

State-Funded Capital Project Request (RAMP)

Frequently Asked Questions

May 9, 2011

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General Questions

Q#1: If July 1st falls on the weekend when is the submission due?

A: It would be due the next working day. Since July 1 falls on a Friday this year , it should be submitted by then. If extenuating circumstances require you to work over the holiday weekend to complete the request then please contact me to make submission arrangements.

Q# 2: Why do we have to submit copies of the RAMP requests?

A: I must submit a copy of your request to both the IBHE and the CDB. The IBHE and CDB have agreed to accept these RAMP copies in a PDF format. We now require one hard copy and an electronic PDF copy of the complete RAMP package to be submitted to the ICCB. We want to keep the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and the Illinois Capital Development Board (CDB) informed of the magnitude of facilities master plan improvements/needs and sharing your entire RAMP request is one way to accomplish that. In this manner those agencies will also have access to information regarding projects recommended for funding by the ICCB.

Q# 3: How is the reported owned gross square footage information in facility file data submissions (F3, F6, B3, & R3 records) used in the evaluation of RAMP requests?

A: One of the criteria used for evaluation of projects is the amount of space available per full time equivalent student and per annual headcount. The owned gross square footage reported by September 1st plus information from the A1 data submissions and the generated instructional credit hours (SU & SR) allows ICCB staff to consider the amount of space available to each district.

Q# 4: Where can I find ICCB's summary of projects submitted last year and its recommended list of projects to be funds?

A: Prior year information can be found on the ICCB website at:
<http://www.iccb.state.il.us/budget.capitalrequest.html>

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Q# 5: If I have a project included in the FY 2010 Capital Bill but is still listed on ICCB capital projects list until contracts are awarded through the Capital Development Board, do I need to resubmit the project as part of this year's RAMP request?

A: No. ICCB will apply inflationary increases for informational purposes so the college is not required to resubmit those projects.

Q# 6: If I have a project that has been recommended for funding by the ICCB and therefore on the ICCB capital projects list but has not received a state appropriation yet, do I need to resubmit the project as part of this year's RAMP request?

A: Yes. Until the project receives an appropriation, you should resubmit the project. It should be included in your current year RAMP document as your highest priority project. This resubmission also gives you the opportunity to update the project for minor programmatic and scope modifications as well as inflationary cost increases to your estimated project costs.

Q# 7: If the project I submitted last year was not recommended for funding by the ICCB and is not on the ICCB capital projects list, is my current year request limited in the scope or dollar amount of the project request?

A: No. If the project has not been recommended for funding (published on the ICCB Capital Projects List) then it is considered a new project for consideration in subsequent years and reevaluated as such until it is placed on the ICCB Capital Projects List. Until such time as it is recommended for funding the college may reconfigure the project scope and budget request as they find necessary. Keep in mind that any project request should be consistent with the college's long range facilities master plan.

Q# 8: If I have a project on the ICCB published capital list can I replace it with another project that is not on the list?

A: No. A new project should be submitted for evaluation as an addition to the end of the published capital list for the coming year.

Q# 9: Why am I required to include an estimate for LEED design guidelines into the cost estimate of my project budget?

A: The State of Illinois, the Governor's office, and the CDB are promoting LEED guidelines and green facilities for all projects whose cost of construction or remodeling are supported with State appropriations. Therefore, since the RAMP projects are to be supported with state appropriations, the projects' cost estimates should include an estimate for LEED design guidelines. The ICCB and CDB recommends including up to 6% of the construction base costs (line 1 of table 3) on line 2 of table 3. of the project cost estimates.

Q# 10: What if I do not want to incorporate LEED design guidelines into the cost of my project?

A: You can request a waiver from LEED. Unless CDB grants a waiver from LEED it is my understanding that the Capital Development Board will require the green design in the project to LEED standards in the planning process of your project. If these costs have not been factored into the cost of construction and the project appropriation then there may not be adequate state funds to complete the project. The CDB does allow the ICCB and

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the college to seek a waiver from the requirements. The reasons for an exemption are included in the Green Building Guidelines for State Construction at the following link. http://www.cdb.state.il.us/green_initiatives.shtml. If you plan to submit a waiver to CDB please contact Ed Smith

Technical questions related to electronic spreadsheets

Q# 1: How do I find a copy of the electronic version of tables 1 thru 4?

A: The downloadable tables are in an Excel and Quattro Pro format on the ICCB website at:
<http://www.iccb.state.il.us/fiscalmanuals.html>

Q# 2: Why do you require table 1 to be submitted electronically in exactly the same format as it was originally distributed?

A: ICCB staff summarize capital project requests for analytical purposes and internal use. Over 100 projects have been submitted in each of the last several years submissions. Therefore, the use of the electronic tables in this summary process reduces the opportunity for human error and allows quicker summarization using a spreadsheet application.

Completing the forms

Q# 1: My project is on the ICCB capital list and I am resubmitting the project for FY 2013 to adjust for inflation. When I calculate my project costs using the formula, my "Total Project Cost" when compared to last year's project cost estimates are slightly more than the allowable rate of inflation as stated in my e-mail communications and as found on the summary of changes page of the RAMP Manual. What should I do?

A: You may need to make a slight downward adjustment in line 4 (escalation) of table 3 in order to ensure the "Total Project Cost" increase from last year to this year on table 1 is no more than your allowable inflation rate as stated on the summary of changes page of the RAMP Manual.

Q# 2: When do I use the required local match line in the lower right corner of table 1 (labeled as "MATCHING CONTRIBUTION")?

A: Per the RAMP instructions it would be a rare situation to have reported anything on the MATCHING CONTRIBUTION line. Generally, the 25% local funds requirement would be classified under the appropriate line of "LOCAL FINANCING SOURCES" and the "MATCHING CONTRIBUTION" line would be zero.

Q# 3: Will I ever need to use the "prior years" or "beyond current year's" funding columns on table 1?

A: You will only use the prior years' funding column if the project has received a state appropriation in a year prior to the current request (budget) year which is related to the proposed project. If this occurs it is likely the project has been recommended for funding by the ICCB. Generally, the only time you would use the beyond current year's funding column is when you are requesting funding in separate appropriations and not in the same year. This may occur if you have a project which lends itself to being phased in over a period of time or a project is so large that it is logical to break the project into phases (this might be recommended by the ICCB).

Supporting documentation

- Q# 1: Can we or should we submit attachments to help justify the need for the project?
- A: Yes, the college should submit necessary attachments which relate directly to the project, however, the programmatic justification narrative or scope of work narrative should also succinctly explain the attachments' contents.
- Q# 2: Must I submit a copy of the district's Facilities Master Plan with the RAMP document/request?
- A: No. Districts are required to submit a Facilities Master Plan independently to the ICCB once every five years or sooner if changes occur (ICCB rule 1501.602c). Therefore, ICCB staff should already have a Facilities Master Plan for reference on file to review during the RAMP review process.
- Q# 3: Why is it important that a RAMP requested project be on the district's Facilities Master Plan?
- A: It is important that the district have a "road map" in place to guide them and help keep their priorities focused since a project getting recommended for funding may take a number of years to actually receive a state appropriation. A project that benefits the district in the long term may be less likely to have to be voluntarily withdrawn by the district after several years of waiting for a state funding commitment.

Funding Questions

- Q# 1: Why does ICCB limit the total estimated project cost change from last year to this year to no more than the rate of inflation?
- A: Colleges with projects on the list are waiting for funding just like you are waiting for funding. We limit the growth of a project to a reasonable inflation estimate to limit total growth of projects on the list so projects behind your project know that there generally should not be unexpected expansion of a project which could reduce their opportunities for funding. All the costs are estimates and the bidding climate at the time a projects goes to bid will affect the bid amounts.
- Q# 2: Why did the Capital Development Board (CDB) develop a list of regionally adjusted costs for estimating project budgets?
- A: For years the CDB had struggled with variances in the cost of constructing around the state. Cost estimates annually inflated by a single average cost of inflation number, according to the CDB, often resulted in a gross understatement of estimated project costs of projects located in regions of the state that typically experience higher construction costs which is usually in northern Illinois. Beginning with the FY 2011 RAMP, the CDB developed weighted inflation factors and construction costs using R.S. Means data in an attempt to more accurately reflect costs of construction in different regions of the State. Appendix B of the RAMP Manual contains a schedule of the cost estimates per GSF for the type of space for your district and should be used to develop your fiscal year 2013 submission. Four regions were developed: Chicago, Rockford, Collar Counties, and the

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rest of the State which is titled Statewide. The statewide rates will be used by the majority of districts. The rate of allowable cost escalation in your projects from last year to this year is dependent upon the region you are located in throughout the state. The rate of inflation can be verified by dividing any of the cost per GSF by space type this year by the corresponding space type CDB cost from last year. The rates are listed on the summary of changes page of the RAMP Manual and in Appendix B.

- Q# 3: What if my architect or staff made an error in calculating costs, left a component out, or otherwise have misstated our needs in the project which has been recommended for state funding and is included on the ICCB capital projects list?
- A: If the error cannot be corrected within the annual inflation allowance, you should contact ICCB staff to explain the problem. Depending upon the shortfall in needed funding, the college may need to consider contributing additional local funds to address the shortage or make design changes to stay within the approved budget. These cases are rare and will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

In considering a project each year, the ICCB makes the assumption the project has had a thorough review and evaluation. The project generally should have been developed and reviewed by the architect assisting with programmatic justification, scope of work and cost estimates development, by the college staff, and by the Board of the district. Even if an error is found, there is no guarantee that additional state funding can be considered for the project. It is really beneficial for the college to ensure that each project has the proper level and detail of review before it is submitted for state funding consideration. Your project may be the next project proposed to be added to the published capital list.

- Q# 4: How long can I expect to wait for a project to receive a state appropriation for funding if it is recommended for funding by the ICCB?
- A: Given Illinois' current economic climate, it could be years. ICCB suggests any project request reflect a long term facility need rather than a short term need. Funding for community college construction projects was averaging \$50 million per year up until approximately FY 2003. This meant approximately a 2 to 3 year wait. However, since that time funding has slowed and the list has grown longer. At that time, the downturn in the Illinois economy caused the State to redirect general revenue funds normally used to pay long term bond debt for State of Illinois capital purposes toward day to day operating expenses. Until FY 2010, the General Assembly has been reluctant to approve any new capital appropriations or authorize any new bonding authority unless there is a specific new revenue source to service the annual debt created by the sale of additional construction bonds. Some bonds have been sold to begin financing some of the FY 2010 Capital Bill and the General Assembly has identified new revenues sources to service the newly created debt. During FY 2011, the validity of the legislation generating the earmarked revenue sources to service capital bond debt has been challenged. A lower court ruled in favor of the challenger and the State has asked the Illinois State Supreme court to reverse the lower court ruling. Until this matter has been settled, the pace at which projects ultimately proceed may be impacted.