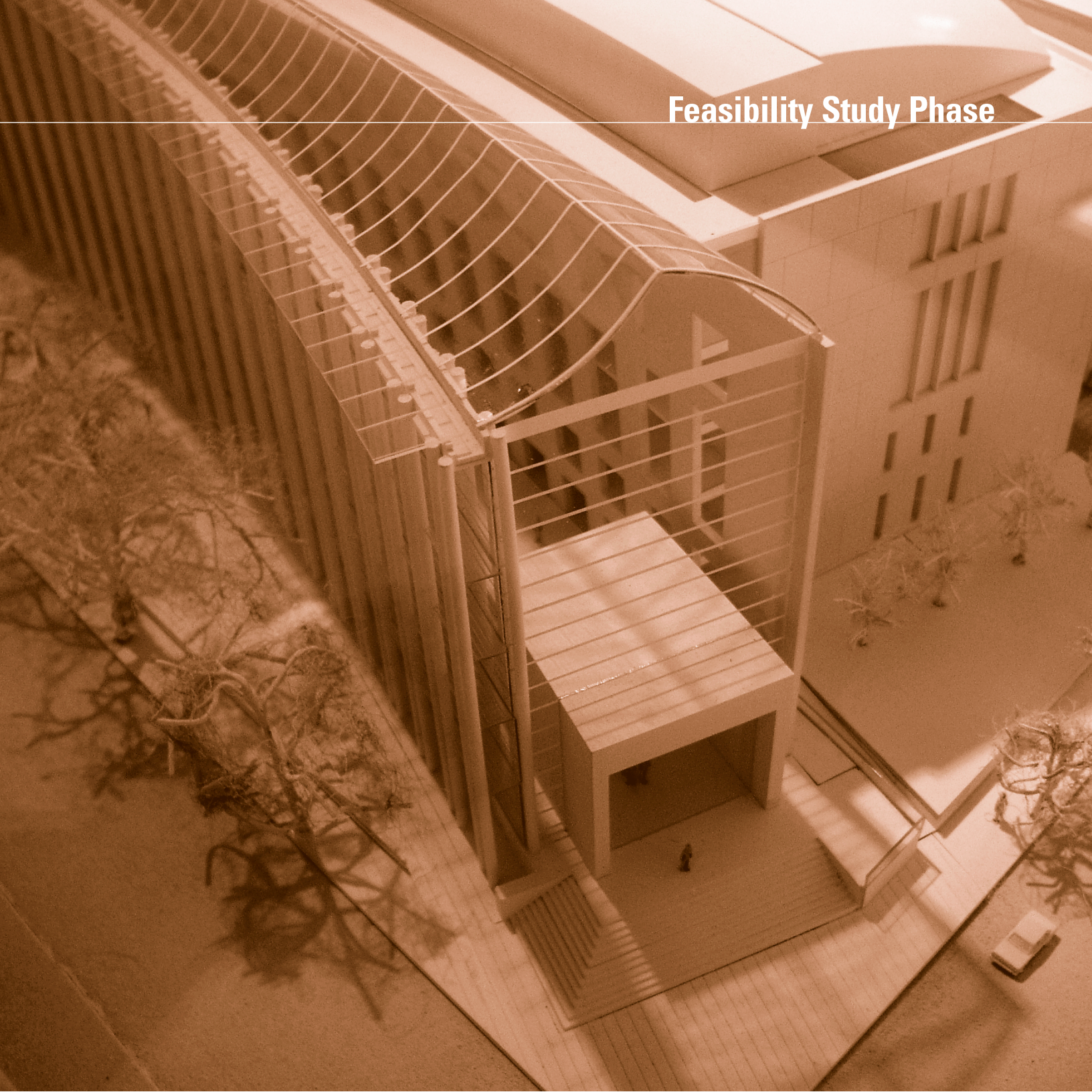
United States Courthouse, Mobile AL
Architect: Moshe Safdie & Associates

Feasibility Study Phase



Feasibility Study Phase

A Long-Term Foundation

The Feasibility Study process has the single greatest influence on a project's development for success.

Years after its completion, the quality of the Feasibility Study continues to support or constrain the project team's response to unforeseen conditions, revised customer needs, customer expectations, and site acquisition.

Overview of the Feasibility Study Phase

In GSA's Capital Investment and Leasing Program (CILP), the Feasibility Study supports a request for site and design funding. In this, the GSA project team, their customer, and, sometimes, national stakeholders consider alternatives and set a course for the project. The recommended alternative sets a sound basis for project design, execution, and budget parameters for design and for site acquisition.

The Feasibility Study defines project goals, scopes customer need, and assesses alternatives to satisfy both. GSA has standard scopes of work that describe detailed deliverables that can be customized to meet each project's needs (see "Appendix F").

A Feasibility Study should be completed for all GSA capital projects—whether initiated by GSA's internal planning or congressional requests to evaluate community needs, such as an 11-(b) request. The only exceptions are limited-scope projects.

This Guide suggests a process to begin, conduct, and complete a successful Feasibility Study and to deliver a funding request for a successful project. (See Exhibit 4.1: Feasibility Study Process and Exhibit 4.4: Feasibility Study Process Schedule). The Feasibility Study phase comprises these basic steps:

Recommended Activities

Step 1 *Confirm Readiness*

Determines whether a project is "ripe" for a Feasibility Study.

Step 2 *Develop the Scope of Work/Select Feasibility Study Contractors*

Authorizes the development of the scope, as appropriate for the project's needs and evaluation.

Step 3 *Conduct the Feasibility Study*

Works with customers and stakeholders to develop and evaluate alternatives and to create the Implementation Plan. This is the heart of the Feasibility Study.

Step 4 *Prepare and Submit the Site/Design Prospectus Package*

Develops the submittal Prospectus package for site and design funding.

Outcome

- Submission of project to Capital Program for funding

Duration

This entire Feasibility Study phase typically takes twenty-five (25) weeks.

Exhibit 4.1: Feasibility Study Process

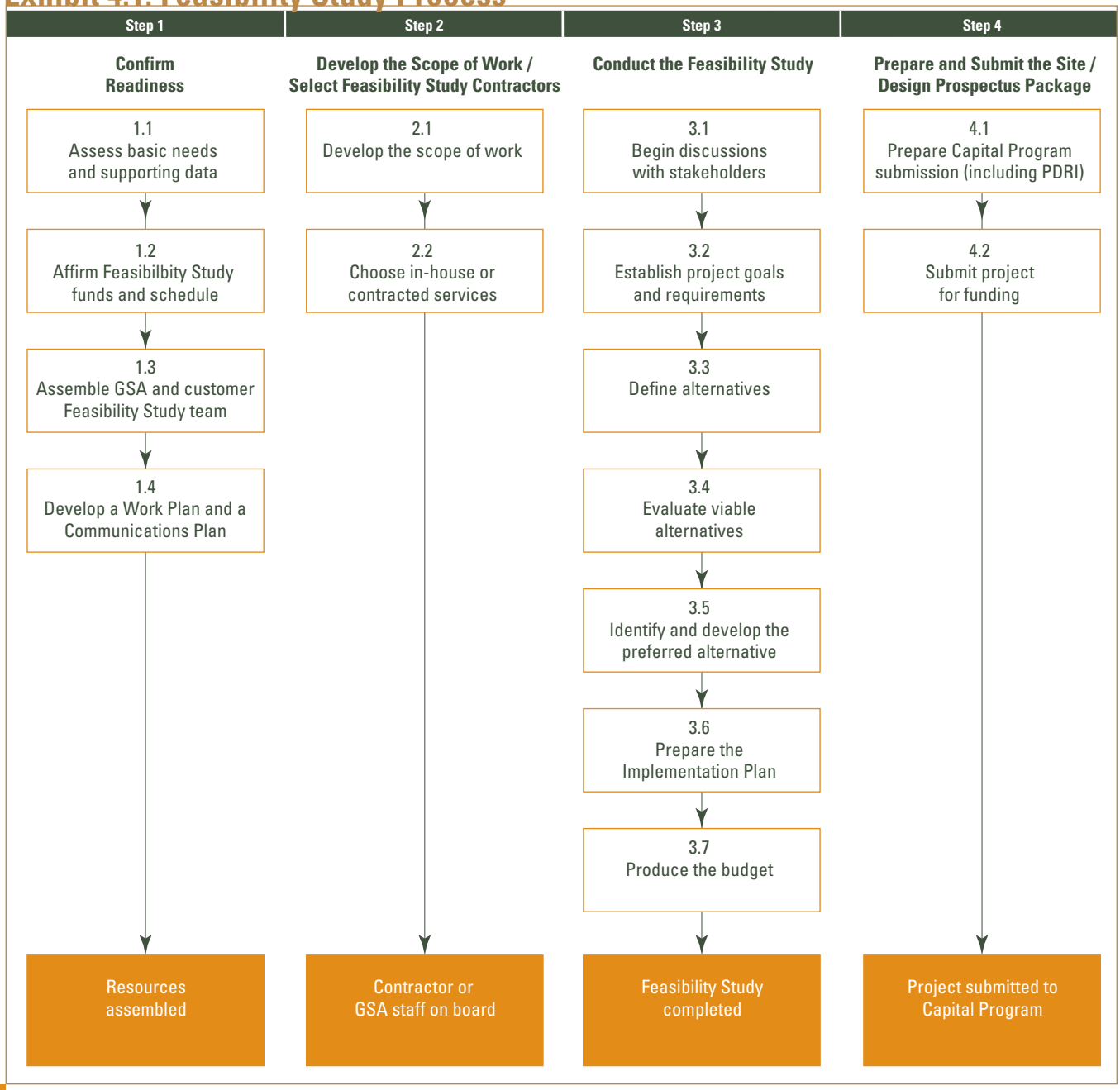


Exhibit 4.2: Keys for Feasibility Study Success

Set Expectations
The GSA team, rather than the Feasibility Study contractor, acts as the leader and sets expectations. Feasibility Study expectations often last throughout the project's lifetime. Make sure that all stakeholders understand the Feasibility Study process and the status of alternatives. A customer or community who understands the process and their role can be the project's greatest ally.

Customize the Scope of Work
Standard scopes of work are invaluable tools, but only a starting point. Ensure that each Feasibility Study is focused, complete, and on time by customizing the scope of work to meet a project's specific requirements.

Emphasize the Project Management Plan
Create a Project Management Plan at the beginning of the Feasibility Study process and update it throughout. Use the PMP as a tool to focus the efforts of the team, the customer, and the contractor.

Ensure In-House Knowledge
GSA holds responsibility for the general understanding of the project, from housing plans and phasing, to community coordination and procurement methods. GSA's in-house team must have in-depth knowledge of the project and be able to answer questions in support of the project throughout the approval process. The team may hold important roles in the future (during the site selection, design, or construction phases) and continue to support the project over the long term. The Feasibility Study contractor develops project costs, but the regional Office of Real Property Asset Management must conduct the analyses required for the Capital Program.

Keep the Feasibility Study Team Engaged
Assemble a broad-based team early and keep them involved. In-house GSA experts and customers are crucial to help set strategy, ensure an effective Feasibility Study, and manage expectations prior to the Capital Program submission. After the program is submitted, the team should be ready to respond to questions from national stakeholders.

Evaluate a Broad Range of Alternatives
Examine all reasonable options to meet customer needs and project requirements. Start broadly and refine the alternatives during the Feasibility Study. Only limited-scope projects, such as single-system projects, should begin the Feasibility Study with pre-defined solutions.

Conduct the PDRI Process
Using the Project Definition Rating Index (PDRI) process can help to identify strengths and weaknesses in the Feasibility Study and Prospectus early on. See the *Planning Call* for more details on the process and its requirements.

Step 1: Confirm Readiness

Through the ongoing management of GSA facilities and customer needs, it is an Asset Business Team that usually identifies when major capital projects are warranted to meet new or changing needs. For all courthouse projects, Feasibility Studies should be performed in accordance with the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts' (AOUSC) *5-Year Plan*.

First, the team leader must determine whether the project is "ripe" to begin a Feasibility Study. This informal assessment is based on the professional judgments of GSA staff and is determined by their collective knowledge of customer needs, facility requirements, and the available resources to satisfy both. It considers customer needs, asset condition and supply, and the availability of people and resources to conduct an effective study. Property Managers, Realty Specialists, and Portfolio Managers, those closest to the customer's needs, are key information sources. Relevant documents include Building Evaluation Reports (BERs), Building Preservation Plans (BPPs), Asset Business Plans (ABPs), and Local Portfolio Plans (LPPs).

Readiness is confirmed when the team leader determines that the facility requirements or customer needs can only be met through a Prospectus-level project.

The Feasibility Study team leader assembles a team, establishes a basic understanding of the project's drivers, uses this to scope an effective approach, and develops a Work Plan and a schedule to guide the study through completion.

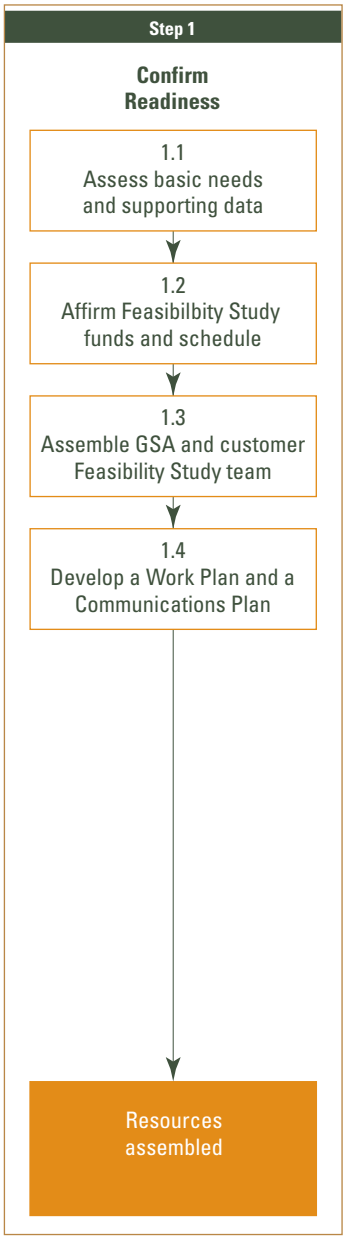
Recommended Activities

1.1 *Assess basic needs and supporting data*
Focus on GSA's understanding of customer needs and the availability of existing resources.

1.2 *Affirm Feasibility Study funds and schedule*
Ensure availability of funds and the viability of schedule.

1.3 *Assemble GSA and customer Feasibility Study team*
Gather GSA experts to support the project.

1.4 *Develop a Work Plan and a Communications Plan*
Create a Work Plan that addresses the scope, schedule, approval process, and budget for the Feasibility Study. Develop a Communications Plan to manage customer agency, stakeholder, and community expectations; build consensus; support the schedule; and enhance coordination within the team and with the customer agency.



Ready to Begin?

At this early stage, the Feasibility Study team assesses four key areas:

- What they know.
- What they need to know more about.
- Where the project can be located.
- Who can help them.

Who Leads the Team?

Most regions develop the Capital Program in their regional Office of Real Property Asset Management. Consequently, the Asset Business Manager who leads the Asset Business Team for the affected buildings is often named the Feasibility Study team leader.

Outcome

- Confirmation of adequate resources available to conduct the study

Duration

This task typically takes two (2) weeks.

1.1 Assess Basic Needs and Supporting Data

This step focuses on understanding basic needs and assessing the impact of meeting those needs with existing assets (e.g., buildings and projects). The Feasibility Study team leader uses a number of documents to make this assessment, but this task involves more than reviewing documents. The team leader often confers with others who have more detailed and up-to-date information about the asset, the customer's requirements, and local conditions. By gathering and reviewing all information, the team leader gains a solid understanding of the project's background, builds an effective Feasibility Study team, and tailors the scope of work.

Recommended Activities

Review background information and documents.

- Identify what studies are already on hand. Look for existing studies that address key portions of the relevant needs and affected facilities. For a list of typical supporting studies that can provide background information, see "Appendix B: Input Documents."
- Determine the key needs, issues, and asset plans that must be fully investigated.
- Assemble all of the information that will be provided to the Feasibility Study contractor.

Manage customer expectations.

- Talk with the customer about the Feasibility Study process and how their needs could be met. Discover whether they have any assumptions about how to meet their needs, such as a new building or a particular site. Ensure that some alternatives are not being ruled out without thorough evaluation.
- Discuss where the customer prefers to be located and whether this conforms to relevant policies and regulations. Develop a plan to reconcile any differences.
- Encourage candid discussions and an open-minded approach so the team can pursue the best project without dashing expectations later.

Identify gaps in knowledge.

- Determine the need to commission any special studies (e.g., seismic, progressive collapse, blast, historic preservation) before beginning the Feasibility Study. Include these special studies within the scope of work and coordinate with the project Work Plan and schedule.
- Concentrate on understanding key issues, uncertainties, expectations, and basic project drivers by talking with GSA, the customer, and other stakeholders. Many of these persons may join the Feasibility Study team later; tap their knowledge now to help shape the approach and the scope of work.

Outcomes

- Adequate understanding of projection conditions
- Identification of gaps in background documentation
- Key elements for the scope of work
- Background information to shape the Feasibility Study team composition

Duration

This task typically takes one (1) week. Factor impacting duration:

- Availability of staff members and documents

1.2 Affirm Feasibility Study Funds and Schedule

The Feasibility Study team leader must ensure that adequate resources and time are available to prepare the Feasibility Study and the Site/Design Prospectus properly. The team leader and regional management must gauge the customer's own priorities and level of support for this work effort and timetable.

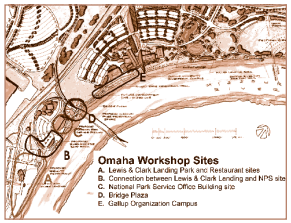
Recommended Activities

Assess status of the customer's basic needs.

- Affirm that the customer supports a design request for the proposed year. If not, determine whether regional resources for the upcoming Capital Program submission should be shifted to another project. For new courthouse construction, be sure to follow the directed *Planning Call* (based on the AOUSC's *5-Year Plan*).

Confirm timely completion.

- Ensure that sufficient BA61 (regional operating) funds are set aside to pay for the Feasibility Study and any supporting studies that are required.



Omaha, NE

GSA collaborated with the city on a donated site for a build-to-suit National Park Service (NPS) building. This building was planned as an important early anchor for Omaha's waterfront redevelopment, and the site was ideal for NPS's interpretive programs. GSA convened a community workshop and incorporated the city's needs into the competitive procurement. The customer has the right site, and Omaha moves forward on its waterfront project.

A Good Team

Successful projects require strong teams. Assemble the team as the project begins. A strong and inclusive core team serves the project for several years—through the *Planning Call*, project authorization, and implementation.

Additional expertise from both in-house and contract experts, as well as outside stakeholders, may supplement your core team at different points in the project, but the core team maintains the project's memory and integrity throughout the process. Use the best talent available.

- Determine how much time is needed to perform the supporting studies, conduct appropriate preliminary consultations and reviews (including NHPA Section 106 and NEPA), and prepare a comprehensive Prospectus package, as outlined in the annual *Planning Call*.

Outcome

- Confirmation of customer's and regional management's support for a successful Feasibility Study

Duration

This task typically takes one (1) week. Factors impacting duration:

- Level of communication between Regional Office and the customer
- Regional Office support of Feasibility Study's preparation

1.3 Assemble GSA and Customer Feasibility Study Team

GSA expertise is a key resource that benefits every project. Although various experts may be brought in during the review of the Feasibility Study, the entire team should be assembled now. Their subject matter expertise and knowledge of project specifics are needed to develop an effective Feasibility Study scope of work.

Recommended Activities

Match project issues with GSA expertise.

- Identify the Feasibility Study team leader if different from the planned Project Manager.
- Identify the GSA experts who work with the customer and the affected facilities and include them on the Feasibility Study team. If there is a GSA Customer Relations Manager for the agency, make sure to use their expertise.
- Use the worksheets in Exhibit 4.3 and "Appendix E" to ensure that all relevant experts are identified and recruited for the team.

Match customer needs with appropriate agency representation.

- Review the customer's special needs or concerns as cited in the project's background information. Include representatives from the customer agency with the right expertise to help shape and review the Feasibility Study.
- Make sure to consider all customer agencies impacted by the project, not just the largest customers or the lead agency.

Consider outside stakeholders.

- Address issues or opportunities influenced by outside factors. Examples include potential sites and availability, local impacts (e.g., parking, neighboring properties), additional construction costs, or the ability to phase coordination with nearby developments (e.g., local plans, preservation features). Be inclusive, broad, and proactive in considering outside issues and local stakeholders.

Outcome

- Recruitment of a strong team of GSA and non-GSA experts to shape the scope of work and ensure the project's success

Duration

This task typically takes one (1) week.

1.4 Develop a Work Plan and a Communications Plan

The Work Plan is a crucial tool to ensure that the Feasibility Study achieves its goals, stays within budget, and remains on schedule. The team leader is responsible for mapping out all of the tasks, determining who does what and when, and defining the deliverables for each step. Once the project begins, the team leader uses the Work Plan to troubleshoot the process, the deliverables, and the schedule.

The Communications Plan helps to manage the expectations of all involved in the project; build consensus; support the schedule; and enhance coordination among all parties. The Communications Specialist team member assists the team leader and others with these activities.

The Project Management Plan (PMP) and the Work Plan include some of the same information. At the earliest stages of project development, the Project Management Plan may function as a preliminary "Work Plan" for the preparation of the Feasibility Study and the Capital Program submission. Draft PMPs are required with the Site/Design Prospectus package submission.

The Role of the Project Management Plan

The Project Management Plan is separate from the Feasibility Study, but they should be developed in tandem. When possible, the Feasibility Study's scope should be tailored to inform the PMP's requirements. In the long run, a well-written PMP will conserve far more effort than it took to prepare. The Office of the Chief Architect (OCA) can supply guidelines on the preparation of the PMP.

Exhibit 4.3: Feasibility Study Team Member Worksheet

FS Team: GSA

- ☐ Team Leader
- ☐ Contracting Officer
- ☐ Property Development Manager
- ☐ Regional Counsel
- ☐ Office of the Chief Architect Representatives
  - ☐ Center for Courthouse Programs
  - ☐ Border Station Center
  - ☐ Urban Development Program
- ☐ Site Selection Specialist
- ☐ Project Manager
- ☐ Asset/Portfolio Manager
- ☐ Regional Historic Preservation Officer
- ☐ Other GSA Specialists
  - ☐ Appraiser
  - ☐ Archaeologist
  - ☐ Architect/Interior Designer
  - ☐ Civil/Structural Engineer
  - ☐ Regional Environmental Quality Advisor
  - ☐ Regional Fine Arts Officer
  - ☐ Regional Fire Protection Engineer

FS Team: Customer Agency

- ☐ Administrative Services Representative
- ☐ Facilities Group Representative
- ☐ Human Resources Representative
- ☐ National Office Representative

FS Team: Contractor/Consultant

- ☐ Acquisition Law Advisor
- ☐ Archaeologist
- ☐ Architect
- ☐ Civil Engineer
- ☐ Code Review Expert
- ☐ Constructability Advisor
- ☐ Cost Estimator
- ☐ Environmental Engineer (Conservation)
- ☐ Environmental Scientist
- ☐ Financial Advisor
- ☐ Geotechnical Engineer
- ☐ Historic/Cultural Preservation Consultant
- ☐ Industrial Hygienist
- ☐ Land Use Planner
- ☐ Real Estate Appraiser
- ☐ Real Estate Broker
- ☐ Registered Fire Protection Engineer
- ☐ Security/Blast Assessment Consultant
- ☐ Structural Engineer (Seismic)
- ☐ Title Search Consultant
- ☐ Traffic Engineer
- ☐ Urban Planner
- ☐ Zoning Attorney

Recommended Activities

Use the Feasibility Study Checklist (see "Appendix C").

- Refer to the Feasibility Study Checklist for a list of typical contents and tasks. Not every project requires all of the Checklist elements. However, using the Checklist helps to review the project's requirements and select the appropriate elements for each project.

Create a Work Plan for conducting the Feasibility Study.

- Work with the Feasibility Study team to develop a Work Plan and a schedule for key tasks. The schedule should conclude with the completion of the Regional Office's Capital Program submission for the project.
- Review the project's characteristics. Identify key factors about the project or the location that impact the Work Plan and identify criteria that impact the scope, schedule, and budget.
- Verify coordination with other studies—either completed or ongoing.
- Identify the project's decision-making processes and coordination requirements. Review the approval processes for GSA, the customer agency, local government, and others. Determine typical time frames and milestones and add this information to the schedule.

Begin a Project Management Plan.

- Create a PMP that reflects the Work Plan for the Feasibility Study.
- Use the PMP to guide the Feasibility Study process. Don't limit the plan to the submission for the Capital Program. The PMP gains detail over time, but it should be drafted early in the process and updated throughout the Feasibility Study process.
- Ensure that the PMP incorporates all elements of the PBS Pricing Policy, with particular emphasis on establishing separate budgets for the shell, each tenant's TI, and GSA-provided security.
- Include the Communications Plan in the PMP to cover the duration of the project.

Create a Communications Plan.

- Understand the context of the project and the community by reviewing previous communications approaches and strategies, plus contacts made with federal, state, and local agencies during the Pre-Planning phase.

Reasons to Create the PMP During the Feasibility Study:

- The team is more engaged and contributes more effectively.
- Focus is on the final product at the beginning of the process.
- Feasibility Study's scope is tailored to support PMP preparation.

- Assess project and local history, local issues, and activities that may create interest or controversy around the project, such as local elections and other development activities.
- Identify key stakeholders in terms of the following:
  - Organization (size and structure);
  - Project stakeholders;
  - Level of influence;
  - Issues of interest; and
  - Leaders and spokespersons, for contact information.
- Include plans for involving key stakeholders in the Feasibility Study preparation.
- Plan to review the draft Work Plan with key stakeholders, including the customer agency, GSA Regional Office, and GSA Central Office.
- Assemble names, addresses, and contact information of key stakeholders and media personnel.
- Provide a clear understanding of who does what, when, and why. Use this information to gain understanding, develop support, or announce progress, as appropriate.
- Identify project milestones and communications deadlines.
- Summarize this information and prepare the Communications Plan. Review the Communications Plan with the Feasibility Study team and the communications staff for the Region, GSA Central Office, and customer agency.

Outcomes

- Provision of the resources, knowledge, and Work Plan for completion of the Feasibility Study
- Effective linkage of the Feasibility Study and the Project Management Plan
- Development of the Work Plan as the foundation for the scope of work and Request for Proposal (RFP) preparation
- Development of Communications Plan

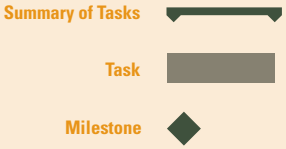
Duration

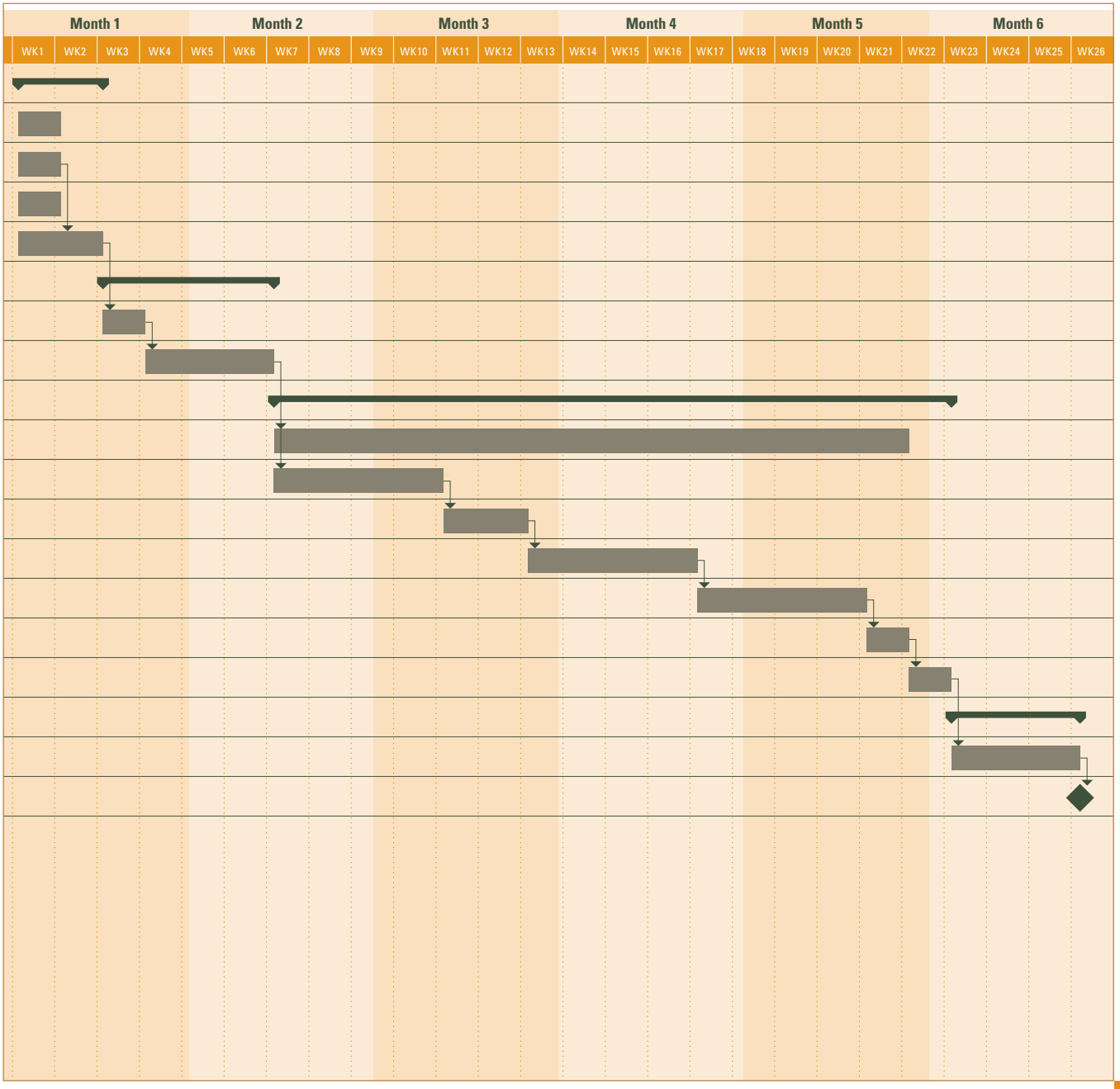
This task typically takes two (2) weeks. Factors impacting duration:

- Number of stakeholders
- Size and scope of project

Exhibit 4.4: Feasibility Study Process Schedule

Task Name	Duration
Step 1: Confirm readiness	**2 weeks**
1.1 Assess basic needs and supporting data	1 week
1.2 Affirm Feasibility Study funds and schedule	1 week
1.3 Assemble GSA and customer Feasibility Study team	1 week
1.4 Develop a Work Plan and a Communications Plan	2 weeks
Step 2: Develop the Scope of Work/Select Feasibility Study Contractors	**4 weeks**
2.1 Develop the scope of work	1 week
2.2 Choose in-house or contracted services	3 weeks
Step 3: Conduct the Feasibility Study	**16 weeks**
3.1 Begin discussions with stakeholders	15 weeks
3.2 Establish project goals and requirements	4 weeks
3.3 Define alternatives	2 weeks
3.4 Evaluate viable alternatives	4 weeks
3.5 Identify and develop the preferred alternative	4 weeks
3.6 Prepare the Implementation Plan	1 week
3.7 Produce the budget	1 week
Step 4: Prepare and Submit the Site/Design Prospectus Package	**3 weeks**
4.1 Prepare Capital Program submission (including PDRI)	3 weeks
4.2 Submit project for funding	1 day

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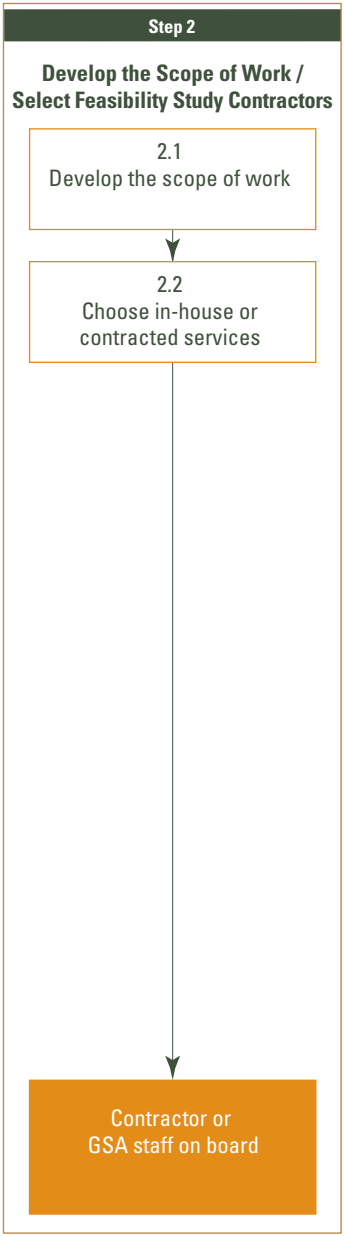
Step 2: Develop the Scope of Work/ Select Feasibility Study Contractors

The Feasibility Study team must use the most up-to-date background information to create a scope of work that effectively assesses customer needs and facility requirements, evaluates alternatives, and proposes the right project. After developing the scope of work, the team must decide whether it is best to use in-house or contracted personnel to conduct the study. This decision is based on the requirements of the study and the resources available. At the completion of this step, the team is ready to begin the Feasibility Study.



Recommended Activities

2.1 *Develop the scope of work*
Understand that a clear, complete scope of work is necessary to hire outside contractors successfully. The scope is an invaluable tool to support the work process and guide the team.

2.2 *Choose in-house or contracted services*
Choose the best expertise for the job, based on the project requirements, the customer agency's needs, and available resources. When a professional services firm is to be engaged, a GSA Contracting Officer and a member of the Feasibility Study team shepherd the selection process.

Outcome

- Full readiness of people, funds, and plans for conducting a high-quality Feasibility Study

Duration

This task typically takes four (4) weeks. Factors impacting duration:

- The complexity of the project
- Any modification from a standard Feasibility Study scope of work
- The availability of Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contractors or Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) Management Operation and Business Improvement Services (MOBIS) Schedule contractors

2.1 Develop the Scope of Work

The Feasibility Study's scope of work provides the detailed blueprint for conducting the study. The scope of work should be developed before deciding who will perform the individual activities involved in the effort. If GSA staff prepares the Feasibility Study,

Resources for Feasibility Studies

- Exhibit 4.2: Keys for Feasibility Study Success
- "Appendix C: Feasibility Study Checklist"
- "Appendix F: GSA's Standard Scopes of Work"

These materials are continually updated on the OCA's Construction Excellence and Project Management Division Web site.

Standard Scopes of Work

GSA has developed standard scopes of work for Feasibility Studies and PDSs that support both renovation and new construction projects. These scopes of work provide detailed deliverables for Feasibility Studies and PDSs that can be customized to meet each project's needs. Contact the OCA's Construction Excellence and Project Management Division for the latest documents or check the Project Management Web site. (See also Exhibit 4.5.)

the scope of work is an invaluable guide. When contractor assistance is required to conduct the study, the scope of work is imperative.

The Feasibility Study team should always customize the scope to ensure that it meets the requirements of the project and those of the relevant Capital Program. GSA has model scopes of work for Feasibility Studies that are helpful in developing the scope for each project (see "Appendix F"). Additionally, the standard PDS scopes of work for renovation and new construction projects may suggest key components to be included in the Feasibility Study. Both of these models are recommended as starting points for developing the project scope.

Recommended Activities

Review model scopes of work.

- Evaluate the model scopes of work provided through the OCA and the Regional Office. Every project should evaluate project requirements, environmental factors, technical factors, and financial factors. Ensure that the scope fully addresses all of these categories.
- Review the scopes of work from similar projects and incorporate the appropriate parts. Consult their Project Managers to discover what worked best.

Customize the scope to meet the latest project specifics.

- Convene the Feasibility Study team to help shape the scope of work.
- Ensure that the scope fills in any gaps left by previous studies, addresses known issues, and investigates all known and potentially viable alternatives.
- Encourage the exploration of creative options, including adaptive reuse of historic buildings and intergovernmental property exchanges. Ensure that the scope leads the Feasibility Study process to look for a creative alternative.

Customize the scope to meet the current requirements of the relevant Capital Program.

- Consult with the Office of Real Property Asset Management or the Portfolio Representative on your Feasibility Study team to review the *Planning Call* issued for the targeted funding year. Requirements change from year to year (e.g., parking plans, courtroom matrices), so use the current version.
- Consider the long-term informational role that the Feasibility Study plays. In addition to shaping the funding request, these data form the foundation that supports the project through the Design Excellence process, site selection, and development of the PDS.

Exhibit 4.5: Feasibility Study Deliverables

The Feasibility Study must present the following information for decision-makers at GSA and at the customer agency and, ultimately, stakeholders in the administration and in Congress.

Customer Agency's Goals	• Defines the customer agency's business goals and their impact on the facility's requirements. • Describes workplace performance goals, space assignments, and flexibility needs. • Creates building requirements. Creates the customer's housing plan, taking into consideration any special space requirements, required adjacencies and square footage, and future uncertainties. • Identifies the project's requirements and the consequences if action is not taken.
Asset and Portfolio Goals	• Defines the project within the context of other available master plans. • Addresses the project's impact on all affected GSA assets and interdependent projects and describes customer-pricing implications. • Discusses facility operation, durability, and life-cycle costing requirements. • Addresses opportunities, risks, and required actions to meet accessibility, historic preservation, environmental, urban development, and Design Excellence goals. • Identifies special requirements for foundations, structures, exteriors, electrical and mechanical systems, site work and landscaping opportunities, geotechnical analysis of site, and considerations for special construction and demolition, among other items.
Program Goals	• Addresses opportunities, risks, and required actions to meet accessibility, historic preservation, fire protection engineering, life safety, urban development, environmental, and Design Excellence goals.
Alternatives	• Develops creative and broad alternatives as the heart of the Feasibility Study. • Evaluates a range of alternatives to shape the appropriate project. • Identifies, defines, and evaluates alternatives. • Considers macro-level alternatives (e.g., combinations of new construction, renovation, and leasing). • Chooses a preferred alternative, as well as "sub-alternatives" within the preferred alternative (e.g., tenant mix or phasing options within a renovation project). • Identifies special requirements for foundations, structures, exteriors, electrical and mechanical systems, fire protection and life safety systems, site work and landscaping opportunities, and considerations for special construction and demolition, among other items.

Implementation Plan (included in the PMP)	• Describes key project milestones, stakeholders, funding sources, and uncertainties about or risks to the project's delivery. • Discusses phasing and swing space requirements, potential agency interruptions, utilities coordination, construction phasing, and building turnover plans. • Describes required stakeholder funding approvals and strategies for meeting environmental, historic preservation, and urban development requirements.
Cost Estimating	• Provides project data, estimated construction costs (ECC), estimated total project costs (ETPC), estimated customer relocation costs, and tenant improvement (TI) costs for the alternatives. • Ensures that all estimates meet the latest *Planning Call* requirements. • Uses benchmarks established for new courthouse and border station projects.
Project Management	• Describes required stakeholder funding approvals and strategies for meeting environmental, historic preservation, fire protection engineering, life safety, and urban development requirements.

Use knowledge of the required deliverables to focus the scope.

- Ensure that the deliverables can be produced within the resources of the schedule, team, and budget.

Outcomes

- The final scope of work and schedule
- Adequate information for contractor selection and procurement
- Guidance for the in-house team and the customer agency
- A solid foundation for the project's requirements and Capital Program Manager's support of Site/Design Prospectus
- A Feasibility Study document to support the project through the PDS

Duration

This task typically takes one (1) week.

2.2 Choose In-House or Contracted Services

The Feasibility Study team determines whether to contract with a professional services firm, use an in-house team, or use a combination of GSA and contractor resources. The decision is based on project complexity, the quality and availability of existing technical data, the availability of in-house resources, and the requirements described in the scope.

If it is determined that a Feasibility Study contractor is required, the Contracting Officer leads the team through the selection process. Identify a contractor with the right personnel, local knowledge, technical experience, and understanding of both GSA and the project's requirements.

Recommended Activities

Define the type of expertise required.

- Assess the project's complexity and location, as well as the customer agency's characteristics.
- Review the project's requirements, plus technical and financial factors.
- Determine whether the project is a limited-scope renovation (e.g., a single system). If so, then in-house services and resources may be adequate.
- Determine whether the project involves multiple buildings or customer agencies, site selection or new construction, and extensive environmental or historic preservation work. These factors may require professional services.

Data for the Future

Support your project submission by presenting key data in easily usable formats (e.g., tables and matrices). These are referred to frequently throughout the approval process.

Determine whether the project can be performed by GSA staff.

- If so, assemble the team and move on to Step 3: Conduct the Feasibility Study.

Consider the complexity of the project and the expertise required.

- Determine whether a contractor should be used.
- Review the capabilities of professional services firms already on board (e.g., IDIQ contracts, FSS/MOBIS).
- Consult with Contracting Officers and other Project Managers who have worked with the available contractors to judge their suitability for this Feasibility Study.

Include specialists with appropriate expertise.

- Ensure that any IDIQ contractor hired for the project has the right expertise.
- Include specialists who meet the Department of the Interior's professional qualification standards if the alternatives may affect historic resources.
- Include specialists who have experience selecting and valuing the affected submarket and can make well-supported projections of future site costs and site suitability if the Feasibility Study develops new construction or site acquisition alternatives.

Consult with the Contracting Officer.

- Work with the Contracting Officer to issue an RFP or Work Order that includes the project's scope of work.
- Determine the time required to bring a firm on board. An IDIQ firm may be brought on board fairly quickly. If a standard solicitation process is required, then allocate additional time.

Receive offers, negotiate the terms, and award the contract.

Outcome

- Issuance of notice to proceed to the Feasibility Study contractor or GSA team

Duration

This task typically takes three (3) weeks. Factor impacting duration:

- Use of a non-IDIQ contractor

Step 3: Conduct the Feasibility Study

The Feasibility Study defines the project and establishes project requirements, identifies key technical factors (e.g., zoning, engineering, or sustainability requirements), and defines financial factors for the project. It considers alternatives to meet customer needs and facility requirements in light of regional and national business strategies, technical merit, capital costs, financial impact to the Federal Buildings Fund (FBF), and local context.

The Feasibility Study contractor is responsible for completing the study with the team's input and guidance. GSA's role is to guide the study, coordinate reviews, keep stakeholders informed and involved, and ensure that the Feasibility Study is responsive to the needs of the customer and the requirements of the federal government.

Immediately following the notice to proceed, the team leader must provide all background materials to the contractor. This includes copies of studies, drawings, and reports, as well as contact information for customer agency representatives, GSA Building Managers, and GSA experts.

Recommended Activities

3.1 *Begin discussions with stakeholders*
Use input from stakeholders to understand the customer agency's requirements and concerns, as well as local opportunities and issues.

3.2 *Establish project goals and requirements*
Determine the customer agency's requirements for location, site, housing plan, and schedule and define asset needs (especially for R&A projects).

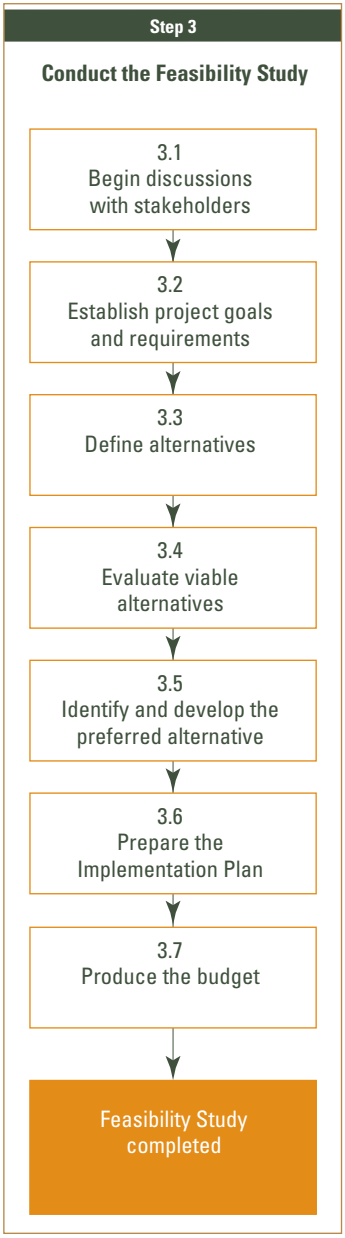
3.3 *Define alternatives*
Generate a broad range of creative alternatives to support the development of an appropriate solution.

3.4 *Evaluate viable alternatives*
Evaluate the viable alternatives, test their approaches, and understand their impacts.

3.5 *Identify and develop the preferred alternative*
Describe and support the preferred alternative.

3.6 *Prepare the Implementation Plan*
Detail the activities to accomplish the project.

3.7 *Produce the budget*
Finalize the construction cost estimate and total project costs.



Launching the Feasibility Study

To start the contractors in the right direction, the team leader provides substantial background information, arranges introductions, opens channels of communication, and helps with activity coordination during the first two weeks.

Hold a Kickoff Meeting

This is a crucial early step that supports the coordination of team members, contractors, and customer agency representatives.

Review the Work Plan, schedule, contact information, required documents, and participants' roles. Complete the Feasibility Study Checklist ("Appendix C") and identify which items are to be addressed and whether they have a major or minor impact.

GSA specialists with expertise in historic preservation, green building, progressive collapse, and other specialties should be included in the Kickoff Meeting.

Outcome

- A complete Feasibility Study, including project requirements, the technical evaluation, and the financial analysis

Duration

Conducting the Feasibility Study typically takes sixteen (16) weeks.
Factors impacting duration:

- The complexity of the project
- The time needed to complete specialized studies
- The availability of the GSA Feasibility Study team and the customer agency to provide information and make interim decisions
- The time need to review, digest, and develop the draft into a solid Capital Program funding proposal

3.1 Begin Discussions with Stakeholders

The GSA Feasibility Study team and the contractor must meet with the customer agency, Building Managers, Asset Business Teams, local community, and other stakeholders to identify key issues, potential sites, individual interests, and project requirements and to shape a Feasibility Study that effectively addresses their requirements (see Exhibit 4.6: Sample Agenda). These discussions allow the customer agency to describe their needs, desires, and concerns.

The team may also talk with outside stakeholders to understand their plans. The project may create opportunities or risks that must be addressed early. This information enables the Feasibility Study team to strategize and budget accordingly.

Recommended Activities

Meet with the customer agency within the first two weeks of the project.

- Learn about the customer's business, vision, and mission and how these impact the agency's future, especially how they drive their real estate requirements.
- Describe the assistance that is needed from the agency to support the study.
- Identify which customer agency staff members are designated to coordinate requests from the contractor or the Feasibility Study team for interviews; access to work spaces and potential secure areas; tenant space standards for test fits; and tenant move and cost estimates, among others.

Exhibit 4.6: Sample Agenda

Meeting With Customer Agency or Community

1. Introduce attendees.

2. Review description of government project.

3. Briefly describe overall process, including earlier studies.

4. Review current Feasibility Study activities, purpose, outcome, and schedule.

5. Inquire about agency planning procedures, sources of information, and key program needs.

6. Identify potential opportunities and pitfalls (sites, local opportunities, timetable, phasing).

7. Assign next steps
   - Collect further data
   - Plan additional meetings
   - Establish points of contact

Fine-tune the sample agenda, based on project history and timeline. Consider these points in preparing for the meeting(s):

- Are the meeting participants familiar with the proposed project and the Feasibility Study process?
- Have they been involved in a Feasibility Study for other projects?
- Is there a previous working relationship between this group and GSA and the team leader? Is this a first-time meeting or a follow-up?
- What are the local impacts of the project? Consider the impact on urban design, job creation, transportation, growth, revitalization, and other local issues.
- Has there been any previous community involvement? What will be planned?

Outline Existing Data

The Feasibility Study scope should list completed studies and supporting data, as well as analyses and studies to be conducted. Confusion on these issues affects the cost, schedule, and success of the project.

Acknowledge and Understand Outside Stakeholders' Interests

Understanding stakeholders' interests results in a higher quality project, delivered on time and under budget. For renovation projects, stakeholders often focus on impact to historic resources, need to relocate valued public service agencies, or opportunities to enhance public spaces. Consider the project's potential to advance local plans (e.g., streetscape improvements, additional employment).

Stakeholders sharing GSA's goals may be able to contribute additional resources to resolve GSA, customer agency, or local community concerns. Early and open conversation with relevant stakeholders is the best way to develop shared goals and an effective solution.

- Review the Work Plan, especially the meetings, presentations, or reviews that the customer agency staff should attend. The professional services firm contractor also should attend these meetings.
- Review and discuss the Communications Plan with the customer agency and the Feasibility Study team to finalize the strategy for publicity, press releases, and other communications activities. If the Feasibility Study team does not have a Communications Specialist, then designate someone who will issue information and address inquiries and potential problems. Review schedules for internal and external communications milestones.

Keep minutes or other reports for all meetings and phone calls.

- Coordinate all contact with local authorities through the appropriate GSA Regional staff.
- Communicate regularly with the Regional Administrator.
- Identify either the team leader or the Project Manager as the control point to approve all communications.

Determine whether meetings are required with other key stakeholders.

- Consider meeting with the GSA Central Office or the congressional delegation to discuss project goals (use Exhibit 4.6: Sample Agenda).

Consider meetings with representatives of local government.

- Determine whether representatives of civic organizations, including fine arts commissions, fire marshals, planning commissions, and local/urban design review boards, should be consulted on development issues. Explore the potential to leverage federal and local development efforts and to fine-tune the evaluation factors to support the project's requirements and the local community's needs.

Consult those involved in the NHPA Section 106 and NEPA processes.

- Contact the state environmental agency, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and other relevant agencies.

Outcomes

- Close coordination with customer agency
- Support for communications efforts, leading to an effective working relationship among all project stakeholders

Duration

This task typically takes fifteen (15) weeks. Factor impacting duration:

- Number of meetings, based on the agencies and groups of the local area and their shared purpose or competing nature

3.2 Establish Project Goals and Requirements

Responding to customer needs and addressing building deficiencies are the key forces that drive Feasibility Studies. Meeting with the customer agency; reviewing their requirements; and developing financial criteria are important steps.

The project requirements include the following five items:

1. Location
2. Site
3. Housing Plans
4. Schedule
5. Business Needs

Recommended Activities

Determine the customer agency's requirements.

- Identify key drivers for change in the customer agency's business and operations; identify how the project location and the workplace environment should support the agency's business goals and effectiveness.
- Discuss what works well currently and what is needed for future operations.
- Review the agency's space standards, population (head count) projections, technology specifications, and security requirements, as well as any special requirements.

Border Highways

Significant changes to border stations usually require extensive road or highway work. Without the required road investments, the projects are not viable. Be sure to coordinate project planning with State and Federal Highway Officials. Clearly document the required coordination and commitments in the Feasibility Study and the PDS. Contact the Border Station Center for more guidance (see "Appendix G").

Discuss customer agency's location preferences.

- Assess the following factors:
  - Interaction with the public.
  - Security requirements.
  - Interaction with other federal, state, or local agencies.
  - Access to transportation, including highways, mass and public transportation, parking; and availability of amenities and services, such as retail, business services, and child care, among others.

Review opportunities to support local planning initiatives.

- Consider the location and development of the project, the development of the site, and other facilities.

Identify the site requirements for new buildings.

- Include the following factors:
  - Visibility of the site and the image of the facility.
  - Number of access points from local streets.
  - Character of entry.
  - Capacity for surface and/or structured parking.
  - Security setbacks.
  - Provision of public open space, such as plazas and parks.
  - Unique foundation requirements.
  - On-site loading and materials handling.
  - Minimum site area.
- Refer to *The Site Selection Guide* for more detail on site requirements.

For R&A projects, prepare the following analyses:

- Summarize the building type and characteristics, including construction types, special features, and overall size.
- Identify recommended improvements to mechanical systems and building envelope; perform security and risk assessment; identify hazardous materials; evaluate life safety systems; review compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, historic preservation requirements, and green building requirements; assess interior renovations and life-cycle cost considerations.
- Develop interior planning concepts and sketches, as needed, to assess capacity.

Develop housing plans.

- Determine appropriate types and quantities of work space (offices and open-plan areas) and support space (meeting and conference rooms; lobbies; filing; local area network, or LAN, closets); and special space (libraries, cafeteria, command centers).
- Assess the head count and growth functions. Discuss any significant future changes to the customer agency's size and operation that can impact the housing plan.
- Review the planning horizons and timeline with the customer agency to assess their impact on the customer agency's requirements and future operation.

Develop a list of project goals.

- Define the criteria for a successful alternative. These goals and criteria form the basis for creating and evaluating the alternatives.

Setting the Level of Tenant Improvements

Interior designers and space planners play important roles in assisting the customer agency to develop their desired level of TI investment early in the project.

Outcomes

- Drivers identified for customer requirements and project goals
- Comprehensive list of goals and criteria for customer agency requirements, site requirements, and asset recommendations
- Review of project's potential to benefit local plans

Duration

This task typically takes four (4) weeks.

3.3 Define Alternatives

After identifying the project's goals and assessing the customer agency's needs and the asset's requirements, the Feasibility Study defines a number of alternatives that may satisfy these goals. Alternatives include alteration, new construction, lease, purchase, build-to-suit lease, disposal, outlease (including Section 111 historic outlease), status quo, and combinations thereof. The status quo alternative helps to define the urgency of the project, but it also may identify a realistic fallback position (in whole or in part).

Alternatives should be identified broadly and creatively and then narrowed down as the analysis progresses. The customer agency, project team, and the Feasibility Study contractor should all participate in the development of alternatives.

Alternatives Workshop

A workshop is a fast and effective way to generate and evaluate alternatives. All of the participants (GSA, customer agency, and contractors) provide input in the following agenda activities:

- Confirm existing conditions, project goals, and evaluation criteria.
- Generate creative potential alternatives.
- Define and use the evaluation criteria to review all alternatives.
- Select viable alternatives for further study.

Recommended Activities

List the project requirements and illustrate them with plans, sections, or diagrams.

- Develop and illustrate a few standard alternatives for the team's review. Consider, for example, renovation and reuse of existing buildings, new construction, disposal, and a combination of these options.

Review the conclusions reached in Step 3.2.

- Include all participants in the Feasibility Study to ensure complete agreement about customer agency needs, asset requirements, the housing plan, strategies for local coordination, and other project goals.
- Be sure that the goals and criteria are clear.

Brainstorm additional alternatives.

- Hold a meeting or workshop to develop alternatives creatively.
- Generate a number of alternatives; use the project goals and criteria to identify those viable alternatives worthy of additional study. The process should allow for additional alternatives to be considered as the analysis proceeds into greater detail. Consider inviting a few local stakeholders to participate if appropriate for the project.
- Describe the potential locations that meet the project's goals, GSA's Location Policy, applicable Executive Orders, and so forth. This is an important step for several reasons.

Outcome

- A range of alternatives for further investigation

Duration

This task typically takes two (2) weeks.

3.4 Evaluate Viable Alternatives

The Feasibility Study should discuss all of the developed alternatives, including viable ones and others that were rejected early in the process. Strong consideration should be given to existing GSA-controlled assets, their ability to meet customer agency needs, and each alternative's impact on GSA's portfolio performance.

Project and technical requirements analyses determine each alternative's ability to meet customer agency needs, address technical factors for each alternative, and develop cost estimates.

After developing cost estimates, the team must perform a financial analysis for each alternative. In general, GSA's financial analysis requires a pro forma and a 30-year present value analysis for each alternative (e.g., The Automated Prospectus System, or TAPS, analysis) and an Asset Business Plan (ABP) for each affected GSA property. The *Planning Call* outlines the specific analyses needed to satisfy the Capital Program.

Meaningful analysis requires sound inputs. For various projects, these may include market appraisals of GSA assets, agency rent computations, defined TIs, and market surveys of appropriate sites and acquisition costs. Generally, the Feasibility Study contractor (or GSA staff, with the assistance of appropriate professionals) should develop the cost inputs for each alternative.

Recommended Activities

Analyze project and technical requirements.

- Define Scope of Customer Needs:
  Compare each alternative's ability to meet customer needs. These requirements may be defined in U.S. Courts' Any Court model, Local Portfolio Plans (LPPs), *Border Wizard* simulation model, or a macro-level program of requirements.
- Describe Tenant's Move/Lease Actions:
  Provide an analysis of project-related move costs and impacts on the customer agency's operation as a result of the temporary relocation of tenants, leasing of swing space, phased moves within a building, and final move-ins.
- Assess Site Issues:
  Analyze both new construction and renovation alternatives. Consider the impact that siting would have on the project. Considerations include customer needs, local market conditions, and community impacts, as well as compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), GSA's Location Policy (such as E.O. 12072 and E.O. 13006), and other regulations. For a new construction project, refer to the *Site Selection Guide*. Remember that the selection of the delineated area impacts the following factors:
  - The potential relationship of the project to the local community.
  - The potential to support other local and federal planning initiatives.
  - The cost of site acquisition.
  - The cost of construction, based on the site's characteristics.

Knowledge of Existing Conditions

The Feasibility Study uses knowledge of existing conditions to frame future requirements and budgets. The size and shape of the windows, presence of radiators, location of stand-pipes and potential location of the dropped ceiling reflect a working knowledge of current conditions and inform the assumptions used to develop cost estimates in the Feasibility Study.

Sharing Information

Be ready to provide copies of reports, information, and customer agency contacts to your contractor.

Calexico, CA Stakeholders' Discussions

External stakeholders play critical roles on the Feasibility Study team.

GSA invited city and Imperial County officials, Caltrans, Cal/EPA, and their Mexican counterparts to study upgrades for the border facilities at Calexico. The stakeholders shared land use and infrastructure plans, aerial photos, and key data and helped shape and review alternatives. As a result, the viable alternative was identified, two southbound lanes were created to eliminate a 2-mile backup that had paralyzed Calexico's main street, and strong support of local officials was gained.

In this project, the external stakeholders' significant resources and longer budget cycles enhanced their value as Feasibility Study team members.

For expansion of an existing site, establish the capacity of undeveloped portions of the property within the existing zoning codes and the infrastructure's capacity. Consider the potential to acquire additional adjacent land.

- Examine Capital Costs:
  Prepare cost estimates to provide a basis for review and approval by GSA officials. Benchmark or parametric-level cost analyzes (using gross-square-foot costs) may be used as follows:
  - New Construction
    GSA's *General Construction Cost Review Guide (GCCRG)* provides data and calculation procedures to establish Feasibility Study phase cost estimates. Identify unique project/site conditions and related costs. For courthouse and border station construction, there are project-specific construction benchmarks and models to develop construction costs.
  - Cost Benchmark
    Where alteration estimates are not appropriate, the Feasibility Study should cite cost-per-square-foot estimates (UNIFORMAT II, Level 3) or other reliable estimates based on prior studies (e.g., BERs, seismic, hazardous material studies).
  - Leasing
    These projects may require market rent appraisals and lease scoring analysis for swing space leases and lease alternatives.
  - Capital Cost Breakdown for Costs Amortized in Rent
    Shell, TI, and security costs (as defined in the GSA *Pricing Desk Guide*) must be separated to allow for rent structuring of project alternatives. To determine the TI allowance, the Feasibility Study team can use the agency's general and customization allowance or benchmarks (if available), or obtain a cost estimate for functional space. Estimates are also required for joint-use space to complete the project's budget. Non-market comparables (costs such as security and raised floors that are amortized in the rent) should be denoted separately from TI costs.
- Evaluate Life-Cycle Cost:
  Evaluate each alternative based on its total life-cycle costs, including the comparative costs associated with the original construction/alteration, ownership, maintenance, and disposal. An alternative is the most cost-effective if it has the lowest life-cycle costs, expressed in net present value terms.

- Develop Project Delivery Schedule:
  Evaluate each viable alternative and include a project delivery schedule that shows critical events and milestones from the time of the GSA budget authorization/appropriation to tenant occupancy and their likely impact on on-time delivery. Environmental compliance actions, site acquisitions, swing space requirements, and lease terminations/relocations are examples of critical events that must be clearly identified as milestones on the schedule.

Conduct the financial analysis required of the Capital Program.

- Include analyses of the alternative's impact on regional performance measurements, targets, and strategic goals within the financial analysis. GSA staff should use the *Planning Call* to define the financial analysis requirements. In recent Capital Programs, the *Planning Call* has required the following tools:
  - Pro Forma
    This real property financial modeling tool analyzes a single facility. It provides a quantitative study of proposed capital investment requirements, investment decision-making, and income/expense information for new construction and R&A proposals.
  - Multi-Asset Portfolio Planning (MAPP) Model (optional)
    Although no longer required by the latest *Planning Call*, the MAPP modeling tool performs analyses similar to the pro forma for multiple buildings or leases.
  - The Automated Prospectus System (TAPS)
    TAPS is a present value cost model developed for GSA to meet the requirements of OMB Circular No. A-94. TAPS provides an analysis of lease, new construction, or R&A alternatives, based on the comparison of their 30-year net present value.
  - The Local Portfolio Plan (LPP)
    The LPP is GSA's tool to provide a planning context for GSA assets at a community-wide or market level.
  - The Asset Business Plan (ABP)
    The ABP is GSA's Web-based asset management tool. It provides building-level income/expense history and projections, planned investment, and long-term holding plans for the building.

Evaluating Alternatives

Each alternative should be evaluated on its ability to meet the following:

- The project requirements in terms of the customer's needs, and the facility's and portfolio's requirements.
- The technical requirements, including key GSA program goals (e.g., sustainability, historic preservation, urban design).
- Financial performance.

Outcome

- Financial and technical analyses of each viable alternative under evaluation

Duration

This task typically takes four (4) weeks.

3.5 Identify and Develop the Preferred Alternative

The preferred alternative is the best alternative to meet the objectives of the customer agency, asset, and portfolio. Based on the evaluation of the alternatives, the Feasibility Study should include a written summary that concisely documents the decisions, explains the findings, and provides justification for proceeding with the preferred alternative as part of GSA's Capital Program.

The description of the analysis should address the following issues and describe its advantages, compared to competing alternatives.

Recommended Activities

Discuss the preferred alternative.

- Describe Customer Need:
  Identify the customer's business goals and real estate impact, demand/customer plan, LPP, and physical asset requirements.
- List Project Objectives, Portfolio Goals, and GSA Program Goals:
  Identify those project objectives that relate to the overall portfolio and project goals, as well as to GSA's broad mission program goals. Include project requirements developed in response to federal law (e.g., NEPA, NHPA Section 106), GSA legacy programs (e.g., Design Excellence, Green Buildings), and other technical requirements.
- Define Design Issues:
  Identify design constraints and unique requirements, including site issues.
- Determine Schedule:
  Identify schedule constraints and risk assessment for project delivery.
- Resolve Funding Sources and Budget Schedule:
  Identify funding sources (e.g., Budget Activity; TI costs, Reimbursable Work Authorization, donations, other sources) and budget schedule for project delivery.

- Identify Decision Criteria and Documentation:
  Establish capital cost, financial cost, advantages and disadvantages, and other decision criteria used for comparison. Compare each alternative to illustrate how the best alternative was identified. Provide a short narrative discussion on the deciding factors.
- Develop Procurement Method:
  Identify the procurement method that can successfully deliver the proposed project.
- Determine Performance Measurement:
  Identify how the proposed project impacts the performance measurements.
- Provide Customer Assignment Drawings:
  Recommend production of relevant blocking and stacking diagrams.

Outcome

- Written analysis of the preferred alternative

Duration

This task typically takes four (4) weeks.

3.6 Prepare the Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan outlines how the project can best be procured (e.g., design-bid-build, design/build) and, for new construction alternatives, the area in which it will be located and how the site will be acquired. The Feasibility Study recommends a procurement method based on the complexity, risks, and potential cost savings presented by the preferred alternative. The procurement method has a significant impact on the schedule and location proposed in the Prospectus.

Recommended Activities

Delineate areas for site selection (for new construction) and lease acquisitions.

- Realize that the eventual site selection must conform to the location cited in the Prospectus.
- See *The Site Selection Guide* for detailed information about establishing delineated areas. The *Planning Call* and the Office of Real Property Asset Management can also provide assistance.

Is Everybody On Board?

Be sure to allow adequate time to meet with the customer agency to review the preferred alternative, collect comments, and receive confirmation that the Feasibility Study recommendation is correct from the customer's point of view. Anticipate how much time it will take the customer to schedule meetings and complete reviews. Some agencies need more lead time than others to finish this task.

Funding Cycles

When developing the project schedule, recognize both the limitations of the funding cycle and when funds become available. For example, schedules with fourth quarter (4Q) awards or first quarter (1Q) funding may be problematic.

Help With Site Selection

GSA's *Site Selection Guide* (2003) offers detailed assistance with site selection. Although it concentrates on the later stages of site investigation, evaluation, and selection, it is an excellent resource to shape site consideration during the Feasibility Study. It is available from the OCA.

Greenville, SC

The Feasibility Study has the key role in defining the site acquisition request figure. But it can be tough to get the right figure since it is a calculation based on future assumptions. Markets and the availability of suitable sites can change over time. Successfully predicting acquisition costs relies on assessing specific sites, assembly costs, market demand, and availability.

The Feasibility Study team for a new courthouse in Greenville incorporated these factors into their scope of work, and a qualified real estate consultant calculated reliable acquisition costs. Local officials also participated in the initial feasibility discussions and will be involved during site selection. The region will apply both techniques in all future Feasibility Studies that propose site acquisition.

Review project delivery options.

- Determine whether the implementation of the project requires a specific type of delivery:
  The recommendation at this time restricts all future options to those defined in the Site/Design Prospectus (e.g., whether the project is going to be design/build or traditional design-bid-build).

Develop strategies for project phasing.

- Include any necessary swing space for interim tenant moves during renovation or consolidation projects.

Consider the best Design Excellence approach for hiring a designer.

- Determine whether the project would benefit from a two-stage or three-stage (design competition) process. The project team will have some flexibility to make this decision later, but the Feasibility Study should provide background, guidance, and a sufficient budget for the desired alternative.

Develop the project delivery schedule.

Complete draft OAs with move-in schedules.

Outcome

- Completed Implementation Plan for Capital Program submission

Duration

This task typically takes one (1) week.

3.7 Produce the Budget

The Feasibility Study should include accurate budgets for design, site acquisition, and construction.

Cost estimates must conform to the standards dictated by the *Planning Call*. Although a significant portion of this effort is conducted during the analysis of alternatives, this step is the final effort to refine or confirm those estimates.

The estimates for site and design costs are most crucial because they directly support the Site/Design Prospectus. Ideally, the costs presented in the Feasibility Study must forecast and align with the Construction Prospectus cost estimate, which is typically presented two years later and based on more detailed construction costs.

Recommended Activities

Refine design costs.

- Use applicable tables and consider whether the design costs should be adjusted for unusual complexity, design competition, unforeseen conditions, or other factors that may increase the design effort (e.g., complex or controversial NEPA processes).

Refine site acquisition costs.

- Use professional appraisal estimates based on representative (e.g., buildable) sites, rather than on unsuitable market comparisons.
- Include estimates for demolition, decontamination, soil conditions, and tenant and utility relocations.
- Ensure that the site acquisition request enables the purchase of a suitable site in the planned year of purchase.

Estimate construction costs.

- Ensure that construction cost estimates conform to *Planning Call* standards. Consider site-specific conditions that may affect costs, such as seismic zone, soil conditions, hardening requirements based on an achievable setback, landscape area, invasive testing, multiple phases, working in occupied buildings, and after-hours work, among other factors.
- Use Cost Benchmark estimates for new courthouse construction projects.

Complete draft OAs, based on project budgets for the preferred alternative.

Outcome

- Realistic, thorough project cost estimates

Duration

This task typically takes one (1) week.

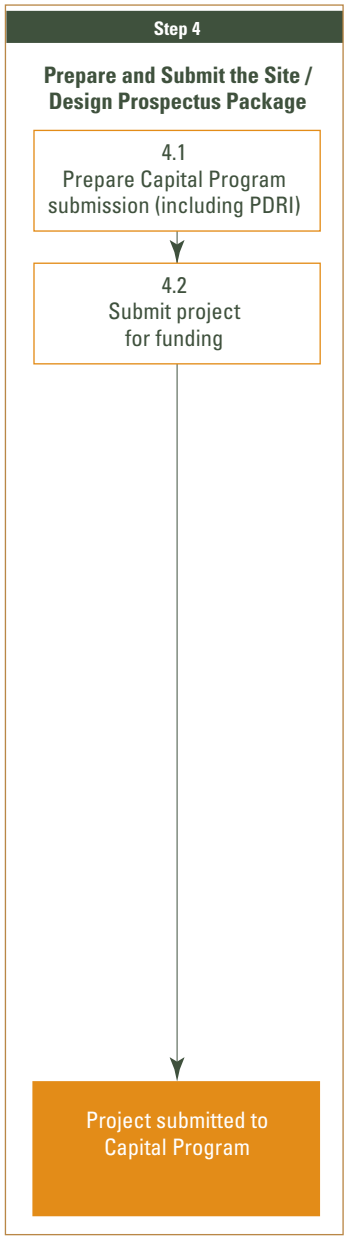
Review Budget Items Carefully

Since workplace performance and customer involvement and satisfaction are high priorities, the budget should include fees for requirements development, space planning, and design development for the tenant spaces. Ensure that the budget can cover these important aspects of the project.

Be Sure to Include These Costs in the Budget

- R&A
- Phasing
- Swing space
- Occupied space
- Night/weekend work
- Tenant relocation

Step 4: Prepare and Submit the Site/Design Prospectus Package



While the Feasibility Study is the key source of information for finalizing the Capital Program submission, the final product is a Prospectus funding proposal. Therefore, the Feasibility Study team must stay engaged until the Prospectus is completed. The package is generally prepared and assembled by the regional Office of Real Property Asset Management. It includes the Prospectus, the economic analyses, and final housing plans.

The *Planning Call* directs the requirements of the submission. As discussed earlier, it is important to anticipate and incorporate these requirements into the scope of work and throughout the process. They cannot be "tacked on" at the end of the process. Feasibility Study team members may share the effort and prepare specific parts of the funding package, based on the requirements of the *Planning Call*. These often include an Environmental Checklist, the Project Management Plan, and Occupancy Agreements, among other items.

The time to prepare the Capital Program submission always seems far too short. Plan a reasonable time frame with the staff in the Office of Real Property Asset Management who coordinate the development of the submission package, to ensure that there is adequate time to prepare an effective submission.

Recommended Activities

4.1 *Prepare Capital Program submission (including PDRI)*
Meet the specific requirements of the current *Planning Call*.

4.2 *Submit project for funding*
Complete the submission and deliver the Prospectus package to the regional Office of Real Property Asset Management.

Outcome

- Completed and submitted Prospectus (with sound project strategy and cost estimates)

Duration

This task typically takes three (3) weeks.

4.1 Prepare Capital Program Submission (including PDRI)

The *Planning Call* issued by the Office of Real Property Asset Management provides the detailed requirements for the program submission. Each year the *Planning Call* varies slightly, in response to current concerns and requirements. Know the core components of the *Planning Call,* as well as requirements that have been changed or added.

Recommended Activities

Check with the Office of Real Property Asset Management.

- Confirm the *Planning Call* requirements and the various due dates.

Conduct a Project Development Rating Index (PDRI).

- Assess the project's strengths and weaknesses.

Complete the submittal package.

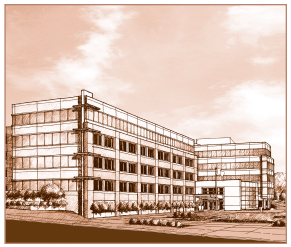
- Work with Feasibility Study team members to fine-tune the Site/Design Prospectus funding proposal. Allow sufficient time to review the document and ensure that it is complete, well written, and well organized.

Outcomes

- An understanding of the requirements of the current *Planning Call*
- A fine-tuned submittal

Duration

This task typically takes three (3) weeks.



Parkersburg, WV

When the Bureau of Public Debt (BPD) asked for help with a major new lease, the project team knew they needed to work quickly. In just six weeks, working with a term A/E, the team assessed BPD's eight current locations, developed an efficient strategy for phased moves, and worked with city officials and the local historic commission to evaluate alternatives. All existing buildable and developable sites were considered. The team proceeded with a build-to-suit construction, awarded via a design competition.

This quick and thorough approach to planning can make all the difference to the client and the community.

4.2 Submit Project for Funding

Once the project submission has been completed, it is prioritized within the Region and then included in the Regional Office's Capital Investment and Leasing Program (CILP) request to GSA in Washington, DC.

Recommended Activities

Submit the Site/Design Prospectus funding proposal. Revise if requested.

- Ensure that the Feasibility Study team leader works with the regional Office of Real Property Asset Management to respond to any requests for revision or clarification. The team leader coordinates this work with appropriate Feasibility Study team members and expedites the responses.

Outcome

- Completed and submitted Site/Design Prospectus package

Duration

This task typically takes one (1) day.