

Selecting a consulting engineer is one of the most important project decisions a client makes. **Consulting Engineers Nova Scotia (CENS)** suggest clients consider the life-cycle cost of a project including design, construction, operations and maintenance costs, as well as the reliability and the durability of the end product.

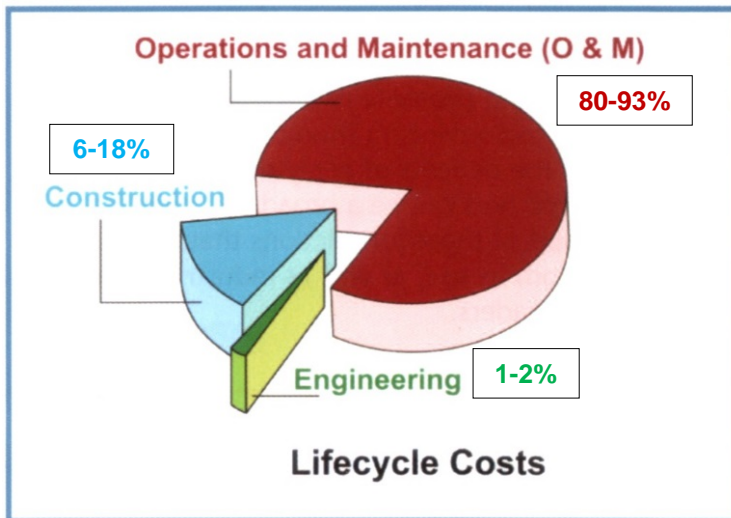


Figure 1: Typical breakdown of project life cycle costs

Figure 1 shows the total relative costs for design, construction and operations and maintenance over the life-cycle of the project. The Engineering design component, while only in the range of **1 to 2% of total costs**, has a significant impact on both construction costs and operations and maintenance costs, as well as the overall reliability of the project itself.

Although the engineering design costs are minimal compared to the overall cost of a project, it must be noted the real additional engineering cost to the client for choosing the “best design” is the difference between it and the lowest price, in effect, **a fraction of 1%**.

There are additional “best value” business reasons for the client when selecting the “best design”, for example:

- Extensive studies have shown that selecting “low price” design results in approximately **10% extras** on the project, whereas selection of the best technical solution results in extra costs of **less than 5%**.
- Clients have experienced **less staff monitoring** of the project is required when the best engineering design is selected.
- **Productivity** by both the client and engineering staffs is enhanced.
- Best design will result in a **better quality product** for the end user and lower life cycle cost of a project.
- Best design provides more opportunity for **innovation and creativity**.

CENS has created a document entitled **“Guidelines for Procuring Consulting Engineering Services in Nova Scotia”**. This Guideline, prepared by CENS and endorsed by Engineers Nova Scotia, is intended to assist our clients in getting **“best value”** for their financial investments when procuring engineering design services.