



## **HENNEPIN COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT**

### **GUIDE TO BIDDING COUNTY ROAD AND BRIDGE PROJECTS**

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



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## **Purpose of Guide to Bidding**

This *Guide to Bidding* is designed to lead contractors and subcontractors through Hennepin 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 Hennepin County Transportation.**

The County advertises its highway construction projects:

- in Finance and Commerce Daily Newspaper,
- on the county web site: [www.hennepin.us/ContractOpportunities](http://www.hennepin.us/ContractOpportunities); 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 Hennepin County projects in an advertisement is to look for the bid opening location and/or where to obtain plans and proposals.

At the end of this Guide are "Other Highway Construction Resources".

## **Applicable Requirements for Highway Transportation Projects**

Parts of a project's requirements are determined by the source of funds. For example, if project funds are solely from Hennepin 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**

Hennepin 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.

## **Ways to Bid County Projects**

Three bid methods are available for bidding Hennepin County road and bridge construction projects with electronic bidding being the preferred method:

1. Electronic Bidding
  - a. First you will need to acquire a User ID and password through ConneX (see page 4 for instructions).
  - b. Plans and Proposals are downloaded through the eGram web site <https://egram.co.hennepin.mn.us/>; **Note:** *you are only allowed to bid if you download all plans, specs, and addendums,*
  - c. **Bid is submitted electronically** through eBidVault <https://ebidvaultrtvision.com>,
  - d. Bid bond may also be submitted electronically on the eBidVault site through Surety 2000. Until the time of Bid Opening, your company agent is the only one who can see your bid.

If you use this method do not submit a hard copy of your bid. If you do, **the hard copy governs.**

2. Purchased Paper Plans and Proposals/Paper Bid Submission
  - a. Hard copy Plans and Proposals are purchased at the Hennepin County Purchasing office,
  - b. Bidder fills out required bid documents,
  - c. Obtains bid security (bid bond or certified check), and
  - d. Submits bid documents and bid security before bid opening to the location specified in the bid documents. (See Documents Required for Paper Bid Submissions.)

Hennepin County highway construction projects which are submitted electronically **MUST** utilize the "electronic bidding" method described **in this guide** and return the following paper copies (paper copies can be found in the Bid Submittal Documents file):

### **Documents Required for Paper Bid Submissions**

- 1) Title Sheet of the Proposal
- 2) Proposal Form (Page 1 of 2 and Page 2 of 2)
- 3) Form 21126D (if project is a Federal project)
- 4) Form CM 32-34 (if project is a Federal project)
- 5) Non-Collusion Declaration (if project is a Federal project)
- 6) Notice to Bidders (signature) page
- 7) Copy of Bid Security (if not submitting an electronic bid bond through Surety 2000)

### **Electronic Bidding - Advantages and Information**

Electronic bidding reduces errors in the bidding process. Plus it allows bidders to make changes right up to the last minute prior to the opening of bids.

**What kind of computer and software do I need?** The web sites can be accessed using any IBM compatible PC capable of running Windows XP (or newer) or MAC with 28K free space.

**Do I need an account with an Internet provider?** Yes, and access to the Internet using Explorer 6, 7 or 8 Browser, Mozilla Firefox Browser, Opera Browser, Safari Browser. .

### **Hennepin County utilizes the following web sites:**

- eadvert: <https://eadvert.dot.state.mn.us/> - Advertises projects.
- ConneX: <https://connex.mn.uccs.com> – Sign up for User ID/password and PIN number for access to Hennepin County web sites and to submit a bid
- eGram: <https://egram.co.hennepin.mn.us/> - For plans, specs, information, addendums, messages.
- eBidVault: <https://ebidvaulttrvision.com> – For Electronic Bidding (see page 5).

A hard copy of the Proposal and/or the "Schedule of Prices" is NOT required when submitting a bid utilizing "Electronic" bidding. If a hard copy of the Proposal is submitted with an "Electronic Bid", **the Hard Copy Will Govern** if it is received before bid opening.

- Electronic bids are **date and time** stamped as to when the last submission occurred.
- Electronic bids can be retracted. This will delete all entries.
- Only you (the Contractor) can see your Bid until bid opening.

When the bid is submitted using "Electronic Bidding", the bidder must use an electronic signature (personal identification number/PIN) on the bid to conform with MN Statute § 161.32, subd. 1b. The bid must also comply with the requirements of the eBidVault web site.

A bidder may submit a bid bond electronically if you use Surety2000. A hard copy bid bond is also acceptable. 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. The bid bond is five percent of the contract amount or per the project specifications; this helps assure that only legitimate bids are submitted.

For electronic bidding, and all other bidding questions, contact Jerry Mortenson either by phone at 612-596-0371 or by email at [jerry.mortenson@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:jerry.mortenson@co.hennepin.mn.us).

Hennepin County Department of Transportation  
1600 Prairie Drive  
Medina, MN 55369

### **Process for obtaining access to online plans and electronic bidding**

1. Users with an existing ConneX account and returning Contractors **Log in with User ID & password** (Skip to step 10). If you have previously been issued a Hennepin County User ID and password, or have never been issued a User ID and password before, and want to bid or look at the plans, you must now sign up through the new ConneX system. In ConneX you will be able to set up your company User ID and password. **NOTE: *Your password must include 1 Capital Letter and 1 numerical digit.***
2. Enter ConneX website: <https://connex.mn.uccs.com>
3. Create an organization and sign up for a user account.
4. Follow the guided interface to set up an account/organization and read the notes under each step for extra information or guidance.
5. Log into created account
6. Edit any user detail changes – i.e., Password changes, phone number changes
7. Add Organization Details under **My Organization** – New Contractor or pick existing contractor
8. Save Details at the bottom of My Organization Page
9. Select Agency you wish to have **eGram Access** to: i.e.; Hennepin County (this will be a one time request).
10. After Request Access is sent to Hennepin County. You will receive an email from Hennepin County granting access to Hennepin County's eGram site.

11. Contractor will be able to access and download project information from the Hennepin County eGram site. After downloading specs, plans, and addendums from the eGram server, the Contractor will show up on the Plan Holders list.
12. Contractor will then be able to access and submit an online bid on the eBidVault server.

### **Electronic Bidders:**

All Bidders will need a User ID, password, and PIN Number. A Bid Key, from ebidVault server, will be issued for each project that you bid on. Each project has its own unique Bid Key. Only the Authorized Representative from the Company receives a PIN number to sign the Bid.

### **eGram Server**

1. See all project information
2. Can download plans and proposals
3. Receive emailed addenda and notices regarding project

### **eBidVault**

1. Obtain Bid Key for project bidding from the eBidVault server.
2. Obtain electronic bid forms (Federal Forms)
3. Submit an electronic bid bond through Surety 2000 (or you may submit a hard copy prior to bid opening date and time).
4. Submit electronic bid (or print and hand deliver a hard copy bid prior to bid opening date and time).
5. Digitally sign and submit bid.
6. Cancel electronic bid, if desired.

### **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 User ID 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 at 2 p.m. on bid day, only your authorized bidders can see the bid. The software program uses an encryption code and other security methods which prohibit anyone, including HC/DOT and the service provider, from reading your bid. At the bid letting the bids are released so that HC/DOT can read the bid, but cannot alter the bid in any way. Your bid will remain confidential until award of the project. When the bids are opened on bid day you will receive an email.

Bids will be opened when the time on the eBidVault server reaches 2 p.m. on bid day. The server time of the eBidVault 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 a bid multiple times before the deadline, only the last submission will be retained and passed on to HC/DOT.

When you make changes to your bid the authorized person who can sign your bid must re-sign the bid. This ensures that the changes to your bid are accepted.

**Will I know if my bid changes are accepted?**

Each time you open your bid an email will be sent to you indicating that your bid has been opened. When you make changes to your bid the authorized person who can sign your bid must re-sign the bid. This ensures that the changes to your bid are accepted. *If you do not re-sign the bid, the changes that were made are not submitted in your bid to the County.*

**Can I withdraw a bid?**

Yes. You may withdraw your electronic bid on the eBidVault web page. If you request to have your bid withdrawn before the bid opening deadline, your bid will not be passed to HC/DOT. If you wish to withdraw your paper bid, you must contact the Purchasing Manager before the bid opening deadline.

**Could my bid be lost?**

No. The data is backed up on multiple servers.

**Is the System reliable?**

HC/DOT 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.

**Will support for the electronic bid system be available?**

Yes. You will have access to telephone, E-mail and fax support from Hennepin County. Presently telephone service is provided between the hours of 7:00AM and 3:30 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.

Each time you bid is opened the user who submitted the bid will receive an email that the bid has been opened.

Every user account in the organization is informed about addendums.

### **What Happens Once Bids Are Opened?**

1. At 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 ebidVault 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 nor accepted.
    - i. 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.
4. Detailed Bid Abstract is not posted until the project is awarded.

## **“eGram” - Hennepin County’s Bid Information Web Site**

<http://egram.co.hennepin.mn.us>

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

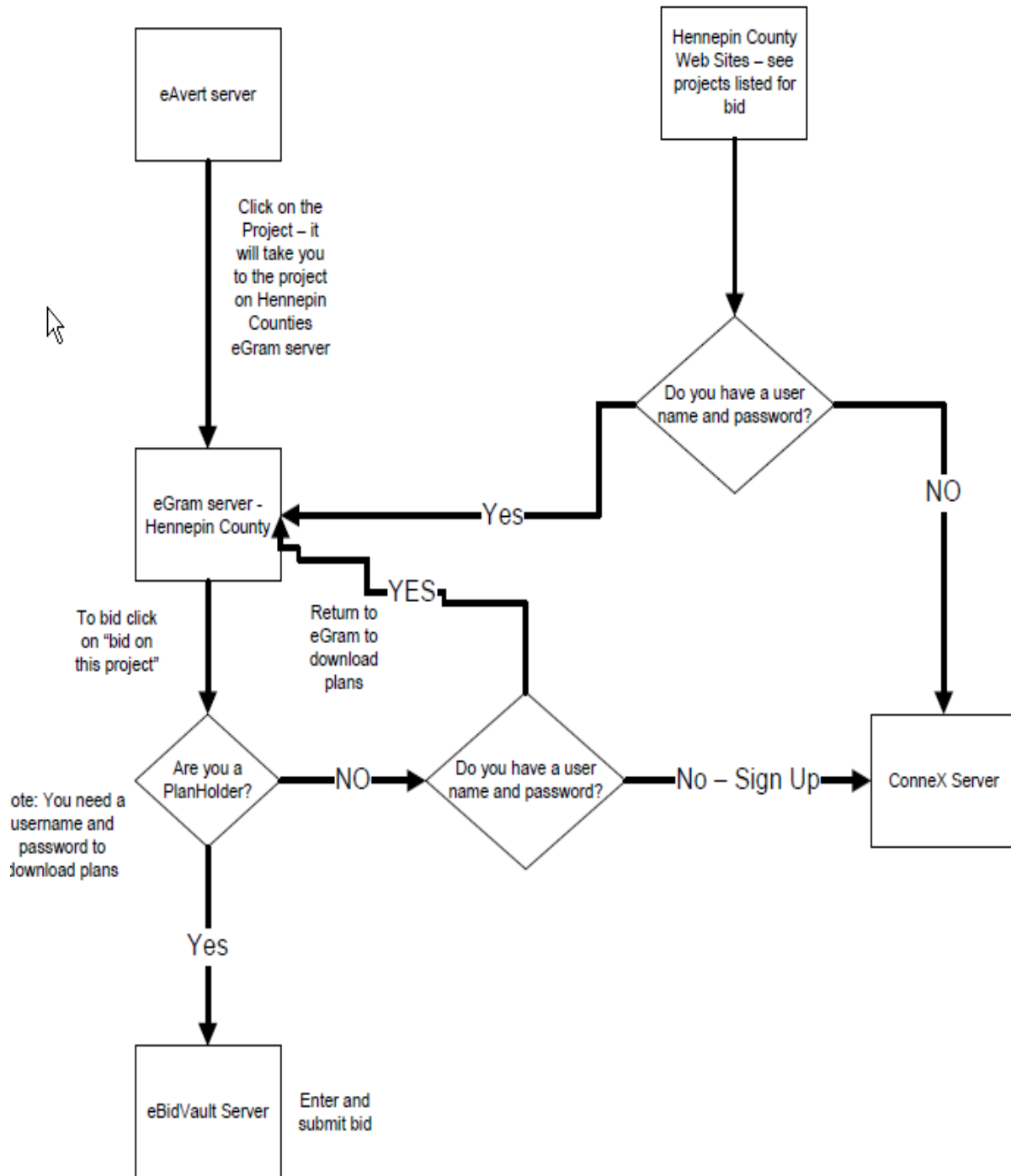
- tentative 6-month letting schedule “Projects in Planning”
- current projects as advertised “Projects in Bidding”
- current awarded projects “Projects in Construction”
- general bidding requirements
- forms

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- addenda for projects
- bid totals (as read)
- detailed bid abstracts (after award)
- plan holder lists
- electronic files of plans and proposals
- project notices

Sponsor: Hennepin County Transportation Department

Contact: [jerry.mortenson@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:jerry.mortenson@co.hennepin.mn.us)



## **Before Bidding**

### **Requirements**

Hennepin 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:

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

Office of Secretary of State  
Retirement Systems of Minnesota Building  
60 Empire Dr., Suite 100  
Saint Paul, MN 55103  
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 assure that only legitimate bids are submitted.

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

### **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>

### **Wage Rates**

Prevailing wage rate is defined as the hourly basic rate of pay plus the employer's contribution for health and welfare, vacation, pension, and other economic benefits paid to workers engaged in the same class of labor in the same geographic area.

If a project is financed with both state and federal funds, workers must be paid the higher of the two wage rates for an individual classification as listed in the contract's state and federal wage determinations.

Proposals contain prevailing wage information. Should wage rates change between the time the proposal goes on sale and the letting date, you will be sent an addendum showing the new wage rates. You must comply with the most current wage rates.

**State** prevailing wage information can be found at:  
<http://www.doli.state.mn.us/LS/PrevWageHwyH.asp>

**Federal** prevailing wage information can be found at:  
<http://www.access.gpo.gov/davisbacon/mn.html>

Read the labor provisions in your proposal.

#### **WARNING**

Both the federal government and State of Minnesota require contractors who are awarded government funds for public works projects to pay their employees the prevailing wage for the locality where the project is located.

### **Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program**

County project contracts contain SBE goals that will be stated in the proposal. The SBE program ensures that small businesses owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals have equal opportunity to participate on contracts and project work administered by the County. For more information go to:  
[www.hennepin.us/ContractOpportunities](http://www.hennepin.us/ContractOpportunities) and look for "Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program" under Popular Links.

### **Affirmative Action Requirements**

These requirements ensure equal opportunity for employment in the construction trades on County projects regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, religion, marital status and status with regard to public assistance.

### **Work Entry Program (WEP)**

County project contracts may require work entry participation. If required, the WEP Goal will be stated in the proposal. The Prime Contractor shall submit a training plan no later than the time indicated in the proposal. The training plan shall include the job classification titles of trainees, planned training activities and the approximate start date of trainees.

## **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](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](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/programs/inpdes_p.html)

### **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>

## **INFORMATION**

### **Advertisements for Bids**

Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) advertises local construction projects for agencies on their bid letting web site at:

<http://bidlet.dot.state.mn.us/advertisement.aspx>.

Hennepin County advertises highway construction projects for a minimum of three weeks before the scheduled letting date; some projects are advertised longer.

### **Tentative Letting Schedule**

The County may provide a schedule of tentative future projects (for about a six-month period). Listed projects are for informational and planning purposes only and may change over time. The tentative letting schedule is available on the eGram web site at:

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

### **Pre-Letting Plans and Proposals**

Occasionally there may be pre-letting plans and proposals for a job to provide a detailed description of the following items: type of work, location of work, type and quantity of materials to be used, unique construction specifications, wage rates, and miscellaneous items.

#### **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 may cause the rejection of your bid. Hennepin 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 downloaded or purchased plans and proposals for particular projects. To obtain plan holder lists check the web site at:

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

#### **WARNING**

**Contractors should be familiar with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) Standard Specifications for Construction and Project Special Provisions prior to submitting a bid.**



### **Mn/DOT's Standard Specifications for Construction**

The Plan and Proposal will indicate which edition of the Minnesota **Department of Transportation's** 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 Mn/DOT by mail or in-person at:

Map 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.

## **Other Highway Construction Resources**

**Minnesota construction web sites not specific to Hennepin County:**

**Design-Build Projects:** <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/designbuild/>

**Minnesota Materials Management Division Construction Contract Solicitations on QuestCDN.com:**

[http://gap.questcdn.com/gap/projects/prj\\_browse/ipp\\_prj\\_browse.html?group=77&provider=604226](http://gap.questcdn.com/gap/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>