

New bids give square green light

MAIN STREET PROJECT: Low bid of \$3.92 million more than \$1.5 million less than original bids.

By Emilie Rusch 11/20/10
Journal staff

Construction of Main Street Square will move forward with no sacrifices on amenities or materials after the new round of bids came in more than \$500,000 under budget.

The five bids received Friday were from SECO Construction with a bid of \$3.92 million; Dean Kurtz Construction for \$4.05 million; Gustafson Builders with a bid of \$4.06 million; R.C.S. Construction for \$4.14 million; and J. Scull Construction for \$4.83 million.

The city has budgeted \$4.5 million for the project, including all of the optional upgrades. The Rapid City Council will award the contract at a special meeting Nov. 29.

Mayor Alan Hanks attributed the lower bids to a more competitive environment and a better understanding of what the project entailed. Friday's low bid, \$3.92 million, was more than \$1.5 million less than the low bid

of \$5.45 million in October.

"It's an unusual circumstance, but we couldn't be happier," Hanks said late Friday. "We're getting exactly what we were hoping for, and we're getting it for more than \$1 million less."

The \$6.5 million project is being funded by \$3.5 million in city Vision 2012 funds and \$3 million in private donations. The total cost is split into two parts — \$4.5 million for site construction

and \$2 million for specialty equipment and infrastructure. The plaza's ongoing maintenance will be funded by the downtown Business Improvement District, a special tax district approved by voters in June.

In October, the city council rejected all three bids received after they all came in over \$1 million more than budgeted. The original

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SQUARE: Contract changed project's completion date.

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bid documents had asked contractors to meet a Memorial Day completion date, and officials said the high cost of winter construction and certain specialty materials like granite likely drove the bid prices up.

The new bid documents asked contractors to have work "substantially complete" by Aug. 26, 2011, and fully complete by Sept. 30, 2011.

Ten optional upgrades

were also included in the documents for premium materials if cost allowed. Upgrades included granite planters, awnings on the parking structure, larger trees and brick pavers for the adjoining sidewalks and alley.

Dan Senftner, president of Destination Rapid City, the nonprofit downtown development group that proposed the project, was "thrilled" by Friday's bids and said the project is now right back to where it started.

"Nothing was changed. We left nothing out," Senftner said. "Everything from the original design of Main Street Square stays in."

Like Hanks, Senftner

said the low bids can be attributed to having more contractors compete this time than last. SECO Construction, which entered the low bid of \$3.92 million, did not vie for the project in October.

"They took a serious

interest in making this happen," Senftner said. "It's a good thing for downtown."

Construction is now anticipated to begin in December.

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