

Northwestern Mutual on track to meet hiring commitment for downtown building project

Report details involvement of small business enterprises and Milwaukee residents

MILWAUKEE, Wis. Oct. 20, 2014 – Northwestern Mutual is on track to meet commitments for construction of the Northwestern Mutual Tower and Commons, according to the first quarterly report submitted by Prism Technical to the city of Milwaukee. The company has promised to tap small business enterprises (SBEs) for 25 percent of the project costs and utilize city residents through the Resident Preference Program (RPP) for 40 percent of the hours worked on the project.

According to the report, Northwestern Mutual paid SBEs for 24.1 percent of project costs through March 31 totaling \$2.43 million. But it contracted professional services from SBEs for 35.3 percent of the costs or \$3.18 million. Nearly 44 percent of the overall work was performed by Milwaukee residents, exceeding the goal by more than 1,400 hours.

“We are excited to see how our construction project has already had a significant impact on small businesses and local residents, and believe this report provides evidence of the company’s commitment to the city,” said Sandy Botcher, Northwestern Mutual vice president and project leader. “We look forward to demonstrating continued strong results in the future.”

Botcher added that in the past several months, Northwestern Mutual has worked with its project manager, Hines, as well as Prism Technical and the general contractor team, Gilbane | C.G. Schmidt, to put in place a comprehensive outreach program to share opportunities for SBEs and Milwaukee residents. That outreach included proactively engaging local chambers of commerce, numerous industry representatives, and more than 100 community-based organizations to help ensure the project includes significant participation from diverse segments of the Milwaukee community.

Additionally, 15 informational sessions were held to highlight contracting opportunities (including four sessions for SBEs and two matchmaking sessions), all of which were attended by more than 300 businesses and organizations.

The company also worked closely with the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership/Big Step on five workforce fairs for city residents and the start of two apprenticeship training cohorts.

According to Botcher, Northwestern Mutual utilized more than three dozen SBEs through the first quarter of 2014 to help with a variety of roles related to the overall project. That included designing elements of the Tower and Commons, deconstructing the 16-story structure on the building site, and relocating utilities.

In total, Milwaukee residents have worked nearly 18,000 hours on the project before construction of the Tower and Commons even started. In addition, the company provided on-the-job learning experiences to 15 construction apprentices.

“We’ve said from day one that it’s vital the entire community has an opportunity to be our partner through all phases of the project,” said Botcher. “This partnership will continue to lead the way in creating even more jobs and moving our community forward.”

The 32-story, 1.1 million-square-foot office tower and public space will be completed in 2017 and will preserve 1,100 downtown jobs while adding 1,900 new ones. It will also welcome residents and visitors to the city and anchor Milwaukee’s lakefront development.

To read the entire report and for more information about the Northwestern Mutual Tower and Commons, visit www.NorthwesternMutual.com/BuildingMKE.

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