

STAFF REPORT

Date: December 11, 2024

To: Mayor and City Council

Through: Jackie Bryant, Interim City Manager

Subject: Staff Report (For Possible Action): Approval of RFP 2025-06 and approval of contract to SWCA Environmental Consultants for the Reno Fire Department Risk Assessment and Community Wildfire Protection Plan Project in an amount not to exceed \$244,054.94 and authorizing the City Manager or designee to sign the contract. (General Fund, Grant Funds)

From: Samantha Steere, Management Assistant

Department: Fire Department

Summary:

The Reno Fire Department (RFD) conducted a competitive bidding process under NRS 332.065 for the development of a city-wide Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), funded by FEMA's Fire Prevention & Safety (FP&S) Grant. Five companies submitted proposals, which were evaluated based on terms compliance, project understanding, experience, references, and professional standing. Staff recommends awarding the contract to SWCA Environmental Consultants, whose expertise in wildfire risk assessments and CWPP development, combined with a clear methodology and strong stakeholder engagement approach, best meets the city's needs. The 2025 CWPP will provide a comprehensive framework to reduce wildfire hazards, prioritize mitigation efforts, and improve emergency preparedness, ensuring long-term safety and resilience for Reno's growing population and infrastructure.

Consent Review	Yes	No
1. Is this item an annual or standard item that comes before Council for regular approval?	X	
2. Is this item an agreement required based on an item previously approved by Council?		X
3. Is this item included in the current budget approved and adopted by Council?		X
Other Considerations		
What percent of the total City budget does this item represent?	0.008%	

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

Fiscal Sustainability

Public Safety

Previous Council Action:

On September 25th, 2024, the Council accepted the FY23 AFG FP&S Grant award of \$244,054.94, which includes an in-kind match of \$12,202.75.

Background:

On September 25, 2024, City Council accepted the Fire Prevention & Safety (FP&S) Grant from FEMA to conduct a wildfire risk assessment and develop a city-wide Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). FEMA approved a total budget of \$256,257.69, with \$244,054.94 awarded through the grant and a 5% in-kind cost match of \$12,202.75 funded from FY24 operational funds (personnel time).

The project addresses Reno's increasing wildfire risks due to population growth and expanding development into the wildland-urban interface. The new CWPP replaces the outdated 2005 regional plan, providing a targeted strategy to mitigate wildfire hazards, prioritize projects, and foster a collaborative approach to protecting life, property, and natural resources.

Discussion:

The Reno Fire Department (RFD) issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the development of a city-wide Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), supported by FEMA's Fire Prevention & Safety (FP&S) Grant. The RFP process was conducted in compliance with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 332.065, which governs competitive bidding to ensure fairness, transparency, and value for public contracts. Five companies submitted proposals in response. RFD staff reviewed and evaluated each submission based on conformance to the RFP terms, understanding of project requirements, relevant experience, references, ability to perform, and professional standing.

Over the past decade, Reno has experienced nearly 18% population growth, increasing residential development in the wildland-urban interface and elevating the city's wildfire risk. The last CWPP for the region, completed in 2005, is outdated and insufficient for addressing these evolving challenges. To mitigate these risks, RFD is committed to developing a targeted CWPP to reduce wildfire hazards and protect the community.

The CWPP will serve as a comprehensive framework for wildfire mitigation, identifying and prioritizing future protection projects and fostering a collaborative approach to reducing wildfire risks. It will also raise public awareness, improve understanding of wildfire threats, and help safeguard lives, infrastructure, and the local economy.

RFD's initiative aligns with the Washoe County Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, a collaborative effort involving Washoe County, the City of Sparks, Truckee Meadows Fire, and other partners. This regional collaboration highlighted the need for a CWPP tailored specifically to Reno's unique wildfire challenges, ensuring alignment with state and federal strategies.

Based on the evaluation process, staff recommends awarding the contract to SWCA Environmental Consultants. SWCA demonstrated exceptional qualifications, including extensive experience with wildfire risk assessments and CWPP development. Their proposal includes a clear methodology and a strong approach to stakeholder engagement, data analysis, and risk assessments. SWCA's proven expertise will ensure the project meets its goals and timeline.

The 2025 CWPP will provide a robust, actionable roadmap for reducing wildfire risks, enhancing community resilience, and improving emergency preparedness. By prioritizing high-risk areas and aligning with long-term mitigation strategies, the CWPP will support the safety and sustainability of Reno's residents and infrastructure.

Financial Implications:

The budget for this project is available in the current fiscal year FY 24/25 Fire Department's operating budget (0920-7301-0000) via grant funding, and a \$12,202.75 in-kind match (personnel time).

Legal Implications:

Legal review completed for compliance with City procedures and Nevada law.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends Council approve the award of RFP 2025-06 and approve the contract to SWCA Environmental Consultants for the Reno Fire Department Risk Assessment and Community Wildfire Protection Plan Project in an amount not to exceed \$244,054.94 and authorizing the City Manager or designee to sign the contract.

Proposed Motion:

I move to approve the award of RFP 2025-06 and approve the contract to SWCA Environmental Consultants for the Reno Fire Department Risk Assessment and Community Wildfire Protection Plan Project in an amount not to exceed \$244,054.94 and authorizing the City Manager or designee to sign the contract.

Attachments: