



In some instances the department may negotiate with a local unit of government for field services involving administration, engineering, surveying, inspection, and materials sampling and testing on let road and bridge construction projects on the local system of highways. Local unit staff would perform duties of project engineer (as defined in [standard spec 105.7](#)) and inspector (as defined in [standard spec 105.8](#)).

Local unit personnel are expected to represent the department in the same competent and positive manner, as would WisDOT employees when meeting with the contractor, utilities, general public, news media, and public agencies. They are expected to administrate, engineer, survey, inspect, sample, test, and report under the same standards and to the same degree of competency as department personnel.

## 2-19.1 Prequalification

To provide construction engineering services on let projects on the local highway system, the local unit of government is required to be "adequately staffed and suitably equipped". The local unit must submit form [DT2060](#), Prequalification - Local Unit Performing Construction Engineering for consideration by the department to ensure that a local unit has capable staff and needed equipment to perform construction-engineering services. This form can be obtained from the Bureau of Project Development - Local Project Delivery Section.

The presence of qualified individuals will determine if a local unit is qualified to perform construction-engineering services. This would be documented on [DT2060](#).

To perform construction engineering, the local unit must have at least one staff person that is registered as a professional engineer. Holding a current Certificate of Authorization to practice professional engineering in the state of Wisconsin (per. s.s. 443.08) is satisfactory evidence of professional engineering registration.

Once prequalified to provide construction-engineering services, a local unit would indicate their desire to provide those services on a particular project by submitting a "Letter of Interest". That letter would state their desire to provide the services, discuss the staff available for the project, detail the staff's experience in providing construction-engineering services, estimate the time each of the staff would be needed, and request approval to provide the services.

WisDOT would review the "Letter of Interest" to be sure the correct number of staff are planned to be used, that the staff are available for the correct time, and that the staff are qualified for construction engineering services. If all of these elements are in order, the local unit would be authorized to provide the construction engineering services.

Requests by the local unit to provide construction engineering services for let projects in calendar year 2009 and beyond must meet the following requirements:

- The local unit must fill out and submit [DT2060](#) with appropriate attachments.
- BPD Local Project staff will review the completed [DT2060](#) and either approve it or request additional information.
- The department review of the [DT2060](#) is expected to take less than 45 days.
- The Local Project Delivery Section will notify the local unit after final prequalification approval.
- Prequalification approval is good for three years from the date of approval.
- If conditions change that would eliminate or reduce the prequalification status, the local unit must immediately notify WisDOT so that the prequalification can be re-evaluated.
- A local unit must be prequalified to provide construction engineering services before to submitting a Letter of Interest to WisDOT.

## 2-19.2 Role of project manager

When local units are approved to provide construction engineering services on WisDOT-let projects, the role of the department project manager on these projects is slightly different compared to projects that are staffed by department employees. The responsibility of the department project manager is as defined in [standard spec 105.1](#).

On both occasions the department project manager provides oversight to ensure the project is being built successfully. The project manager will also be called upon from time to time to resolve disputes between the contractor and the local unit engineer.

The big difference between the two situations is that on a project with department employees the relationship between the project manager and the field staff is an employee-employer relationship; on a local unit project the

relationship between the project manager and local unit engineer is purely contractual.

Theoretically a local unit project should require less WisDOT oversight than a DOT staffed project because of less employee-employer supervision. Supervision of local unit employees is the responsibility of the local unit of government when local unit staff is used.

When deciding how much time should be spent on a local unit project the following factors should be taken into consideration:

1. The experience of the field staff
2. The contractor
3. The level of risk
4. The level of controversy
5. The level of inconvenience to the public
6. Complexity of project

These factors must be weighed in determining the number of times a project should be visited by the department project manager. For instance, it may be appropriate to visit a town road bridge project on only one or two occasions during the life of the project, while an urban reconstruction project may warrant more visits.

Department project managers should take advantage of current technologies such as telephone, facsimile machines, teleconferencing, web conferencing, project tracking, estimate viewing website, contract log, etc., to reduce need for field visits.

Ideally, at least some of the visits should coincide with contractor operations that are deemed critical to be inspected. This ensures that the department project manager is able to observe the local unit staff as they engage in inspection and contract administration activities. It is important that the level of supervision and number of site visits be carefully considered so that the project is adequately supervised, but not over-supervised as to unnecessarily raise the delivered cost of the project.

The department project manager will be responsible for evaluating the local unit staff performance similar to the evaluation done for consultants performing construction engineering, as discussed in [FDM 8-25-5](#).