



AGENDA REPORT

TO: Edward D. Reiskin
City Administrator

FROM: David Ferguson
Director, Public Works

SUBJECT: Reallocate Funds For Urban Forest
Master Plan Community Engagement

DATE: February 17, 2021

City Administrator Approval 

Date: Mar 4, 2021

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution Authorizing The City Administrator Or Designee To (1) Increase The Contract For The Citywide Street And Urban Park Tree Inventory And Oakland's Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP) With Davey Resource Group, Inc. (DRG) In The Amount of Forty-Six Thousand (\$46,000), From Six Hundred And Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$625,000) To A Grand Total Amount of Six Hundred And Seventy-One Thousand Dollars (\$671,000) So That DRG May Subcontract With Local Community Organizations That Will Provide Equitable Community Engagement Process Support Services, And (2) Waive The Request For Proposals/Qualifications Requirement.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP) is funded by the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) through a grant from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire). The grant agreement requires the project to be completed by March 30, 2022. The selected contractor for this project, Davey Resource Group, Inc. (DRG), has developed a project timeline that ensures this project finishes before Cal Fire's deadline, and has already begun framing an equitable outreach process that engages with local community groups in under-represented communities throughout Oakland. The reallocation of the \$46,000 to DRG's contract will allow them to provide financial support to these local community groups that otherwise may not be able to participate in the UFMP equitable community engagement process due to funding constraints.

Adopting the proposed resolution will increase DRG's current contract to \$671,000 so that they can pass the additional \$46,000 in grant funding directly to local community groups for their assistance in reaching under-represented communities throughout Oakland. This proposed resolution intends to use the available \$46,000 in grant funds for their intended purpose: to provide a financial investment in the community to encourage engagement with under-represented Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community members in developing the fifty-year UFMP. If the \$46,000 is not reallocated, then these grant funds will go unused. The grant agreement with Cal Fire requests that all grant funding provided to the City by the State is used to complete the overall project. Providing the \$46,000 to DRG to pass it

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through to local community groups will allow these funds to be invested into the Oakland community as originally intended.

Staff requests the City Council to reallocate the \$46,000 to DRG because these funds were initially allocated to another community group that has since declined to contract with the City. In 2018, the City Council passed a resolution to 1) accept the grant, 2) authorize the City Administrator to accept and award a contract for a citywide street and urban park tree inventory and the creation of a fifty-year UFMP in an amount of \$625,000, and 3) waive the advertising and competitive request for proposal/qualification requirements and award \$46,000 of the grant funds to the Oakland Climate Action Coalition (OCAC) to conduct community outreach for the UFMP process.

OCAC declined to enter into a contract with the City of Oakland to conduct community outreach for the UFMP process. DRG, the firm awarded the contract of \$625,000 through a competitive Request for Proposal process, will replace OCAC and conduct an equity-focused community outreach process in coordination with the Department of Race & Equity and an urban forest equity expert subcontracted by DRG. They will perform this work using funds within their original \$625,000 budget.

In order to maintain the original intention that the \$46,000 of grant funding is invested into the community, we request that the City Council reallocate these funds to DRG by increasing their contract from \$625,000 to \$671,000 to pass these \$46,000 in grant funds through to local community groups in each Council District to assist in reaching under-represented communities. Following the model of community outreach performed for the Equitable Climate Action Plan (ECAP), Public Works has engaged with the Department of Race & Equity and others to identify appropriate local community groups that can assist in engaging under-represented BIPOC members of the Oakland community to contribute to the development of the UFMP.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

In September 2018, the City Council passed Resolution No. 87388 C.M.S. to accept and appropriate nine hundred seventy thousand, one hundred thirty dollars and eight cents (\$970,130.08) from Cal Fire's Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program, as provided through the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, for completion of a citywide street and urban park tree inventory, development of Oakland's UFMP, and the planting of seven hundred (700) trees in disadvantaged and low-income communities identified by the California Office of Health Hazard Assessment's CalEnviroScreen 3.0.

As part of this resolution, the City Council also 1) waived the advertising and the competitive request for proposal/qualification selection requirements for related community engagement services and awarded a contract to directly to OCAC in the amount of \$46,000 in grant funding; and 2) authorized the City Administrator to accept and award a contract for citywide street and urban park tree inventory and Oakland's UFMP in an amount of \$625,000 to the successful proposer after conducting a competitive request for proposal without returning to Council. OCAC supported the City's grant proposal and the passing of this resolution. Upon preparing a scope of work for their leading the community engagement process, OCAC declined to move forward and enter into contract with the City of Oakland for this project.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

City Council previously approved waiving the competitive process and awarding \$46,000 to the OCAC to lead the community engagement process. OCAC has since declined to enter into contract with the City to lead the community outreach process for this project for \$46,000. DRG, the awardee of the \$625,000 contract for the tree inventory and UFMP, will replace OCAC to lead the community engagement process within the original \$625,000 contract amount. DRG has significant experience leading community engagement processes for urban forest master plans in many different cities throughout the United States. They have an experienced environmental justice professional subcontracted to work on this project, and they have vetted their proposed engagement plan with the Department of Race & Equity.

The Park & Tree Division of Oakland Public Works worked with the Department of Race & Equity to develop a Racial Equity Impact Analysis and Inclusive Engagement Plan to identify how to proceed with this project equitably. Through this process, we reviewed the Canopy and Land Cover Assessment performed by DRG, the Oakland Department of Transportation's (OakDOT) Geographic Equity Toolkit, and historic redlining maps to identify which communities in Oakland are most underserved. Unsurprisingly, underserved communities throughout Oakland also have the lower tree canopy coverage than Oakland's more affluent communities. We have also identified work completed by members of Oakland's underserved communities and the City that overlap with the efforts of our UFMP, such as but not limited to the East Oakland Neighborhood Initiative (EONI), the ECAP, and the West Oakland Reforestation Plan. We will build off the work that these communities have already put forward and engage with them to further expand their work for the UFMP. The Department of Race & Equity, Public Works, and DRG and their equity subcontractor (Dr. Christine Carmichael) are developing a preliminary plan for reaching these communities but will need to engage with local community groups to make an effective outreach plan that will reach underserved community members. The distribution of funds from the \$46,000 to these groups will provide them financial assistance for their contributions to this project.

The original \$46,000 designated to OCAC was meant to benefit a local community group to help reach underserved groups in Oakland who have been historically neglected by City policies and practices. In order to maintain that this \$46,000 of grant funding directly benefits community groups throughout Oakland, we request that the \$46,000 is added to DRG's current \$625,000 contract, for a total of \$671,000, for the purpose of passing through the entire \$46,000 to local community groups throughout Oakland that will assist in reaching underserved communities. DRG will not hold any percentage of the \$46,000 for administrative fees to pass funds to any of the local community groups; therefore, the entire \$46,000 will be invested into the community. Passing the money through DRG to the local community groups alleviates the costs and other burdens of becoming registered to do business with the City of Oakland, which is a barrier of entry for many small community groups.

We are working with City staff from the Department of Race & Equity and the Environmental Services Division of Public Works, who recently completed the Equitable Climate Action Plan (ECAP), and members of the cross-divisional Race & Equity Working Group, to identify local community groups with which to engage for the purpose of a far-reaching community outreach process.

Proceeding with DRG is the most effective path forward because they are the contractor for the rest of the project, which simplifies coordination, and they will ensure that the entire \$46,000 will go directly into the Oakland community.

WAIVER OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS/QUALIFICATIONS REQUIREMENT

To increase DRG's existing contract amount, Oakland Municipal Code ("OMC") section 2.04.051 A requires that the City conduct a competitive Request For Proposals/Qualification ("RFP/Q") process for the award of professional, technical or specialized services contracts that exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000.00) and are exempt from bidding under OMC Subsection 2.04.050.1.1.

However, OMC section 2.04.051 B allows the waiver of the RFP/Q competitive selection requirement upon the Council by resolution finds and determines that it is in the City's best interest to do so. Staff requests that the Council so find and determine that it is in the best interests of the City to waive the RFP/Q requirement because:

- (1) The City has identified several community groups throughout the City, most of which were involved with the recent Environmental Climate Action Plan (ECAP) process;
- (2) These community organizations are small and unable to meet the City's rigorous contracting requirements in order to enter into a contract directly with the City;
- (3) The City requested proposals for this project from the City's on-call community engagement contractors, and there were no responses;
- (4) DRG has done this exact process before in other cities where they have completed urban forest master plans;
- (5) The grant funding source, Cal Fire, does not prohibit contracting for community engagement services with DRG; and
- (6) The City is under a tight timeline to complete this very critical project by March 30, 2022, and needs to access the \$46,000 as soon as possible to start the community engagement process in time to meet this deadline.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of the proposed resolution will amend and increase the professional services agreement contract with DRG by forty-six thousand dollars (\$46,000) for a total contract amount not to exceed six hundred, seventy-one thousand dollars (\$671,000) for equitable community outreach services for the Cal Fire Grant -Tree Inventory & Urban Forest Master Plan project (No. 1004792). Funding for the increased professional services agreement contract is available in the following funding source:

Table 1: Project Funding Sources

FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT
State of California – Other Grant Fund (2159); Tree Services (30654); Work Order Expenditures (56611); Cal Fire Grant – Tree Inventory & Urban Forest Master Plan (1004792); Program (NB09)	\$46,000.00

There is no impact on the General Purpose Fund, and no additional funding is requested.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

Local community groups have already begun engaging with urban forestry priorities through their involvement with the ECAP, the EONI, the West Oakland Greening Initiative (WOGI), the West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project (WOEIP), and other community groups and community-driven projects. The ECAP adopted in July 2020 and the previous version adopted in 2012 contain actions relating to urban forestry, many of which were suggested by the community. The ECAP has laid the groundwork for the urban forest master plan and has established relationships with local community groups to help facilitate an equitable and fair community engagement process for this project.

COORDINATION

The Park and Tree Division of Public Works will coordinate with the Department of Race & Equity, the Environmental Services Division of Public Works, and the cross-departmental Race & Equity Working Group to identify local community groups to engage for an equitable and far-reaching community engagement process. DRG has a nationwide network and is subcontracting with urban forest equity expert Dr. Christine Carmichael of Fair Forests Consulting. DRG and the Park and Tree Division will work with the local community groups to create an equitable and far-reaching community engagement process for the urban forest master plan. DRG will distribute all of the \$46,000 added to their contract to these local groups for the work they will do to reach members of the community, focusing primarily on reaching underrepresented community members in each Council District.

PAST PERFORMANCE, EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

DRG has a proven track record of doing this exact type of community engagement in other cities across the country. They lead the engagement process and pass funds through to local community groups to reach wider audiences of residents who are not usually represented in planning efforts. DRG has engaged with the Department of Race & Equity and is subcontracting with urban forest equity expert Dr. Christine Carmichael of Fair Forests Consulting. Dr. Carmichael has worked directly with underrepresented communities in Michigan, Minnesota, Virginia, Vermont, and Washington D.C.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: Reallocating the funding to our contract with DRG ensures that the entirety of these grant funds are invested into the local Oakland community, as they were initially intended to be.

Environmental: The distribution of funding directly to local community groups to reach a broader audience of Oaklanders will give them a greater say in the formation of the urban forest master plan. They will both learn about the environmental benefits of Oakland's urban forest and have a direct say in identifying what urban forest priorities they want the City to focus on in the next fifty years. The process proposed here is in line with recommendations in the ECAP.


Race & Equity: This project aligns with the citywide goal of increasing racial equity by focusing on equitable community engagement. The Public Works Park and Tree Division and DRG have been actively engaged with the Department of Race & Equity as we formulate the community outreach plan for the UFMP. The Public Works Park and Tree Division has explicitly engaged with the Department of Race & Equity to perform a Racial Equity Analysis and Inclusive Engagement Plan for this project. We have identified underserved communities to focus outreach efforts through this process by using OakDOT's Geographic Equity Toolkit. Additionally, the Canopy and Land Cover Assessment performed by DRG, a geographic information system (GIS) based assessment of tree canopy coverage in Oakland, shows that the highest priority neighborhoods also have lower tree canopy coverage than other, more affluent areas in Oakland. The funding will allow the local community groups to have the necessary financial support to help reach underserved communities in Oakland.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution Authorizing The City Administrator Or Designee To (1) Increase The Contract For The Citywide Street And Urban Park Tree Inventory And Oakland's Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP) With Davey Resource Group, Inc. (DRG) In The Amount of Forty-Six Thousand (\$46,000), From Six Hundred And Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$625,000) To A Grand Total Amount of Six Hundred And Seventy-One Thousand Dollars (\$671,000) So That DRG May Subcontract With Local Community Organizations That Will Provide Equitable Community Engagement Process Support Services, And (2) Waive The Request For Proposals/Qualifications Requirement.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Brian Carthan, Park Services Manager, at (510) 615-5510.

Respectfully submitted,



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