

ESTIMATING METHODOLOGY

Becker & Frondorf's construction cost estimating methodology consists of being involved closely and on an on-going basis with the Design Team, rather than merely producing a specific estimate. It is particularly important to engage early in the design process, when fundamental design decisions are being made, and can be altered without great difficulty. Therefore, our Project Estimators continuously monitor design decisions that affect cost, and inform the Design Team of the impact of such decisions at the earliest possible time. In addition, we make every effort to understand the Design Team's palette of materials and design intent in order to foresee cost implications, rather than simply reacting to a finished design. Of course, we also provide comprehensive Pre-construction Cost Estimates at specific milestones, such as Schematic Design or Design Development. Finally, we prepare a schedule for the project, and then consider the effect of that schedule on construction costs.

We believe that there are three essential parts to the consulting estimate: take-off (or quantity survey), pricing (or unit pricing), and project review. A good conceptual estimator can manage a significant amount of take-off from very preliminary drawings. This is not only useful for pricing, but helps the client understand where the money is being spent. Quantity measurement typically takes about 85% of the time involved, and is as close to pure science as any part of the estimate. Input for pricing, which takes about 10% of the time, can come from a variety of sources, including subcontractors, suppliers, pricing publications, and estimating software databases. The most important source of pricing, however, is the estimator's own experience: some science, and some art. Finally, the project review is simply the time the estimator takes to review all the intangibles that can affect the project, such as bid climate, economies of scale, access to the site, and other special requirements that can substantially affect the final cost of the project. While this only takes 5% of the time, it can have just as large an impact as take-off and pricing, and it is entirely subjective, that is, all art!

Finally, our database draws from our experience with the construction market. Our deep experience in this market enables Becker & Frondorf to provide the best possible pre-construction information to the Design Team, taking into account such variables as escalation, union and non-union construction, the impact of MBE/WBE goals, the nature of construction, and the influence of government regulations on construction costs.