Q&A

Successful LEED® integration capitalizes on an integrated team

Doug Sadler is an architect in the Infrastructure Group and a LEED-accredited professional.

Q: Why is LEED® certification important in design-build projects?

A: Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is a program of the U.S. Green Building Council that spells out the steps facilities need to take to meet environmentally friendly requirements in areas such as energy efficiency, environmental quality and site planning.

Successful LEED implementation capitalizes on an integrated team (owner, designer, contractor, operations) with participation from concept to completion. Design-build facilitates this early integration.

New federal design-build projects are now requiring firms that bid on them to complete a project checklist of LEED credits and to include a LEED professional on the project staff.

Because LEED-eligible buildings frequently have complex energy-efficient mechanical systems, they require commissioning from an outside authority. Time to test and flush out the systems also must be built into the project schedule. Typical cost accommodations can be limited and result in long-term facility savings.

Burns & McDonnell has 24 LEED-accredited professionals from across various disciplines.

For more information, contact Doug Sadler, (816) 822-3354.

How it Works — The Art of the Estimate

Estimating design-build projects combines experience of the past with knowledge of the present to predict the future. With many years of experience, estimating is one of the key strengths of Burns & McDonnell construction services.

Accurate estimating begins with the understanding that every aspect of a project has a cost associated with it. Developing accurate costs early in the process so clients can make fact-based decisions is the ultimate goal of estimating.

"Most design-build estimating occurs before the drawings reach 30 percent completion," says Ed Beeman, director of the BMcD estimating group. The process starts by assigning a lead estimator. Then, discipline-specific estimators (electrical, mechanical, structural) take engineers' drawings and written scopes of work and quantify each part of the job. How many cubic yards of concrete will be needed? How many tons of steel?

While this is going on, prequalified subcontractors are bidding off the same information.

"Our estimates and estimates from our subs are close almost every time," Beeman says. "If they don't match, we need to go back and determine why there is a difference and make the appropriate adjustment."

Final adjustments to the bid are made based on variables including project location, working conditions, manpower and material availability.

For more information, contact Ed Beeman, (816) 822-3930.