



CITY of CALABASAS
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: OCTOBER 28, 2024

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS

FROM: CURTIS CASTLE, P.E., PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR/CITY ENGINEER
TATIANA HOLDEN, P.E., DEPUTY PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR
TRA'A BEZDECNY, ASSISTANT ENGINEER

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION TO AWARD A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
AGREEMENT FOR THE LAS VIRGENES CREEK RESTORATION
PROJECT PHASE III DESIGN TO WATEARTH, INC. IN AN AMOUNT
NOT TO EXCEED \$853,554 (INCLUDING A 15% CONTINGENCY)

MEETING NOVEMBER 13, 2024
DATE:

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that City Council award a Professional Services Agreement (Attachment A) for the Las Virgenes Creek Restoration Project Phase III design to Watearth, Inc. (Watearth) in an amount not to exceed \$853,554 (including a 15% contingency).

BACKGROUND:

In 2008, Phase I of the Las Virgenes Creek Restoration Project was completed, removing 3,600 square yards of concrete that re-naturalized a portion of the Las Virgenes Creek north of Agoura Road to the 101 Freeway. Phase I also installed a short trail (350 feet long), a gazebo, and educational signage. In total, Phase I cost approximately \$1.4 million and was funded through a Proposition (Prop) 50 grant from Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) and from an obligation from Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky. In 2016, Phase II of the restoration was completed on the creek between Agoura Road and Lost Hills Road. Phase II built the Las Virgenes Trail, removed hundreds of invasive plants, planted over 1,300 trees, installed erosion control and bank stabilization, and constructed

the lower gazebo with educational signage. Phase II cost approximately \$1.8 million and was funded by grants from LACFCD (Prop 84), Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Prop 1), and community donations.

After Phase II's completion, Phase III conceptual plans were developed in-house by City staff and were successfully used in efforts to obtain grant funding for the project. It is anticipated that Phase III will add additional trails, remove invasive and dead plants, plant 1,000 new trees, improve potential fish passage, add a crosswalk on Lost Hills Road connecting the lower gazebo to De Anza Park using a High Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK), and soft-bottom the remaining concrete channels by removing the concrete along the water way but keeping the existing structure holding the roadway up. Staff began hosting Walking Creek Tours in January 2024 to connect with the public, show the work already completed, discuss what the City plans to complete with the final phase, and request feedback to guide final design work. This public outreach is required for grant opportunities staff is actively pursuing. Staff is also utilizing the tours to connect with other entities working on regional projects, including the Rindge Dam Removal (CalTrout) and the Invasive Aquatic Species Control (CalTrans and U.S. Fish and Wildlife). In July, staff posted a Request for Proposals (RFP) for design services to complete the final pre-construction items.

The design consultant is tasked with completing the CEQA document phase, feasibility studies, final design, and permitting. The feasibility studies will include work-related to soft-bottoming portions of concrete culverts, which is anticipated to involve the removal of most or all concrete at the bottom of the channel while leaving the sides of the structures in place to support the road at Meadow Creek Lane and Lost Hills Road. This effort will also remove the final human-made fish barriers present in the City's portion of the creek. The final design will be based on conceptual design, public feedback, and the feasibility of multiple options developed during the feasibility phase. The consultant will prepare plans, specifications, and estimates (PS&E) that will be submitted to the City for review. The PS&E will supply the technical documents for the construction bid package and a construction cost estimate. Finally, any construction activities taking place in the creek are subject to permitting through the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Army Corps of Engineers, and the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board; the consultant will provide all required supporting documentation to the City to obtain the permits.

Staff received proposals from three design firms: Dudek; MNS Engineers, Inc.; and Watearth. Staff evaluated and scored the proposals based on demonstrated understanding of the project, qualifications of the firm and proposed team, proposed timeline to comply with grant requirements, previous experience, and references. Based on the scores from the proposals and taking cost into consideration (see Table 1), Watearth was the highest-ranking proposer.

Table 1. Proposal Amounts

Proposer	Amount
Watearth	\$717,221
MNS Engineers	\$947,835
Dudek	\$1,493,951.47

Watearth is an environmental and civil engineering firm that demonstrated, through its proposal, that it is qualified and capable of completing project planning and studies, master plans, modeling, design, and construction support services.

FISCAL IMPACT/SOURCE OF FUNDING:

The design phase for the Las Virgenes Creek Restoration Project Phase III will be funded by Measure W Municipal Transfer funds. Measure W, also referred to as the Safe Clean Water Program, is a Los Angeles County effort funded by a parcel tax that provides local agencies an annual fund allocation (transfer) for the purpose of improving water quality associated with stormwater and urban runoff. With the upcoming December 2024 transfer from the County, Calabasas will have approximately \$1.1 million in Measure W funding. Staff will work with L.A. County to program these funds. Staff is requesting \$853,554 be appropriated from the City’s Measure W account to the project account, 36-319-6500-42, to track project expenditures. The requested funds should be appropriated to this account, and the budget adjusted accordingly (see Table 2).

Table 2. Agreement Budget

Item	Amount
CEQA, Studies, PS&E	\$ 717,221
Allowance	\$ 25,000
Contingency (15%)	\$ 111,333
Total	\$ 853,554

The project budget includes a 15% contingency and an allowance for potential additional expenses related to permitting and community engagement. The City has secured \$1.3 million in Prop 1 Round 2 funding for the construction phase (Resolution No. 2024-1883 adopted February 14, 2024). However, additional funding, roughly \$2 million, will be required for the construction phase.

REQUESTED ACTION:

Staff requests that City Council award a Professional Services Agreement for the Las Virgenes Creek Restoration Project Phase III Design (PS&E) to Watearth, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$853,554 (including a 15% contingency).

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Professional Services Agreement with Watearth