

RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES

Board Memorandum

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

DATE: OCTOBER 28, 2024

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT SERVICE AGREEMENT FROM REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NO. 2379 TO ADMINISTER THE SMART IRRIGATION PROGRAM WITH VALLEY SOIL, INC., FOR A THREE-YEAR PERIOD AND TWO OPTIONAL ONE-YEAR EXTENSIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$250,000 PER YEAR WITH A NOT TO EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$750,000

ISSUE:

Consider approving Professional Consultant Services Agreement with Valley Soil, Inc. to administer the Smart Irrigation Program for a three-year term in the amount of \$750,000.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Public Utilities recommend that the City Council:

1. Approve the Professional Consultant Services Agreement from Request for Proposal No. 2379 to administer the Smart Irrigation Program to Valley Soil, Inc. for \$750,000;
2. Authorize the City Manager or designee to execute up to two (2) additional one-year terms not to exceed total of five (5) years, at \$250,000 annually; and
3. Authorize the City Manager, or designee, to execute the Professional Consultant Services Agreements, including making minor and non-substantive changes to the agreements.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

On July 3, 2024, the State Water Resources Control Board approved a draft resolution of the Conservation is a California Way of Life Framework (Framework), and it is expected to be formally adopted in late 2024. If adopted, the Framework will become effective beginning January 2025 and requires that urban water use entities (cities and water agencies) meet specific objectives designed to monitor and reduce water use throughout California.

To assist with gauging the status of Riverside Public Utilities' (RPU) readiness to meet the objectives set forth in the Framework, a Dashboard was developed for RPU by a consultant provided by Western Municipal Water District. The projected compliance for RPU's overall Water Use Objectives is calculated in the Dashboard as "moderate", meaning RPU is projected to have moderate compliance readiness through 2024. A variety of tasks must be completed to increase RPU readiness; these tasks will be met by several focused areas of outdoor water use efficiency

measures, programs, incentives and initiatives. The water saved by the RPU Smart Irrigation Program will play a key role in meeting the compliance goals.

BACKGROUND:

In 2011, RPU launched the Smart Irrigation Program as part of the water utility's effort to achieve mandated water conservation goals established by the State of California in 2009 through Senate Bill X7-7. The goal of this program was to help RPU's residential and commercial water users to conserve water and improve landscape irrigation efficiency through free irrigation evaluations and professionally installed weather-based irrigation controllers (WBICs) and high-efficiency nozzles.

To continue to offer the Smart Irrigation Program, Staff posted Request for Proposal (RFP) No. 1901 on March 6, 2019, outlining requirements for the program. The successful bidder was Valley Soil, Inc., and on July 22, 2019, Board of Public Utilities approved an Agreement with Valley Soil for a three-year term with an optional two-year extension, relaunching an enhanced Smart Irrigation Program. The new Smart Irrigation Program uses a data-driven approach to identifying customers who most benefit from participation in the program. The current contract with Valley Soil, Inc. has expired, and an RFP to continue to offer the program was posted June 18, 2024.

DISCUSSION:

Request for Proposal (RFP) No. 2379 was posted on Planet Bids, the City's online bid system, on June 18, 2024, seeking consultants for the Smart Irrigation Program, a water-efficient landscaping program, which is a direct installation program for both residential and commercial customers. The program consists of a landscape and irrigation efficiency evaluation, installation of a weather-based Irrigation Controller (WBIC) and high-efficiency nozzles. The notification was sent to 132 City of Riverside vendors and 500 external vendors. With 26 prospective proposers, RFP 2379 closed on July 11, 2024, with a total of 2 responses. All responses were found to be responsive and responsible. Under the guidance of the Purchasing Division, three City staff members evaluated the proposals, which resulted in Valley Soil, Inc ranking No. 1. The evaluation criteria, total points, and rankings are summarized below.

Evaluation Criteria:

- a. Qualifications/Approach/Methodology (30%)
- b. Pricing (25%)
- c. Experience (Projects of similar size and scope) (35%)
- d. Professional References (10%)

Evaluation Results:

Program	Proposer	Location	Committee's Avg Rank	Pricing Rank	Overall Rank
Smart Irrigation Program	Valley Soil, Inc.	Temecula, CA	945.00	1	1
	Water Wise Consulting, Inc.	Glendora, CA	731.49	2	2

The RFP price scoring is conducted by the City Purchasing Division. The breakdown of the pricing comparison for landscape audits, and weather-based irrigation controller and high-efficiency

nozzle installation and equipment can be found as an attachment to this report.

Purchasing Resolution 24101 Section 508 (c) Awards states, “Contracts procured through Formal Procurement shall be awarded by the Awarding Entity to the Lowest Responsive and Responsible Bidder, except that.... (c) Contracts procured through Formal Procurement for Services or Professional Services, where a Request for Proposals or Request for Qualifications was used to solicit Bids, shall be awarded by the Awarding Entity in accordance with the evaluation criteria set forth in the Request for Proposals or Request for Qualifications.”

Program Offer

The Smart Irrigation Program was developed to assist high outdoor water-using residential and commercial water customers. Water use efficiency studies, and specifically those conducted in semi-arid climates such as Riverside, have shown that more than 60% of overall daily water use can be attributed to landscape irrigation. Smart Irrigation Program participants receive a landscape efficiency audit that determines the site's potential water savings. Repairs to the irrigation system may be made to ensure the reliability of the existing system. Once the site has received the necessary repairs, a WBIC and high-efficiency sprinkler nozzles can be installed by the vendor. All information, including water savings, is documented by the consultant and provided to RPU monthly.

Customers who participate in the Smart Irrigation Program will receive the following services:

- A landscape efficiency audit
- Irrigation system tune-up in preparation of program participation
- Professional installation of a Wi-Fi-enabled WBIC with on-site training, if applicable
- Professional installation of high-efficiency sprinkler nozzles for pop-up spray heads, as needed

Benefits to RPU Ratepayers and RPU

The Smart Irrigation Program has strong participation rates and water savings realized through the program are significant. Since the creation of the Program in 2011, participants have received 2,272 smart controllers and 109,270 high-efficiency sprinkler nozzles. Over the lifetime of the installed devices, just over 776 million gallons of water will be saved as a result of this program. The saved water is enough for approximately 4,325 average families for a year or enough to fill 1,176 Olympic swimming pools. These savings will become more important as statewide water usage mandates are implemented. Data that the Smart Irrigation Program collects will provide RPU with additional analytical tools to support water conservation efforts. In addition, the Smart Irrigation Program also supports RPU in achieving other benefits, such as enhancing Riverside's drought resiliency, increasing customer engagement and satisfaction, and reducing urban runoff.

The Purchasing Manager concurs that the recommended actions are in compliance with Purchasing Resolution No. 24101.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The SIP aligns with Strategic Priority 4, Environmental Stewardship. Program deliverables support Goal 4.2 by helping customers maximize water efficiency practices and support the Priority goals of championing proactive and equitable climate solutions based in science to ensure clean air, safe water, a vibrant natural world and a resilient green new economy for current and future generations.

Goal 4.2. Sustainably manage local water resources to maximize reliability and advance water reuse to ensure safe, reliable and affordable water to our community.

This item aligns with the Cross-Cutting Threads as described below:

1. **Community Trust** – This program is intended to benefit customers and improve the community environment by encouraging water use efficiency.
2. **Equity** – The Smart Irrigation Program can be accessed by all residential and commercial customers to help them achieve greater water efficiency.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – The program is offered through the City’s RFP process and has had rigorous fiscal review.
4. **Innovation** – The implementation of the devices supported by the program will enable customers to access the most current innovations in water savings and conservation technology for their homes and businesses.
5. **Sustainability and Resiliency** – By providing community education and enhanced water rebates and programs to customers, RPU’s water use efficiency measures help all City residents in effectively managing RPU water resources in a manner to remain water independent.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The total fiscal impact is \$250,000 per year, with a total contract amount of \$750,000. Sufficient funding of \$250,000 is available in the Smart Irrigation Direct Install Program Account No. 6220200-457023. Additional funds for subsequent years are included in the Fiscal Year 25/26 budget and will be included in future Fiscal Year budget preparations.

Prepared by:	Brian Seinturier, Utilities Interim Assistant General Manager/Finance and Administration
Approved by:	David A. Garcia, Utilities General Manager
Certified as to availability of funds:	Kristie Thomas, Finance Director/Assistant Chief Financial Officer
Approved by:	Rafael Guzman, Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form:	Jack Liu, Interim City Attorney

Attachments:

1. RFP No. 2379 Award Recommendation
2. Agreement
3. Pricing Bid Results
4. Presentation