speed, efficiency and power of group buying.](#)

How Does It Work?

- Job Order Contracts provide agencies the ability to accomplish a substantial number of individual construction projects through a competitively-awarded contract.
- Contractors bid an adjustment factor to be applied to a catalog of tasks with preset unit prices developed using local labor, material and equipment rates.
- Job Order Contracts are generally awarded to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder(s). Once a contract is awarded, the agency can have the contractor perform a variety of projects.
- The contractor is paid the preset unit price X the quantity ordered X the competitively bid adjustment factor. No negotiation required.

Forming Collaborative Partnership with Contractors

When working in a condensed timeline, delays and back-and-forth negotiations can't be afforded. Ideally, the contractors working on your project would be engaged and motivated to provide high quality work. The Job Order Contracting process can help make sure they are. With JOC, contractors are driven to provide quality projects, because their performance is tied to the opportunity for future work.

The JOC process also allows for the development of relationships between owners and trusted contractors, who will grow to understand the agency's methods, facilities and preferred materials as they continue to accomplish more work. And with a more collaborative, long-term relationship, project planning, scoping and pricing can be done well ahead of the busy season.



Control What You Can Control

As we approach the busy construction season, so much can feel out of your control. The weather could go haywire. Contractors may not be able to deliver their work on schedule. Worse yet, contractors may discover issues hidden in walls or buried under concrete. Such events are out of your hands. What you can control is how you prepare for the busy season. If you have clear direction about what you want to accomplish, create contingency plans and use the right project delivery method for your projects, you'll be well prepared.

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It has been a successful program for us over the last 28 years, and we've used it for everything. To give you a perspective of the breadth and volume that we've done with JOC, we've issued more than 3,000 work orders with a value of about \$330 million.”

Francis Hoar
Administrative Director
Miami-Dade County
Public Schools



About Gordian

Gordian is the leading provider of Building Intelligence™ Solutions, delivering unrivaled insights, robust technology and expert services to fuel customers' success through all phases of the building lifecycle. Gordian created Job Order Contracting (JOC) and the industry-standard RSMeans Data. We empower organizations to optimize capital investments, improve project performance and minimize long-term operating expenses.

For more information visit gordian.com/busyseason