

CITY OF PALM DESERT STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: August 28, 2025

PREPARED BY: Neal Ennis, Project Manager
Shawn Muir, Community Services Manager

SUBJECT: AWARD A CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT TO SUPERB ENGINEERING, INC., FOR THE CAHUILLA HILLS PARK IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT (MPK00005) – CEQA DETERMINATION

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Make a finding that the project is categorically exempt from further review under the California Environmental ~~Air~~-Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, pursuant to Class 1, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities), and NEPA 24 CFR 58.35(a), and authorize the City Manager to submit Determination of Categorical Exclusion.
2. Award a construction contract to Superb Engineering, Inc., of Banning, California, in the amount of \$1,049,485.79, plus a \$104,948.60 contingency for unforeseen expenses.
3. Authorize the City Attorney to make necessary non-monetary changes to the agreement.
4. Authorize the City Manager to execute the agreement and any written requests for change orders up to the contingency amount, amendments, and any other documents necessary to effectuate this action, in accordance with Palm Desert Municipal Code Section 3.30.170(B).
5. Authorize the City Manager to execute the Notice of Completion (NOC) and the City Clerk to file the NOC upon satisfactory completion of the Project.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

Cahuilla Hills Park is a 27.5-acre public park located at 72-700 Tierra Del Oro in Palm Desert. The park offers various quality amenities including several trailheads, picnic areas, and tennis courts. However, after being assessed by the City's accessibility consultant, Disability Access Consultants, Inc., it was found that the park could improve accessibility to users. Based on their evaluation, several improvements were recommended to enhance accessibility. To implement these recommendations, the City applied for and received a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-23, totaling \$183,420. An additional CDBG grant of \$146,124 was awarded in FY 2023-24, bringing the total grant funding to \$329,544.

In January 2023, City staff issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for engineering and design services related to the planned improvements, using the City's bid portal, OpenGov. The contract was awarded to The Altum Group on May 25, 2023. The scope of work includes community engagement, conceptual planning, environmental documentation, and final engineering design.

The initial conceptual design was presented to the Parks and Recreation Committee on October 17, 2023. While Committee members asked questions regarding the design, they did not offer additional comments or request any changes to the conceptual design.

In February 2024, the concept plan was shared with nearby residents through an online survey designed to assess whether the proposed improvements aligned with community needs. Overall, the feedback was positive, with most concerns centered on preserving the park’s natural setting and maintaining its serene atmosphere. The survey also revealed interest in specific features such as bike racks and updated signage.

In response, staff collaborated with The Altum Group to revise the concept plan based on community input and move forward with the preparation of construction documents. The final plans were completed and approved in June 2025 and subsequently advertised for bid.

Project Description:

The project will renovate the existing park by constructing an ADA-compliant parking area, sidewalk, and trailhead path to improve accessibility and enhance the visitor experience. Key elements of the renovation include:

- Revise parking from 14 standard with 0 ADA spaces to 10 standard plus 2 ADA spaces
- Installation of 500 linear feet of meandering, accessible walking path
- Creation of picnic and respite areas along the path for rest and recreation
- Placement of boulder perimeter rock arrangements to define and beautify the trail corridor
- Installation of a 40-foot shade canopy to provide sun protection in gathering areas
- Area lighting to improve visibility and safety during evening hours
- Landscape enhancements to complement the natural setting
- Formalized, accessible connection to the existing tennis and pickleball courts
- Associated drainage improvements to support infrastructure longevity and reduce erosion

This comprehensive upgrade will ensure compliance with ADA standards while improving functionality, comfort, and aesthetics throughout the park.

Environment Review:

Staff recommends that the City Council find that the project is categorically exempt from CEQA, pursuant to Class 1, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities), and NEPA 24 CFR 58.35(a) under the CEQA Guidelines, as the project involves improvements to, and the reconstruction or rehabilitation of, existing facilities other than buildings.

Request for Bids:

The project was advertised via the City’s bid portal, OpenGov, (Project ID# 2025-IFB-200), and ten bids were received electronically on August 8, 2025:

Contractor	Location	Base Bid
Superb Engineering, Inc.	Banning, CA	\$1,049,485.79
Varn Painting, Inc.	Tujuana, CA	\$1,105,856.25
RG General Engineering	Norco, CA	\$1,139,989.00
Western State Builders	Escondido, CA	\$1,229,206.75
Van Engineering, Inc.	Wildomar, CA	\$1,241,581.50

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PUB Construction, Inc.	Diamond Bar, CA	\$1,475,346.95
All American Building Services	Santa Clarita, CA	\$1,520,583.50
R Dependable Construction, Inc.	San Bernardino, CA	\$1,650,000.00
KNC Construction, Inc.	Apple Valley, CA	\$1,736,355.16
We R Builders	Glendale, CA	\$2,780,230.00

The all-inclusive engineer’s estimate for the project was \$1,409,631. Superb Engineering submitted a bid of \$1,049,485.79, which falls within the estimated budget. Staff has reviewed the bid documents and determined that the bid submitted by Superb Engineering, Inc. is responsive, responsible, and in compliance with all specifications, including all required forms. Based on this review, staff recommends awarding the construction contract to Superb Engineering, Inc.

Legal Review:

This report has been reviewed by the City Attorney’s Office.

Appointed Body Recommendation:

On October 17, 2023 the Parks and Recreation Committee approved the conceptual design.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Funding for this project is included in the approved FY 2025-26 Financial Plan and Capital Improvement Project (CIP) list. Currently \$2.14 Million is budgeted in both CDBG Fund 220 and Capital Improvement Fund 400. There is no fiscal impact on the General Fund with this action.

Authorized Budgets	Date Authorized	Total	CDBG Fund 220	CIP Fund 400
Original Budget FY22/23	7/1/2022	183,420.00	183,420.00	
Additional Budget FY23/24	7/1/2023	146,124.00	146,124.00	
Additional Budget FY24/25	7/1/2024	1,815,000.00		1,815,000.00
Total Authorized Budget to Date		2,144,544.00	329,544.00	1,815,000.00

Authorized Expenditures	Date Authorized	Total	CDBG Fund 220	CIP Fund 400
The Altum Group (Design #C45290)	5/25/2023	124,402.50	124,402.50	
The Altum Group (Design #A48990)	1/29/2025	50,000.00	35,000.00	15,000.00
CVWD Plan Check Fees	5/31/2024	379.00	379.00	
Shade Structure - USA Shade	1/2/2025	45,938.90	45,938.90	
Total Authorized Expenditures to Date		220,720.40	205,720.40	15,000.00

Construction: Superb Engineering, Inc.*	1,049,485.79	123,823.60	925,662.19
Contingency 10%*	104,948.60		104,948.60
Remaining Project Budget Available	769,389.21	-	769,389.21

*This request

The remaining project budget available will be reallocated to other capital projects upon completion.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Construction Contract
2. Contractor Bid
3. Payment and Performance Bonds Template
4. CEQA Notice of Exemption
5. NEPA Determination of Categorical Exclusion
- [6. Vicinity Map](#)
- [6.7. Project Overlay](#)