



Date: April 30, 2019

To: Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager
Through: W. Bowman Ferguson, Deputy City Manager
From: Rhonda B. Parker, Director, Parks and Recreation Department
Subject: Professional Services Contract with Alta Planning + Design for the City's Trail Implementation Program

Executive Summary

The Parks and Recreation Department (DPR) has selected a professional engineering firm for the City's Trail Implementation Program. The purpose of this technical and specialized project is to evaluate the construction feasibility of high priority greenway trails that are presented in the 2011 Durham Trails and Greenways Plan and based on engineering analyses, provide detailed information for feasible and constructible greenway trail alignment alternatives. The project also includes a detailed review of the entire proposed greenway trail network to identify potential gaps and any redundancy of the proposed greenway trail network. As part of this project, the professional engineering firm will provide recommendations for funding future trails and a custom-developed Manual of Design Specifications. The City will receive detailed, technical information for greenway trails that can be used during future public outreach and engagement activities and can be used to inform the City's decision-making processes for the prioritization of projects during City, State, and Federal budget cycles.

DPR solicited qualification packages through the City of Durham's Request for Qualifications process, working closely with the City's Department of Equal Opportunity and Equity Assurance to ensure proposers meet the goals of the Equal Business Opportunity Program. The top candidate, Alta Planning + Design, was selected by a Selection Panel comprised of representatives from DPR, General Services (GSD), Transportation, Public Works (PW), and Equal Opportunity and Equity Assurance (EOEA) departments and from the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO).

Recommendation

The Parks and Recreation Department recommends City Council to authorize the City Manager to execute a professional services contract with Alta Planning + Design for the Trail Implementation Program up to the amount of \$160,000.

Background

The most recent Durham Trails and Greenways Master Plan was adopted in 2011 as an update to the 2001 Master Plan. Since the 2001 Master Plan, very few trail and greenway projects have been constructed by the City. This is primarily because both Master Plans are "broad brush," long-range, and visionary master planning documents that were developed through a partnership between the City/County Planning Department and the Durham Open Space and Trails Commission. The Master Plans recommended building 186 miles of paved and natural surface greenways and trails and on-street "street trails." However, there wasn't any professional engineering assistance with the assessment and evaluation of the greenway and trail project recommendations to refine corridors and alignments or provide direction with

prioritization of the 186 miles of proposed projects. At the time of development for the 2011 Master Plan, it was common practice in Durham to recommend that trails be located within floodplain areas that are otherwise undevelopable. Recent trail projects that were planned in floodplain areas such as the West Ellerbee Creek Trail Phase II and the R. Kelly Bryant Bridge South Trail have proven to be extremely difficult and time consuming to advance to construction because of the ever-changing nature of creeks and streams and their associated floodplains. It is no longer acceptable to assume that the best location for a trail project is within a floodplain area.

The “broad brush” information included in the 2011 Master Plan, without detailed analyses, have made it very challenging to advance projects toward construction. The lack of prioritization has made it very challenging for the City to know which project(s) should be higher priorities for funding. The lack of prioritization has led to project funding ambiguity and ultimately, delays in project delivery. The City’s Trail Implementation Program will provide the City with the detailed information that is lacking from the previous master plans which will assist the City with advancing projects toward construction.

Anticipated project schedule:

Notice to Proceed	June/July 2019
Field Work Investigations	Summer 2019
Existing Projects & Plan Review	Summer/Fall 2019
Opportunities & Constraints Deliverable	Fall/Winter 2019-2020
Draft Plan Document	Winter/Spring 2020
Update to City Council	Winter/Spring 2020
Substantial Completion	Spring/Summer 2020
Final Deliverable Review to City Council	Summer 2020

Issues and Analysis

In the 2018 City of Durham Resident Satisfaction Survey, respondents indicated greenways and trails should receive the most emphasis over the next two years in the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space category. Transportation infrastructure and ease of travel in Durham is consistently rated as a high priority in resident surveys. Greenway and trail infrastructure projects improve non-motorized mobility around Durham, address overdue infrastructure maintenance, provide safe road crossing, encourage physical fitness, and improved community health.

The City’s Strategic Goal #5 includes providing more greenways and trails for residents to use for both recreation and transportation. The Trail Implementation Program will provide the necessary technical information to the City that will help the City deliver more greenways and trails.

Alternatives

City Council could elect to not approve the design contract with Alta Planning + Design and direct City staff in multiple departments to revise work programs to accomplish the scope of work in the Trails Implementation Program. If the contract is not approved, City staff will likely not be able to accomplish the scope of work in the same proposed timeline and that would cause the City to miss deadlines for submitting detailed trail project information to NCDOT for Prioritization and scoring for competitive federal funding.

Financial Impact

This project is being funded by DPR General Fund including ½ Penny for Parks and Trails.

Equal Business Opportunity Summary

The EOEA Department reviewed the Alta Planning + Design submittal package to determine if it was in compliance with Ordinance to Promote Equal Business Opportunities in City Contracting. The goals for this project are Minority Underutilized Business Enterprise (MUBE) 8% and Women-owned Underutilized Business Enterprise (WUBE) 6%. Both goals were exceeded. The compliance letter from EOEA is included as an attachment to this memo.

Attachments

Attachment A – Scope of Work for the City’s Trail Implementation Program

Attachment B – Proposal from Alta Planning + Design

Attachment C – EOEA Compliance Letter