

CITY OF PALM DESERT STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: December 11, 2025

PREPARED BY: Brad Chuck, Public Works Superintendent
Shawn Muir, Community Services Manager

SUBJECT: AWARD A CONTRACT TO WESTERN STATE BUILDERS, INC., FOR
THE CIVIC CENTER PARK PLAYGROUND RENOVATION (PROJECT
NO. CFA00011)

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Award a construction contract to Western State Builders, Inc., of Escondido, California, in the amount of \$1,570,136.14, plus a \$157,000 contingency for unforeseen expenses.
2. Authorize Director of Finance to appropriate funds from General Fund Facility Reserve to the Interfund Transfer Out Account No. 1104199-4501000 in the amount of \$1,000,000 and transfer to Capital Projects Fund Transfer In Account No. 4000000-3910000.
3. Appropriate \$1,000,000 Capital Projects Fund – Civic Center Account No. 4004674-4400100.
4. Authorize the City Attorney to make necessary non-monetary changes to the agreement.
5. 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).
6. 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:

The Civic Center Park playground is an integral part of the City's largest and most frequented public park. In 2024, staff initiated a playground renovation project to address accessibility, safety, and general improvement needs. The new design is based on community input collected through surveys and outreach events and prioritizes inclusive play features and increased shade coverage.

On January 14, 2025, the City entered into agreements with Michael Baker International, Inc., and its subcontractor, In-Site Landscape Architecture, Inc., for design and engineering services. Their scope includes public engagement, conceptual planning, and construction documents.

Project Description:

The project will renovate the existing outdated playground area to enhance visitor and resident experience. Key elements of the renovation include:

- Installation of new ADA-compliant playground structures

- New concrete sidewalks and paths
- Creation of picnic areas with new park furnishings and respite areas along the path for rest and recreation
- Installation of shade canopies to provide sun protection in gathering areas
- Area lighting to improve visibility and safety during evening hours
- Landscape enhancements

This comprehensive playground upgrade will ensure compliance with ADA standards while improving functionality, comfort, and aesthetics at Civic Center Park.

Selection Process:

The project was advertised via the City’s bid portal, OpenGov, (Project ID 2025-NIB-210), and five bids were received electronically on October 9, 2025:

Contractor	Location	Base Bid Amount
Western State Builders, Inc.	Escondido, CA	\$1,570,136.14
Varn Painting, Inc.	Tujunga, CA	\$1,607,635.30
Earthscapes Landscape, Inc.	Ontario, CA	\$1,822,923.63
Tovey/Shultz Construction	Lake Elsinore, CA	\$1,905,859.10
PUB Construction, Inc.	Diamond Bar, CA	\$3,782,910.16

Based on the lowest responsible bid, staff recommends awarding the construction contract to Western State Builders, Inc.

Legal Review:

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

Appointed Body Recommendation:

The initial conceptual design was presented to the Parks and Recreation Committee on May 6, 2025. Committee members expressed overall support for the project and provided positive feedback. No additional comments or requests for modifications to the conceptual design were received.

On May 22, 2025, staff presented the conceptual design to the City Council during a Study Session. Staff confirmed that the proposed play features were selected based on community feedback and recommendations from the landscape designer. The playground is designed to offer multiple levels of play and includes sensory components to accommodate children with neurodevelopmental disorders.

Staff also clarified that shade structures will be incorporated into the design, existing trees will be preserved, and larger concrete planters will be utilized to promote healthy tree and root growth.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Funds in the amount of \$2,284,651 have been included in the approved Fiscal Year 2025-26

Financial Plan and Capital Improvements Project (CIP) List for the Civic Center Park Improvements project under Capital Account No's. 4004674-4400100 and 2334618-4400100. At the time of the FY 2025-26 budget process, this project did not include replacement of the playground equipment. Later in the year, components of the playground equipment were discovered to be broken or damaged through use. It became apparent that the equipment had reached the end of its useful life and a replacement playground should be incorporated into the project. This increased the total project cost by approximately \$860,000. The project total estimated cost is \$3,279,995; therefore, a \$1 million appropriation is necessary, which includes contingency. The table below provides a breakdown of the project budget and expenses:

Civic Center Park Improvements	Budget	Expenses	Balance
4004674-4400100	\$1,634,651		
2334618-4400100	\$650,000		
<i>Park Design / Plan – In-Site</i>			
<i>Park Design/Plans - Michael Baker</i>		\$141,465	
<i>Shade Structures - USA Shade</i>		\$492,159	
<i>Shade Structure – Contingency</i>		\$50,000	
<i>Playground Equipment - Landscape Structures</i>		\$445,407	
<i>Playground Equipment - Contingency</i>		\$45,000	
<i>Volleyball Sand Replacement – TriStar</i>		\$138,328	
<i>Plant Infills - Vintage</i>		\$40,500	
<i>Estimated Additional Park Improvements</i>		\$200,000	
* Construction - Installation		\$1,570,136	
*Construction Contingency		\$157,000	
Total	\$2,284,651	\$3,279,995	(\$995,344)
		*Requested Appropriation	\$1,000,000
		Account Balance	\$4,656

*Current Request

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Construction Agreement
2. Payment and Performance Bonds
3. Western State Builders Proposal
4. Plans and Conceptual Drawings