



City of Gainesville Agenda Item Report

File Number: 2023-917

Agenda Date: October 19, 2023

Department: Public Works

Title: 2023-917 - Request for Proposal Award for Ecological Analysis and Tree Inventory (B)

Department: Public Works

Description: Request for the City Commission to award the University of Florida, Board of Trustees dba University of Florida a contract to perform an Ecological Analysis of Gainesville's urban forest and to conduct a Tree Inventory of urban trees owned by the City of Gainesville.

Fiscal Note: Funding for this agreement, in the amount of \$426,916, will be allocated from the Tree Mitigation Fund.

Explanation: The Ecological Analysis and Tree Inventory is authorized and required by the Land Development Code, Section 30-8.7. The Code requires an Ecological Analysis to be done once every five years, which is now overdue; and the Tree Inventory is to be done every 10 years. This will be the first comprehensive Tree Inventory of Gainesville's city-owned urban trees. The Code specifies this contract be funded from the Tree Mitigation Fund.

The Tree Inventory will cover all city-owned street trees, and all urban trees in City parks. Urban trees in parks will be distinguished from natural, conservation-type trees by the proximity of urban trees to urbanized sections of parks, such as playgrounds, structures, and fields with manicured domestic grass or other man-made ground cover.

The Ecological Analysis and Tree Inventory are vital to the intelligent and informed management of Gainesville's urban forest. Gainesville prides itself on its urban forest. It's important to use innovative and informed management to maintain and improve this resource. Work will commence in Fall 2023, with the Ecological Analysis being complete in Fall 2024 and the Tree Inventory being complete in Fall 2026.

In accordance with City policy, proposals were solicited under Request for Proposal (RFP) #PWDA-230046-DH – Ecological Analysis and Tree Inventory, which listed urban forestry related services (see pages 5 through 9 of the RFP). Five-percent local preference and five-percent small or service-disabled veteran business preference points are awarded if the respondent meets the policy requirements. Forty-three vendors downloaded the solicitation, and a total of seven proposals were submitted by the solicitation deadline, with three proposals deemed non-responsive for not complying with the instructions contained in the RFP. One of the vendors received local, small or service-disabled veteran business preference. The evaluation team, consisting of three representatives from Public Works, ranked the respondents as follows: 1) University of Florida, 2) ARCT, 3) Terracon Consultants, Inc., and 4) Water and Air Research Inc. as best qualified to perform the services listed based on the scoring criteria and information submitted in the vendor proposals.

Staff recommends awarding an agreement totaling \$429,916 to the University of Florida. The Ecological Analysis and Tree Inventory Agreement will provide significant data on Gainesville's urban forest, including species composition, condition, ecological benefits and monetary value. The Ecological Analysis and Tree Inventory identifies tree canopy status, tree health issues and potential urban forestry planning activities.

Strategic Connection:

- ☒ Goal 1: Equitable Community
- ☒ Goal 2: More Sustainable Community
- ☒ Goal 3: A Great Place to Live and Experience
- ☐ Goal 4: Resilient Local Economy
- ☒ Goal 5: "Best in Class" Neighbor Services

Recommendation: City Commission 1) approve the rankings RFP #PWDA-230046-DH – Ecological Analysis and Tree Inventory; 2) authorize the City Manager or their designee to enter into a contract with the University of Florida to provide an Ecological Analysis and Tree Inventory in the amount of \$429,916, subject to approval of the City Attorney or designee as to form and legality.