Challenge

"The old practice of requiring potential contractors to go to a specific print shop to get hard copy plans before they can submit a bid for our project is outdated, wasteful and prone to mistakes. Then, after several rounds of revisions, some contractor is sure to use an old copy they have had lying around. The whole process takes too much time. We looked at using FTP but found it to be a rather unorganized method—totally disconnected from our change management tool. We want a better, streamlined way to get our bid plans and documents out to potential contractors."

Solution

Spitfire Project Management System (sfPMS) includes a Plan Room feature that allows any public contractor or only certain contractors to view and, if desired, download Invitation to Bids, Bid Packages, Drawings, Bid Addendums and any related files. In sfPMS, you can also set up certain contractors with the ability to create their bid proposals right in your system, without involving email or fax.

How It Works

1. You give contractors a URL and project ID and password.
2. Contractors log into the Spitfire Plan Room from anywhere with an Internet connection.
3. Contractors view all necessary documents and files in electronic form.
4. If desired, contractors can also download the files.
5. As the plans change, you direct the contractors to new or updated files in the Plan Room. Version control clearly identifies the latest version of any file.
6. If you want, contractors can use a link on the Bid Package document to enter bid/proposal information. This information is readily available to you when you log into your Spitfire system.

Benefits

- Because sfPMS is both a document control and a file control system, all documents and files are organized and accurately dated, eliminating duplicate or lost files and confusion over which are the "latest versions."
- Distribution of files through the Spitfire Plan Room is cheaper than distribution of printed materials.
- Access to files in the Spitfire Plan Room is nearly instantaneous, cutting down on the time needed to get and review plans.
- Having contractors enter their information right into a Spitfire document means there is no need to copy their information into your system.
- Because the Plan Room and its documents are part of the larger Spitfire Project Management System, alerts can notify you when due dates are approaching or have past.