

Item 25-0054: Award the 2025 Ash Tree Removal Contract to Foley's Tree Service, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$425,000

Utilities Committee

Tue, Feb 11, 2025 4:30PM

Alderman Vered Meltzer (District 2) 01:23

All right, we have a motion and a second. Did staff want to give us a summary of this? And which mic do you have? All right, go ahead.

Deputy Director of Operations Nathan Loper (Public Works) 01:34

So, this is the second year that we had this contract for removing ash trees. And this is actually the same company that we had last year, and they worked out incredibly well. They were super-fast and efficient. Cleaned up really well. Staff, including myself, were on site several times talking with residents. Everybody was just loving what they were seeing. Even the restoration—I think you can all appreciate getting calls for construction projects and whatnot, grass doesn't always grow like folks wanted to. We didn't get a single call or complaint from Foleys after the restoration. So, yep, great, great job. We're excited to see their bid. Bids came in well under budget, and depending how things go, we may be able to squeeze in some additional trees to get done under this contract.

Alderman Vered Meltzer (District 2) 02:28

Awesome. Thank you. Any comments or questions from the committee? Alder Doran.

Alderman Chad Doran (District 15) 02:33

Thank you. If staff could just kind of clarify the difference, I guess, between the bid amount and the total contract amount looks like it was for a certain number of trees at a certain amount. The overage up to the budget amount, I would assume, is, is the additional trees we're hoping to complete under that contract. That's where the flexibility sort of comes in?

Deputy Director of Operations Nathan Loper (Public Works) 02:55

Correct. This early in the project—so last year, trees were in two of our forestry zones. I think there are 17 zones. So very consolidated, low hanging fruit, so to speak. This year, they're spread out across the entire city, a lot of them with power lines through them and things. So, we think that this contract will go pretty quick and there be room to add more trees, but we want to get a little rhythm going here first before we would add to the contract if needed. Whatever the contractor doesn't do our forestry crew has to complete, and there's quite a few trees out there that we may not get through them all yet this year. But the award being the full 425, we might build this knock out all these ash trees yet this year. And then next year would be the focus would be planting, likely requesting through budget to hire a contractor to help supplement our tree planting and get all these trees replaced.

Alderman Chad Doran (District 15) 03:50

Thank you. And just to be clear the contract amount is what the what the contractor will be able to recoup unless the city asks for more trees to be done. Correct?

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Director Laura Jungwirth (Public Works) 04:02

Correct. The city forester and city staff will have to approve anything over bid amount. And then, just to reiterate too that the bids do have a unit price associated to it. So, they are held to that unit price. The only thing that could change, ultimately, is the quantity which would be upon approval by city staff.

Aldersperson Chad Doran (District 15) 04:19

Okay. Thank you.

Aldersperson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 04:22

Thank you. Alder Hayden.

Aldersperson Patrick Hayden (District 7) 04:24

Thank you. I'm sure many other members of council have similar question that I have. Is there any way to follow along with where trees will be removed like in future months? Because I've had questions from a number of constituents. They know they're coming out to their street, but they want to know when. So, if there is, like, some resource to kind of give them a heads up, I think it would take a lot of pressure off calls to the city and calls to alderspersons.

Deputy Director of Operations Nathan Loper (Public Works) 04:53

So, residents that have trees in front of their properties will get a letter from us just stating that there will be a contractor removing trees, and that will happen over a course of several months. We won't know, like, exactly where they're going to be in a given week or even in a given month. And we kind of like it that way, because if they get out ahead and we told residents, "Nope, we're not going to be at Alder Doran's property for a couple more weeks," well, it's going to cost them a lot of money to pull off and come back. So, I just want them to get after it and work as fast as they can. Last year it was like—it was weeks. It was like three or four weeks, and they got a thousand trees done. So, it should go pretty quick.

Aldersperson Patrick Hayden (District 7) 05:34

So, for people that the forester has commented that they'll be out there in the coming months, would it be safe to say, if we tell them, you'll probably get a letter in the mail, and that'll give you a more accurate idea of when they'll be out there and until you, until you get the letter, no, it's not coming anytime soon.

Deputy Director of Operations Nathan Loper (Public Works) 05:52

Yeah. So once this gets awarded, we're probably gonna get those letters out right away. Contractor's ready to start. So, the letter won't say "We'll be there in April" or "We'll be there in May" or "We'll be there in June." It'll say "starting in April" and contract will continue for a couple of months.

Aldersperson Patrick Hayden (District 7) 06:10

Excellent. May I asked another question? And when it comes to replanting, I know we're talking in the future, are we looking at a more diverse set of trees rather than ash since we kind of got burned this time on that?

Deputy Director of Operations Nathan Loper (Public Works) 06:23

Oh yeah, we're not—we haven't been planting ash trees for quite a few years. So yep, definitely keeping with the diverse population that we have and mix it up. Each street probably have a few different species on it. So.

Aldersperson Patrick Hayden (District 7) 06:35

Thank you.

Deputy Director of Operations Nathan Loper (Public Works) 06:36
Yep.

Alderson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 06:37

Thank you. Any other questions? All right, all in favor, say, aye. Aye. Opposed or abstaining? Seeing none, that is recommended four zero for approval.