

competitive their bids will be. In my opinion, contract prices are inversely proportional to the amount of information given about the work. Contractors, as well as city officials, do not like surprises! Also, at the prebid meeting, contractors can be informally judged by asking for their experience in doing this kind of work.

5. Have the bid opening at the time and place indicated in the bid invitation, with bids tabulated so the low bidder knows who he is.

Generally speaking, in the bid process, the low bidder will get the job, but this is not always the case. The low bidder should be carefully examined by an evaluation team made up of department representatives from the contracting department, the actual unit in which work is to be done (forestry division, for example), and someone with enough technical skills to properly evaluate whether the bidder is responsive to the specifications so that his bid prices are in line with work wanted. This team will evaluate the qualifications as well as the technical, managerial and business capabilities of bidders, analyze the prices and costs of bids and prepare the award recommendation.

Monitoring the contract. No single component of the contracting process is more critical than the careful monitoring of a contract. City officials do not give up their responsibility to ensure efficient and equitable tree care by contracting out the work.

The steps involved in good contract monitoring are simple: have well trained and available supervi-

sion, be willing to understand the contractor's point of view, and give the contractor a chance to correct deficiencies. At the end of the contract, prepare a written assessment of the contractor's performance. Give the contractor an opportunity to review the assessment so he may use it as a learning experience.

Summary and Conclusions

Contracting is on the increase because of the pressures of tightened government spending and citizens' demand for low-cost, efficient services. The many advantages associated with contracting will be realized by obtaining support for the idea, considering employee and union relations, developing good specifications, monitoring contract performance, and ensuring continuing competition.

These steps are keys to the contracting process. Following them will not guarantee success; however, not following them will guarantee lots of trouble—maybe even failure. Successful contracting is like any task: if you want to do it well, you have to gain knowledge about it, apply that knowledge, learn from your mistakes, and be willing to make a change to make the end product better.

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Abstract

WARE, G.H. 1986. **The trees of Morton Arboretum.** *Arboric. J.* 10:33-43.

The Morton Arboretum, near Chicago, Illinois, contains 1,500 acres of natural forest and designed landscapes. Its collections contain about 4,000 taxa, assembled since its establishment in 1922. Good systematic collections of woody plants are present. Well-developed geographic groups are also present. A Street Tree Evaluation Group provides practical arboricultural information. Park-like landscapes feature grouping of commonplace trees that are presented in a naturalistic style which emphasizes textural contrasts, vistas, and water. These aesthetically pleasing landscapes also contain countless rare and unusual woody plants. The Arboretum is both a museum and laboratory where lessons on the selection, management and maintenance of woody plants are being learned.