

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: AMES WATER TREATMENT PLANT TREE REMOVAL PROJECT

BACKGROUND:

The City of Ames is planning to construct a new water treatment plant and associated pipe infrastructure to interconnect the new water plant site with the existing site. The project will involve construction of new pipeline facilities through forested areas adjacent to the Skunk River. The first step in the piping project is to create two clear paths by clearing trees and brush so the construction can occur. All tree removal required by the other construction contracts has been combined into a single clearing and grubbing contract.

This work is on a critical path to enable the piping construction to occur in 2014. Tree removal must take place during a critical window from October 15 to April 15 to avoid potential impacts to the endangered Indiana Brown Bat. A habitat assessment was performed by Griggs Environmental Strategies, Inc., which concluded the Ames Water Treatment Plant project would have minimal negative effects on the Indiana Bat habitat, and the City's consultant has provided a design that avoids trees identified as potential roosting locations for the bats. However, staff still desires to complete the tree removal during the critical window to avoid any possible concern over impacting a threatened species.

FOX Engineering has prepared plans and specifications for the Water Treatment Plant Tree Removal Project. The estimated cost for this project is as follows:

Tree Removal Project	\$65,635
Contingency, 5%	\$ 3,282
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Total Project Cost	\$68,917

Engineering expenses are included in the large design contract with FOX Engineering and are not broken out separately. This work was not specifically called out in the Capital Improvements Plan, but is included in the \$183,000 budgeted in the current year's CIP to be paid out of the Water Fund.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Issue preliminary approval of plans and specifications for the Water Treatment Plant Tree Removal Project and issue a notice to bidders setting February 5, 2014 as the bid due date and February 11, 2014 as the date of public hearing.

2. Do not issue preliminary approval of plans and specifications and a notice to bidders at this time. This would negatively impact the overall Water Treatment Plant construction schedule.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The tree removal project is necessary in order to subsequently construct the new water treatment plant and associated pipe infrastructure to connect with existing systems. The work is part of the overall critical path schedule to begin major construction activities in 2014.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, thereby issuing preliminary approval of plans and specifications for the Water Treatment Plant Tree Removal Project, and issuing a notice to bidders setting February 5, 2014 as the bid due date and February 11, 2014 as the date of public hearing.