



**HOLD FOR RELEASE
AT 5:00 P.M. APRIL 1, 2010**

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**KKE ARCHITECTS TOP CHOICE FOR NORTHFIELD SAFETY CENTER
Selection committee to recommend Minneapolis firm to City Council**

April 1, 2010 - Northfield, Minn. A seven-member community workgroup will recommend the Northfield City Council hire KKE Architects, Inc., to lead the process of site selection and building design for a new Police Station and Fire Hall. The recommendation will be on the Council agenda at its April 6, 2010 meeting.

"KKE's proposal and presentation stood out in a very strong field," said City Councilmember Erica Zweifel. "They took a fresh, hard look at our needs, and addressed specific ideas that could save us time and money. Their team interacted well with the workgroup during the presentation, and they have excellent recent experience designing police and fire facilities. That they emphasize sustainability in their designs is an important strength."

The selection process

The City Council authorized the Request For Proposal process for Police and Fire facilities on February 9, 2010. At its March 2, 2010 meeting, the Council appointed the seven-member Safety Center Architectural Firm Selection Workgroup to review proposals and provide a recommendation to the Council on an architectural firm for the project. The workgroup scored the proposals submissions and then conducted interviews with the top firms. Committee members included City Council representatives Rhonda Pownell and Erica Zweifel, local builder Steve Schmidt, Carleton College director of facilities Steve Spehn, city operations engineer Brian Erickson, police chief Mark Taylor, and city administrator Joel Walinski.

The initial RFP drew 17 responses from local, regional and national firms. Using a detailed scoring system that included extra weight for connections to the Northfield community, the initial pool of applicants was narrowed to five finalists, including Wold Architects and Engineers; Collaborative Design Group; Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc. (SEH); KKE Architects, Inc.; and a collaborative led by Professional Design Group. Finalists were invited to make formal presentations that were scored on the basis of quality, design schedule, communication plans, prior experience and cost. "Each of our finalists had excellent credentials and solid proposals, but the KKE presentation was the unanimous top choice of all seven workgroup members," said city administrator Joel Walinski. "Northfield is fortunate to be launching this project at a time when many firms are hungry for good projects."

Council Action

The next step is for the City Council to consider the workgroup recommendation and a motion to authorize city staff to negotiate a contract with KKE to cover site analysis, design, and engineering services. Over the next few months, the Council will consider final site selection and financing for the new facilities.

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About KKE Architects, Inc.

KKE Architects, Inc. is a full-service architectural firm that provides a wide range of architectural, interior design and planning services. The firm has extensive experience designing public service facilities, emphasizing comprehensive community involvement, fiscally responsible design solutions, operationally efficient police and fire station designs, and a commitment to sustainable building solutions. Recent public sector projects include the Thames Road Fire Station in Woodbury, MN and the Barron County Justice Center in Barron, WI.

About the City of Northfield

Northfield is a city of approximately 18,000, located 40 miles south of Minneapolis-St. Paul. Nearly 5,000 college students are drawn to Carleton and St. Olaf Colleges, giving the community an eclectic vitality. Among the city's major employers are Malt-O-Meal, Multek Flexible Circuits and the municipally owned Northfield Hospital and FamilyHealth Medical Clinics. The city is served by a professional police force of 22 sworn officers and a volunteer fire department of 30. The fire department also provides rural fire protection to an area of approximately 145 square miles.

For further information, contact Joel Walinski, 507-645-3009.