LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & DEVELOPMENT

**Office of the Secretary**
PO Box 94245 | Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9245
ph: 225-379-1200 | fx: 225-379-1851

**John Bel Edwards,** Governor
**Shawn D. Wilson, Ph.D.,** Secretary

January 31, 2020

Mr. Travis Boone
Executive Vice President
AECOM
6200 South Quebec Street
Greenwood Village, CO 80111

**RE: Contact No. 4400017438 MRB South GBR: LA 1 to LA 30 Connector**

Dear Mr. Boone:

This letter is in response to AECOM's appeal of the selection for Contract No. 4400017438, posted on January 10, 2020 and heard on January 21, 2020 by the Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD).

I respect and appreciate your taking the time to appeal the selection, as I welcome this process and the dialogue it yields. It is important to note that my decision concerning this selection is not merely based on the technical scores provided to competing firms; however, it is one that encompasses which team is best suited for which project, upcoming projects, recent contract selections, the viewpoints of regional leaders and the members of the Capital Area Road and Bridge District (CARB-D), among other factors.

In your letter of appeal and in your hearing, the weighting of the Tier I and Tier II factors were raised and also several rebuttals were presented to my justifications concerning backlog, area relationships, urban project experience and DBE requirements. I have considered the totality of your information presented written and verbally.

In response, it should be noted that as mentioned above, when a selection is presented to me, I consider factors outside of the technical scores presented. While the technical aspects were weighted heavier at 60% over the less technical criteria presented in Tier II, by your own information presented, none of the factors in either category consider CARB-D or the regional leader's thoughts and opinions. This is one prime example of critical factors that must be considered outside of the technical scores of the evaluation team.

In light of the technical scores and your arguments presented, it should be noted that within Tier I workload was a consideration. While the continued work of AECOM with DOTD is appreciated and desired, the magnitude of the potential of the project at hand or the uniqueness of the working relationship between the public sector and the consultant for this project cannot be discounted. The selected firm's contract will be managed administratively by DOTD, however CARB-D and the parish leaders have expressed the desire for interaction with the consultant and project manager that rises to a level greater than the traditional project. This consideration was not included in the technical evaluation and is appropriately considered at the level of the Secretary.

As such, a team with less workload should be considered with greater weight in order for all entities, including the public, to extract the value from this process they expect. That expectation is going to be met through the dedication of time and relationship management outside of the normal bounds of a DOTD consultant relationship.

You also raised concern pertaining to complex urban project experience. Your correspondence raises ire concerning the selected team's experience versus AECOM. I do not discount AECOM's experience in this area or any other firm in this selection. However, my comments were not just limited to the prime, but extends to the entire team and the work they have done.

Thus, after careful consideration, the arguments of the appellant do not warrant the reversal of the selection.

I would be remiss if I did not point out that while the law gives me latitude concerning the shortlist, I do not make these decisions arbitrarily or within a vacuum. I expend my authority concerning selection very judiciously with the welfare of the state, infrastructure and the industry in mind.

Furthermore, I strongly protect the fair and unbiased nature of DOTD's selections. A selection that is different from a technical team's evaluation is not required to be a validation of their score, nor should it be interpreted as a criticism of the team's assessment, but instead it is an expression of circumstance that I value in a specific selection. It should be noted that under my leadership the utilization of the selection authority beyond the highest rated firm has been used very seldom. I believe the integrity and trust in our process is evident by the fact that only three selections have been appealed in over four years of billions of dollars in selections. DOTD's commitment to its rigorous evaluation process is stronger than ever and there is no desire to erode it as such.

As Secretary, I welcome and desire your continued quest for work from DOTD and value the partnership we have with industry to deliver a world class infrastructure system for Louisiana. Please be assured that your appeal will in no way penalize you in any future selection process. If you have any questions, please contact my Executive Assistant, Rhea Victorian, at (225) 379-1200.

Sincerely,

Shawn D. Wilson, Ph.D.
Secretary

SDW/ddr

c: Ms. Darhlene Major