



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR

July 9, 2024

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Submitted by: Scott Ferris, Director, Parks Recreation & Waterfront

Subject: Contract: Rincon Consultants, Inc. for environmental support services for the Berkeley Water Transportation Pier Ferry Project

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a contract and any amendments with Rincon Consultants, Inc (Rincon) in an amount not to exceed \$3,080,000 which includes \$280,000 of contingency to provide environmental support services for the Berkeley Water Transportation Pier Ferry Project (Project) for the period July 15, 2024 through June 1, 2027.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The cost of this contract is covered by a combination of Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) funds and Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) and California Coastal Conservancy (CCC) grants. Funds for the Project are available in the 2024 budget as follows:

\$1,000,000 606-52-545-000-0000-000-479-720003- PRWWF24002-606-COAST-

\$1,500,000 307-52-545-000-0000-000-461-720003- PRWWF24002-307.

\$580,000 336-52-545-000-0000-000-461-720003- PRWWF24002-336

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

On December 7, 2021, City staff presented the preferred concept from the Ferry Facility at Berkeley Municipal Pier Feasibility Study¹ (Feasibility Study), which includes landside and on-water improvements to provide a dual-purpose pier allowing both recreation and ferry access. The Feasibility Study was finalized and posted to the Project website in June, 2023².

The City received a California Coastal Conservancy grant of \$2.96M and an Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) grant of \$5.139M to fund the engineering,

¹ [December 7, 2021 Work Session](#)

² [Feasibility Study, Ferry Facility at Berkeley Municipal Pier, June 2023](#)

detailed design and environmental studies for the Project. WETA has allocated funding in the amount of \$3,000,000 for the engineering, design and environmental phase (Phase 2) of the Project in its 2023/24 Capital Budget and the City has amended its WETA MOU to reflect the Phase 2 scope and budget allocation (Resolution No. 71,325-N.S.).

On February 27, 2024 the City issued a request for qualifications for environmental support services for the Berkeley Water Transportation Pier Ferry Project (Spec No. 24-11627-C). The City received two proposals and conducted interviews of both firms. After evaluation of written proposals, reference checks and interviews, the selection panel identified Rincon as the consultant best suited to meet the City's needs for this Project.

Under this contract, Rincon will provide environmental studies, documents, public presentations and permitting support to complete all environmental analyses, approvals and permits required for the Berkeley Water Transportation Pier-Ferry Project.

BACKGROUND

In July of 2015, the Berkeley Municipal Pier was closed to the public indefinitely due to structural safety issues. On June 21, 2017, the City contracted with GHD, Inc. to perform a structural engineering assessment to identify feasible options and costs for fixing the Pier (contract No. 10632, Resolution No. 67,856). The draft study identified twelve options ranging in cost from \$16 million to \$51 million. A second component of the study looked at the feasibility of small-scale ferry service at the potentially renovated pier. (Small-scale ferry service is currently offered by two independent providers at K-dock at the main basin at the Marina).

In February of 2016, the Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) updated its Strategic Plan. The resulting System Expansion & Strategic Plan identified a network of sixteen ideal locations for expanded ferry service throughout the Bay Area region, including Berkeley, to help provide alternative transportation for disasters and commuter needs.

WETA

In 1999, the California State Legislature established the Water Transit Authority (WTA) (WETA's predecessor agency), to consolidate existing ferry services operated by the cities of Valley, Alameda and Oakland into a comprehensive water transit system and to expand water transit on the San Francisco Bay. In 2007, the agency name was changed to Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) and its responsibilities expanded to include coordination of the water transit response to a regional emergency.

WETA's overall mission is to plan for and operate passenger-only ferry services on the San Francisco Bay for commuter and disaster response purposes. The Berkeley location has been identified in WETA's System Expansion & Strategic Plan (2016) as

one of the higher priority Near-Term projects, along with the Seaplane Lagoon in Alameda, Mission Bay in San Francisco, and Redwood City.

PREFERRED PROJECT

The Feasibility Study identified a preferred Project that consists of landslide and waterside improvements summarized below. All dimensions and concepts here are preliminary, and subject to change based on the detailed engineering and environmental studies that will occur in Phase 2. The planning-level construction cost estimate for the preferred Project is approximately \$70M (not including electric ferry vessels or cost escalation, see Feasibility Study Appendix E).

- A new, 22-foot-wide pier (same width as the existing Berkeley Municipal Pier) to accommodate both ferry foot traffic, recreational activities, and emergency and maintenance vehicles. The pier would extend from the shoreline at Seawall Drive westward to a new breakwater (approximately 580 feet long).
- A new breakwater creating a safe harbor from the predominantly southwesterly winds and waves for ferry boarding on the north side of the new pier (approximately 400 feet long). The breakwater would provide surface decking to allow public access for recreational activities.
- An extension of the new pier westward into the Bay beyond the breakwater for recreational use (approximately 500 feet long).
- A ferry facility including ferry berthing floats, float piles, ADA-accessible gangways, and security gates.
- Renovation of the parking lot located at 199 Seawall Drive, which would include new pavement surfacing, new striping, and new stormwater bioswales to treat stormwater runoff.
- Improvement of an area along the southwestern side of University Avenue would provide for public buses, shuttles, and a drop-off zone for rideshare and family vehicles.
- Renovation of pedestrian pathways and safety lighting.
- Shifting the Seawall Drive vista parking zone from the west side to the east side of the road.
- A new water access point at the small peninsula located at the southwest corner of Seawall Drive.
- A new restroom and fish cleaning area to replace an existing restroom.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

The transportation system in the Bay Area has become severely impacted by the growing economy and population boom, causing severe traffic congestion and overcrowding on public transit systems. Traffic congestion keeps more vehicles on roads, and overcrowding on public transit systems can push commuters back into cars, both of which result in more greenhouse gas emissions.

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The City's Climate Action Plan identifies public transit as a more sustainable form of transportation (Chapter 3), and sets a goal to expand under-used modes of transportation, such as ferry service at the Berkeley Marina to connect to San Francisco and other locations. In spring 2023, WETA completed its Blueprint for Zero Emission Vessel Transition. To support this transition, the Berkeley pier-ferry will be designed to support zero-emission ferry service.

As a water-based transportation service, WETA will be directly impacted by Sea-level Rise. As agencies throughout the Bay Area explore adaptation strategies and other mitigation measures, WETA will monitor forecasts and trends to ensure that its plans for expansion and operations remain an effective public transit option for the foreseeable future.

This contract with Rincon includes analyses of existing conditions, potential Project impacts, and the development of mitigation measures to ensure that Project's environmental impacts are avoided and/or mitigated to the maximum extent feasible.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

After reviewing two proposals and conducting interviews and reference checks, the selection panel identified Rincon as the best-suited for the City's needs. Staff therefore recommends Council approval of a contract with Rincon for environmental services for the Berkeley Water Transportation Pier-Ferry Project.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

The City does not have the expertise required to complete the tasks covered by this contract. Therefore, no alternative actions were considered.

CONTACT PERSON

Scott Ferris, Director, Parks Recreation & Waterfront, 981-6700
Christina Erickson, Deputy Director, PRW, 981-6712
Liza McNulty, PRW Capital Improvement Program Manager, 542-4131

Attachments:

1: Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

CONTRACT: RINCON CONSULTING, INC. FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT
SERVICES FOR THE BERKELEY WATER TRANSPORTATION PIER FERRY
PROJECT

WHEREAS, the City and Water Transportation Authority executed a Memorandum of Understanding effective July 1, 2019 for the Planning Phase of the Berkeley Pier-Ferry Project (Project) which includes a feasibility study and public engagement; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Phase is complete and a preferred concept has been identified; and

WHEREAS, the second phase (Phase 2) of work includes detailed technical analyses, design, environmental studies, public engagement and permitting for the preferred Project concept; and

WHEREAS, WETA has allocated \$3,000,000 of Regional Measure 3 funds for the Phase 2 of the Project in its adopted 2023/24 Capital Budget; and

WHEREAS, the City and WETA have amended the July 1, 2019 Memorandum of Understanding to reflect the Phase 2 scope and funding; and

WHEREAS, the City has received a California Coastal Conservancy grant of \$2.96M and an Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) grant of \$5.139M to fund the engineering, detailed design and environmental studies for the Project; and

WHEREAS, on February 27, 2024 the City issued a Request for Qualifications for environmental support services for the Berkeley Water Transportation Pier Ferry Project (Spec No. 24-11627-C) and after reviewing two proposals and conducting interviews and reference checks the selection panel identified Rincon Consultants, Inc. as the consultant best-suited for the City's needs; and

WHEREAS, the cost of this contract is covered by a combination of State Coastal Conservancy funds (\$1,000,000 in 606-52-545-000-0000-000-479-720003-PRWWF24002-606-COAST), Alameda County Transportation Commission funds (\$1,500,000 in 307-52-545-000-0000-000-461-720003- PRWWF24002-307) and Water Emergency Transportation Authority funds (\$580,000 in 336-52-545-000-0000-000-461-720003- PRWWF24002-336).

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager is hereby authorized to execute a contract and any amendments with Rincon Consultants, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$3,080,000 which includes \$280,000 of contingency for the Berkeley Water Transportation Pier Ferry Project for the period July 15, 2024 through June 1, 2027. A record signature copy of said agreements and any amendments to be on file in the Office of the City Clerk.

