



Recommendation for Action

File #: 20-2622, **Agenda Item #:** 11.

8/27/2020

Posting Language

Authorize negotiation and execution of a professional services agreement with HDR Engineering, Inc., (staff recommendation) or one of the other qualified responders for Request for Qualifications Solicitation No. CLMP293, to provide engineering services for Aquifer Storage and Recovery Pilot and Program Management project in an amount not to exceed \$6,000,000.

[Note: This contract will be awarded in compliance with City Code Chapter 2-9B (Minority Owned and Women Owned Business Enterprise Procurement Program) by meeting the goals with 20.00% MBE and 16.00% WBE participation.]

Lead Department

Capital Contracting Office

Managing Department

Austin Water

Fiscal Note

Funding is available in the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Capital Budget of Austin Water.

Purchasing Language:

Staff recommendation is the most qualified firm out of three firms evaluated through the City's qualification-based selection process.

For More Information:

Inquiries should be directed to the City Manager's Agenda Office, at 512-974-2991 or AgendaOffice@austintexas.gov <<mailto:AgendaOffice@austintexas.gov>>

NOTE: Respondents to this solicitation, and their representatives, shall direct inquiries to Rolando Fernandez, 512-974-7749, Beverly Mendez, 512-974-3596, or the Project Manager, Helen Gerlach, 512-972-0423.

Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:

To be reviewed by the Water and Wastewater Commission on August 21, 2020.

Additional Backup Information:

Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) is a key component of the Water Forward Plan. The Water Forward Integrated Water Resource Plan is Austin's 100-year roadmap for a sustainable water future. The plan was developed using a holistic planning approach that balances multiple objectives including water reliability, social, environmental, and economic benefits. The City Council adoption of the Water Forward Plan in November 2018 was the culmination of extensive work with the Austin community, a citizen Task Force, across multiple City departments, Boards and Commissions, and regional entities.

The ASR project, as currently envisioned, will store treated drinking water from Austin's surface water

treatment plants. ASR is a storage water supply strategy that is similar in concept to a savings account, where money can be saved and withdrawn when needed. In an ASR project, water is saved underground when available during wet times, and withdrawn for use during drought or emergency situations when other supplies are needed. Since the water in an ASR is stored underground in a naturally occurring aquifer, there are no losses due to evaporation. Storage strategies like ASR will help stretch Austin's existing surface water supplies through a locally controlled source of water, thereby improving our community's resiliency in droughts and other emergency situations such as floods and water quality upsets. The ASR Pilot and Program Management project is the first in a series of steps to develop an ASR project to help meet Austin's water needs.

Development of this ASR project is largely driven by drought needs identified in the Water Forward Plan. Water Forward projections show that when considering the effects of climate change and extreme drought, there may be significant needs above supplies currently available to Austin. Some of these needs can be met through the conservation, demand management, and reuse strategies included in Water Forward, but there is still a need for additional supply during drought or other emergency situations that ASR will help meet. To ensure that there is adequate time to complete an ASR project and store water by 2040, as included in the Water Forward Plan, study and piloting should begin now.

The recommended consultant will work with Austin Water to complete the following three phases:

- **Phase 1:** Develop an ASR program and perform desktop modeling and field testing to evaluate potential sites for piloting. A Carrizo-Wilcox ASR strategy was included in the Water Forward Plan, but through this phase other aquifers that may be closer to Austin will also be evaluated.
- **Phase 2:** Design, construct, and test an ASR pilot project.
- **Phase 3:** Act as owner's representative through any potential full-scale ASR project.

Throughout all phases, the consultant will work with Austin Water to engage the community and incorporate public feedback into the project.

Approval of this RCA will only include contracting authority and contingencies for Phase 1 services and will be the first in a series of Council actions needed to develop an ASR facility. Pending successful completion of Phase 1, Austin Water will ask City Council to approve additional authorization with the same consultant for further phases of the project.

For Phase 1 of the project, there should be little impact to the public. Much of the work will be desktop modeling or bench tests performed in a laboratory. Field investigation in Phase 1 will likely be low-impact, and the consultant will acquire right-of-access agreements for any field location to be tested.

If Council does not approve this item, another selection process to bring a consultant on board will need to be conducted. Since an ASR project takes substantial time to complete, this could delay the implementation of the project and negatively affect the ability to store sufficient water in the ASR to meet identified drought needs in 2040. A delay in implementation of an ASR project could also impede Austin Water's ability to respond to other emergency situations, such as floods and water quality upsets.

This authorization provides for funding of the above listed services. This request allows for the development of an agreement with the qualified responder that Council selects. If the City is unsuccessful in negotiating a satisfactory agreement with the selected responder, negotiations will cease with that provider. Staff will return to Council so that Council may select another qualified responder and authorize contract negotiations with that provider.

TOP RANKED FIRM: HDR Engineering, Inc., is located in Austin, TX

SECOND RANKED FIRM: INTERA, Inc., is located in Austin, TX

Information on this solicitation is available through the City's Austin Finance Online website. Link: [Solicitation Documents <https://www.austintexas.gov/financeonline/account_services/solicitation/solicitation_details.cfm?sid=134016>](https://www.austintexas.gov/financeonline/account_services/solicitation/solicitation_details.cfm?sid=134016).

Strategic Outcome(s):

Safety; Health and Environment.