**Section 625.80 Preliminary Review and Ranking**

a) Following the confirmation of each firm's eligibility, the Director of the requesting Division or Office, or the Director's designated representative(s), and the Consultant Services Unit shall review the firm's experience data, its statement of interest, and any evaluations of its previous work for the Department. Based upon this review, the Consultant Services Unit will rank the firms in order of apparent ability to perform the work. Such review and ranking shall take into consideration at least the following factors:

1) Previous experience in the type(s) of service required;

2) Departmental evaluations of prior contractual services with the Department, if any;

3) The staffing plan and specific expertise of key employees;

4) The plan for accomplishing the objectives (if applicable, according to the requirements stated in the Professional Service Bulletin);

b) Depending upon the type of project and the method of payment, the following factors may also be important in the selection of a consultant:

1) The location of the firm's office in which the majority of the work on the project would be done;

2) The firm's ratio of payroll additives to payroll, as approved in the Department's notice of prequalification.

c) The Consultant Services Unit shall prepare a list for the Selection Committee to show the ranking of each firm and the additional information described above. Such list shall also indicate those firms that are determined to be minority business enterprises pursuant to any applicable Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) definition. If any other federal or State definition would take precedence over the FHWA definition, then such list shall indicate those firms that are determined to be minority business enterprises pursuant to such other definition.

d) The Consultant Selection Committee shall determine appropriate projects, which by their nature and the corresponding qualifications of the proposing minority-owned firms, are suitable for implementing any applicable affirmative action program. On such projects minority ownership may be considered in conjunction with the other factors outlined above in the selection process.

e) Ranking will be made based upon unanimous agreement of the reviewers. Any irreconcilable differences among the reviewers shall be noted when the reviewers submit their materials to the Selection Committee.

f) All information developed or provided under Section 625.80 shall be advisory only and shall have no binding effect upon the Selection Committee. The Department will, unless otherwise required by law, maintain and treat all such information as confidential and as for use only by the Department or another governmental agency entitled by law or by agreement to use such information.