



City of Emeryville

CALIFORNIA

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 6, 2022
TO: Adam Politzer, Interim City Manager
FROM: Mohamed Alaoui, Public Works Director
SUBJECT: **Proposed Scope Of Contract To Develop And Provide A Comprehensive Street Tree Audit And Roadmap To Future Expansion Of Emeryville's Street Tree Inventory. CEQA Determination: Not a "Project" under CEQA Guidelines section 15378**

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council of the City of Emeryville provide direction on the scope and elements of a proposal to perform an audit of the city's street trees and to provide reports detailing best locations, tree species, and management practices to increase canopy cover throughout the city.

BACKGROUND

At the January 18, 2022, meeting of the Emeryville City Council, in item 12.5, staff was directed to bring a plan to Council for an audit of the City's street trees and a report on opportunity sites for additional or improved tree canopy.

Staff requested proposals from four firms with experience in urban greening, and recommends the proposal submitted by PlaceWorks dated June 23, 2022, for the services described in Exhibit A, at a cost not to exceed \$54,389.

DISCUSSION

One of the Guiding Principles in the City's General Plan is "Enhanced and connected open space network and green streets," which includes a value of "many more trees along streets."¹ This value is repeated throughout the General Plan.² The benefits of urban greening through tree canopy expansion are many, and include improved air and water quality, stormwater management, carbon sequestration, and aesthetic/quality of life improvements. An increase in street trees is also associated with economic benefits such as lower crime rates³ and lower energy use and costs⁴.

The proposal includes the following outcomes and deliverables:

¹ Emeryville General Plan, Section 1.1, item 3.

² Emeryville General Plan, Section 4-1, "Green streets," Section 5-2, "Better connections;" Policies PP-P-5, UD-P-43, and UD-P-46; and Implementation Action CSN-A-1

³ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0169204612000977>

⁴ <https://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/53420>

- GIS inventory and mapping of existing street trees and tree wells (i.e. a tree “audit”)
- GIS inventory and mapping of opportunity sites for street trees, including both empty tree wells and potential additional locations
- Suitability of sites for trees
- Above-ground limitations and known below-ground limitations
- Sidewalk width and width of planting strip if present
- Driveways and other impediments to tree planting
- Identification and ranking of tree planting opportunity areas
- Tree type and soil recommendations, with input from the City Arborist
- Mapping of opportunity areas in a searchable web application, GIS shapefile, and a printed format

The proposal anticipates completion of a report and the above deliverables in seven to nine months from initiation.

The creation of this report will clearly inform future efforts to select, plant, and maintain street trees, and will be a key element for securing funding for the expansion of tree canopy throughout the city.

FISCAL IMPACT

This project is not in the current Capital Improvement Program, but it is related in outcome to an existing project, 19-EPW-113, “City Hall Bay-Friendly Landscaping.” The funds in that project can be used instead to fund this higher-priority project. There is remaining budget of \$120,284.75 in Fund 254, Account 80050 that can fully fund this proposed project.

STAFF COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC

The project was proposed at a public meeting of the City Council on January 18, 2022.

CEQA DETERMINATION

This proposal is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a “project” as defined by Section 15378 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The proposal involves preparation of a report and does not involve any construction activity or commit the City to any action that may impact the environment.

CONCLUSION

As designed, the proposed audit and report on the trees lining Emeryville’s streets will enable the City to seek opportunities for expanding the number of street trees, their canopy coverage, and their health. This data will provide key information to pursue funding opportunities for increased urban greening, leading to environmental and quality of life benefits for the community.

The scope as proposed is designed to be comprehensive but also consider costs. Additional tasks could include locating and mapping underground utilities, more extensive public engagement, inclusion of the Marina or other park areas, or other tasks as directed by Council. Staff seeks direction from Council on the proposed elements of the project and any additional tasks or deliverables desired.

PREPARED BY: Nancy Humphrey, Environmental Programs Supervisor

**APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EMERYVILLE:**

Adam Politzer, Interim City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

- Exhibit A – Proposal/Scope of Work