

Green center study goes to Gerding Edlen

Sustainability Center of Excellence team also includes SERA and GBD Architects

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BY SAM BENNETT

The team of Gerding Edlen Development Co., SERA Architects and GBD Architects has been selected to perform a feasibility study for the Sustainability Center of Excellence in Portland.

Damin Tarlow of Gerding Edlen said the new building will be a sustainable structure that has “never been tried before” and said his team is “born to do this.”

“All the design capability we need is here in Portland and all we need to do is take it to the next level,” he said. “We will use a collaborative approach called integrated project delivery, so everyone (on the team) is responsible for everything.”

Other Gerding Edlen team members are Interface Engineering, Glumac, PAE Consulting Engineers and Hoffman Construction. Tarlow added that the team will call on other local, national and international expertise for the project.

A selection committee concluded that the Gerding Edlen team is best positioned to do the project. “After lengthy deliberations, debate and discussion the committee unanimously agreed that Gerding Edlen Development is the most qualified and experienced team to deliver this complicated project within the schedule and meet as many objectives as are likely to be met for this ambitious project – such as satisfying LEED platinum and the Living Building Challenge,” the committee said in its notice of intent to award, released Wednesday.

The Living Building Challenge is a standard that requires a building to be self-sustaining by generating its own power and reusing water on-site. So far, no building has met the Living Building Challenge, which is an initiative of the Cascadia Region Green Building Council.

Gerding Edlen will be expected to prepare the feasibility analysis for the 220,000-square-foot building by June. After that phase, the Portland Development Commission may invite the Gerding Edlen team to move ahead with the design phase, according to the RFP.

The PDC received 11 proposals for the feasibility study RFP and narrowed those down to four finalists. The other finalists were: Holst Architecture with FX Fowle, Pettigrove Venture and Equity Community Builders, LLC; Ethos Project Management with Behnisch Architects, Inc., Brightworks and Regenes Group; and Winkler Development Corp. with Perkins + Will and LRS Architects.

The other seven teams that submitted proposals were led by Allied Works Architecture, Inc.; Ankrom Moisan Associated Architects, Inc.; Citizen & Company; Hennebery Eddy Architects, Inc.; Skylab Architecture LLC; THA Architecture, Inc.; and Urban Renaissance Development Co. LLC.

SERA Architects’ sustainable project list includes the Nines, a luxury downtown Portland hotel designed to be LEED silver, and the East Portland Community Center, designed to be LEED gold. Gerding Edlen redeveloped the Portland Armory into Gerding Theatre, which achieved LEED platinum, and the Casey Condominiums.

In a request for proposals issued last month, the PDC and experts from the Oregon University System said the scope of the first phase of the project would include development of schematic design, a development program, a preliminary budget and project schedule. The next phase will include design development, a construction contract and a development budget.

Daniel Spero, a senior procurement specialist with the PDC, said the first priority will be to establish a program for the building. "Once the program for the building is agreed upon they can sketch concept renderings," said Spero.

The PDC is planning for a structure that will be an icon for green building and highlight the city's leadership in sustainability, according to the RFP. The building will serve as a laboratory for research by students and faculty in the Oregon University System and connect research to practice.

A 15-member evaluation committee made the selection. The committee included representatives from the business community, the Living Building Initiative, the Portland Development Commission, the Oregon University System (including administrators, professors and researchers), the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, the Portland + Oregon Sustainability Institute and national specialists.

Tarlow said careful planning and design will be needed to make the most of a small site. He added that the project "is the best economic development opportunity I've seen come along."