

## Local firm wins bid to design Job Corps campus in Milwaukee

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Fifteen years after it was proposed, a \$28 million, federally funded Milwaukee Job Corps project that will provide educational and vocational training to low-income youth is taking shape.

A Milwaukee architectural firm was selected to design the U.S. Department of Labor project that was bid nationally. Ursula Twombly and her firm Continuum Architects + Planners beat out more than 18 competitors.

"She's witness that a local, woman-owned small business can get the job," Mayor Tom Barrett told more than 100 local business owners who gathered Thursday to learn from federal officials how they might bid for work on the Job Corps project.

The Milwaukee Job Corps - one of 122 centers nationwide - will be built on 25 acres on N. 60th St. between Good Hope and Mill roads. The campus will feature 155,000 square feet among eight buildings, including a welcome center, administrative and medical building, student services building, education building, cafeteria, two dormitories and a gym and recreational facility.

About 272 low-income students will live on campus and another 30 will attend as day students. The students will range in age from 16 to 24.

"The campus is designed to encourage interaction among all the students and be a campus where tolerance is the norm and life is positive," said Twombly, who has been in business for 12 years.

### Work for subcontractors

The project includes working with 10 other companies from the area for services such as mechanical, civil, electrical and structural engineering; plumbing; fire protection; food service; and construction budgeting, Twombly said.

Plans call for the building to include "green design" principles and sustainability, she said. This will include conserving water by using native plants and vegetation to minimize irrigation needs, reducing energy consumption up to 30% through the use of geothermal technology, and using regional materials to cut down on production and transportation costs.

There's no federal requirement that local contractors be used, but Barrett and U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore (D-Milwaukee) invited some to Thursday's informational session to learn about bid requirements.

Michael F. O'Malley, team leader of facilities management for the national office of Job Corps., and Eric Ness, district director of the Small Business Administration, also attended the meeting and took questions.

Ness said a small business can bid as a subcontractor or form a joint venture with others. The threshold for a small business is \$31 million in annual sales averaged over three years.

O'Malley said the Job Corps project will be set aside for small businesses.

Milwaukee first applied for a Job Corps in 1993 when Barrett was a U.S. congressman. He and other federal legislators persisted until 2003, when the city was awarded the program.

The project was stalled for another three years when a site near Mitchell International Airport would have required environmental cleanup that the U.S. Department of Labor didn't want to undertake.

Bids for the project are scheduled to open in Washington on Sept. 15, with construction slated to begin in November.