



CITY OF SALINAS COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: FEBRUARY 20, 2024

DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS

FROM: DAVID JACOBS, DIRECTOR

BY: HEIDI NIGGEMEYER, NPDES PROGRAM MANAGER

TITLE: PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF SALINAS AND CRAFTWATER ENGINEERING INC FOR COMPLETION OF THE “GREEN CITY” MASTER PLAN

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

A motion to approve a Resolution authorizing the Interim City Manager to execute a Professional Services Agreement with Craftwater Engineering, Inc. for the completion of the “Green City” Master Plan in an amount not to exceed \$487,359.20 .

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Per the City’s NPDES Permit, we are required to reduce pollutant loading and stormwater runoff volumes to our local waterways. This can be accomplished through the installation of Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI). On May 6, 2022, an RFP was released to support the development of a “Green City” Master Plan for Salinas. After a review of submittals received, Craftwater Engineering, Inc. was selected to complete this plan. A Professional Services Agreement (PSA) for \$600,000 was successfully negotiated and work began on this plan. However, the PSA expired in August 2023; a new PSA for the work remaining needs to be instituted. Therefore, it is recommended that the City Council approve a resolution approving a Professional Services Agreement in an amount not to exceed \$487,359.20 between the City of Salinas and Craftwater Engineering, Inc. for completion of the “Green City” Master Plan.

BACKGROUND:

Urban stormwater runoff is a significant and growing problem that impacts numerous communities through the U.S., including the City of Salinas and other California Central Coast cities. Urban pollutant runoff has been identified as the fastest growing source of degradation to urban water resources due to continued urban development with limited incorporation of effective low impact development features. As a result, the EPA has imposed regulatory mandates across the country requiring cities including Salinas to reduce pollutants entering into waterways by implementing practices to mitigate stormwater runoff. The impact of the urban landscape on local waterways can be greatly reduced through more resilient urban lands management practices. Effective programs that reduce urban stormwater volumes and improve the quality of this runoff integrate

source control, ground control, and stormwater treatment practices; collectively referred to as green stormwater infrastructure (GSI).

Small amounts of rain throughout a watershed incrementally add up to large volumes of runoff downstream. Similarly, small changes to stormwater runoff treatment in a watershed can cumulatively result in significant improvements to overall watershed health. The lack of proper stormwater runoff management and treatment negatively affects public health/safety, economic stability/vitality, and the quality of life for urban dwellers, not to mention the environmental quality of local waterways. Effective and intensive GSI implementation not only helps to address the impacts associated with excessive stormwater runoff, but also provides a strong overall investment value through the generation of significant social and economic benefits for the community.

GSI “greens and cleans” the urban landscape, providing many social improvements (e.g. neighborhood shading, enhanced community well-being, reduction in crime), public health benefits, reduces energy demand and other benefits that can revitalize communities, reducing blight and increasing neighborhood stewardship. While GSI practices are effective at addressing issues related to stormwater runoff, the scale of implementation for GSI targeting existing impervious areas for retrofit (rather than incorporation into new development) has been extremely limited and the pace of implementation has been relatively slow.

To identify GSI retrofit opportunities throughout the City, the City is retaining an engineering services firm to support compliance with the pollutant load and runoff volume reduction requirements in our Phase 1 NPDES permit through the development of a “Green City” Master Plan. To accelerate progress toward permit compliance and articulate the linkage between the City’s financial investment with its stormwater program and the multitude of community benefits, the City took a strategic step to develop a green street conceptual design for the area around Closter Park to serve as the showcase first implementation of a “green street” in Salinas. The example attached to this report is just a concept design and is still being vetted throughout the Community at public events. This concept design was used to apply for a Proposition 68 Urban Greening grant.

While this concept will provide a tangibles example of a multi-faceted environmental and community return from green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) projects, the potential Citywide opportunities and benefits can only be demonstrated through a thoughtful, systematic master plan that emphasizes “complete streets and communities” elements for stormwater management, active transportation, pedestrian safety, and climate resiliency. To maximize Citywide benefits and influence, the plan will integrate across City-owned properties and rights-of-way by defining multi-benefit alternative stormwater compliance pathways that can be co-leveraged by the City, property owners, and developers. **The project is federally funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).**

The “Green City” Master Plan includes the following tasks:

- Expanding the GSI planning and prioritization process Citywide to build a comprehensive library of multi-benefit stormwater capture projects and green complete street opportunities, including implementation timelines
- Creating conceptual designs of top tier projects to ensure implementation readiness and better position for funding and partnerships
- Developing an offsite alternative compliance program (i.e. stormwater credit program) to further accelerate surface water quality improvement and GSI implementation by leveraging partnerships with local developers and property owners
- Building a programmatic framework for the “Green City” master plan implementation in consideration of other departments’ capital improvement projects, with emphasis on developing complete streets, and
- Developing and updating our stormwater standard plans for stormwater capture projects for rapid implementation and consistency in maintenance.

The outcome of this plan will provide a clear framework and all necessary tools for the City to stand up, implement, administer, and track the “Green City” master plan results. The concept designs produced can be utilized to obtain grant funding for GSI within the City. Results will further advance ongoing City efforts to improve water quality, address climate resiliency, and better the lives and health of the Salinas community.

A request for proposals (RFP) for interested engineering consulting firms was advertised on May 6th, 2022, on “PlanetBids” website and in the “Salinas Californian” for the preparation of a “Green City” Master Plan as described above. Submittals were received from two firms. The firms submitting qualification/proposal statements were:

- Craftwater Engineering, Inc.
- Sherwood Design Engineers

The submittals were reviewed based on the following selection criteria listed in the RFP document:

1. Understanding of scope of work to be done.
2. Experience with similar work.
3. Quality of staff for work to be done.
4. Demonstrated technical ability.
5. Familiarity with Salinas and our Phase 1 NPDES permit requirements

Based on these criteria, the review panel comprised of four review panel members selected Craftwater Engineering Inc. as the top firm. A Professional Services Agreement was initially executed in August 2022 and approved by Council on August 23, 2022. However, that contract has expired, and a new contract needs to be executed for completion of the “Green City” Master Plan with the funds remaining from the original contract.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

Not a Project. The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378).

In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 includes the general rule that CEQA applies only to activities which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment.

Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Because the proposed action and this matter have no potential to cause any effect on the environment, or because it falls within a category of activities excluded as projects pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378, this matter is not a project. Because the matter does not cause a direct or foreseeable indirect physical change on or in the environment, this matter is not a project. Any subsequent discretionary projects resulting from this action will be assessed for CEQA applicability.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

The proposed project and agreement meet the City Council's Strategic Plan Initiative of Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability.

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

This project will rely on coordination between the Development Engineering, Traffic, CIP Engineering and NPDES divisions in Public Works. The NPDES Division will coordinate the overall execution of the "Green City" Master Plan, with Development Engineering, CIP Engineering and Traffic providing valuable input to the master plan from an engineering and development perspective.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

Funding is available and appropriated in 3911.50.8192 – ARPA funding for Stormwater Green Infrastructure Program.

ATTACHMENTS:

Green City Master Plan PSA Feb 2024 thru Feb 2025
Resolution for GSI Master Plan PSA
Green City Master Plan Agreement
Closter Park Green Streets Example