



Office of the City Manager

14

CONSENT CALENDAR  
February 22, 2022

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
 From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager  
 Submitted by: Joran Klein, Director, Planning and Development Department  
 Subject: Contracts for Plan Checking Services

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt three Resolutions authorizing the City Manager to execute contracts and any amendments for plan checking services for three-year terms, starting March 1, 2022, with the following firms:

1. Telesis Engineers for an amount not to exceed \$1,500,000
2. West Coast Code Consultants for an amount not to exceed \$1,500,000
3. TRB and Associates for an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The full costs for outside plan checking services are covered by plan check fees paid by applicants. The consultants are used on an as-needed basis, which varies based on the availability of in-house resources, as well as on the level and complexity of construction projects. The consultants invoice the City by project, based on work completed. All contract expenditures are fully covered from fees paid by project applicants.

The amount requested per contract is a not-to-exceed (NTE) amount, which is expected to last for three years. Based on previous experience, staff expect that the aggregate amount spent on these as-needed services over the contracts' duration will be less than the total NTE amounts. The average total spending on outside plan check services over the last three years was \$803,260 per year. The average plan check revenues received by the City over the last three fiscal years was \$4.8 million per year. The expenditure code for plan checking services is 621-53-585-634-0000-000-472-612990- (Prof Svcs – Miscellaneous).

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The City requires owners and contractors to obtain building permits prior to construction. Plan review must be performed before most building permits can be issued. Plan check contractor services vary with the volume and complexity of construction projects, and availability of in-house plan checkers.

In response to the City's release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for plan checking services (Specification No.22-11467-C), 13 proposals were received and reviewed by a committee of Planning and Development Department staff. Proposals were judged on five criteria outlined in the RFP, and the firms Telesis Engineers, West Coast Code Consultants, and TRB and Associates received the highest rankings.

#### BACKGROUND

The Planning and Development Department has maintained contracts for outside plan check services to ensure reasonable turnaround times for customers since 1989. The contracts are primarily used for plan review services on an as-needed basis for all types of projects, including new buildings, renovations and alterations of existing buildings, soft-story building retrofits, and high-rise buildings including special life safety provisions. Consultants may also review proposals and make recommendations to the Building Official on acceptance of alternative materials, designs and methods of construction per Section 104.11 of the California Building Code.

Construction activity remains strong this year and is expected to remain strong in the next three years, necessitating the proposed not-to-exceed contract amounts, based on staff analysis of potential need.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

The plan check firms will conduct their work remotely. The Building and Safety Division requires customers to submit plans electronically and conducts electronic plan check. As a result, work can be transferred swiftly to outside consultants without the need to transport plans, and all plan review processes are paperless.

#### RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The services provided by the consultants allow the Building and Safety Division to maintain a turnaround time for plan review that meets the City's performance objectives and the needs of the community. Consultants can be used flexibly when volume is higher than staff can handle, and to maintain necessary services in the face of unforeseeable staff shortages. Consultants also provide special expertise when needed, such as reviews for the soft-story program, advanced building systems, customized construction, etc. Without this help, the review time would be increased substantially, particularly on large and complex projects, and special expertise would have to be contracted on a case-by-case basis causing extensive delays.

#### ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

#### CONTACT PERSON

Jesse Bright, Supervising Plan Check Engineer, Planning Department, 981-7523  
Alex Roshal, Building Official, Planning Department, 981-7445

Attachments:

1. Resolution: Telesis Engineers
2. Resolution: West Coast Code Consulting
3. Resolution: TRB and Associates

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

CONTRACT: TELESIS ENGINEERS FOR PLAN CHECKING SERVICES

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has utilized the services of private plan checking consultants since 1989 to provide expertise and the flexibility to respond to varying work demand; and

WHEREAS, there is a continuing need for flexibility to provide timely plan review when City staff are not available to provide the required services within the timeframe established to meet the City's performance requirements; and

WHEREAS, thirteen firms responded to a Request for Proposals released on October 5, 2021 (Specification No. 22-11467-C); and

WHEREAS, a selection committee reviewed the proposals and determined that Telesis Engineers, West Coast Code Consulting, and TRB and Associates were the best qualified to provide the services needed; and

WHEREAS, the cost of the contracted service and overhead is fully recoverable in fees; and

WHEREAS, the contract has been entered in the Citywide contracts database and assigned; and

WHEREAS, funding for miscellaneous professional services is a baseline budget item (621-53-585-634-0000-000-472-612990-), set at \$930,000 per year and any additional funding above the baseline will be available from the Fund 621 fund balance to be appropriated as part of a future amendment to the appropriations ordinance (AAO).

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager execute a contract, and any amendments with Telesis Engineers for plan checking services for a total contract period of three years in an amount not to exceed \$1,500,000 for the Planning and Development Department (from account 621-53-585-634-0000-000-472-612990-).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a record signature copy of said contract and any amendments will be on file in the Office of the City Clerk.

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

CONTRACT: WEST COAST CODE CONSULTING FOR PLAN CHECKING SERVICES

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has utilized the services of private plan checking consultants since 1989 to provide expertise and the flexibility to respond to varying work demand; and

WHEREAS, there is a continuing need for flexibility to provide timely plan review when City staff are not available to provide the required services within the timeframe established to meet the City's performance requirements; and

WHEREAS, thirteen firms responded to a Request for Proposals released on October 5, 2021 (Specification No. 22-11467-C); and

WHEREAS, a selection committee reviewed the proposals and determined that Telesis Engineers, West Coast Code Consulting, and TRB and Associates were the best qualified to provide the services needed; and

WHEREAS, the cost of the contracted service and overhead is fully recoverable in fees; and

WHEREAS, the contract has been entered in the Citywide contracts database and assigned; and

WHEREAS, funding for miscellaneous professional services is a baseline budget item (621-53-585-634-0000-000-472-612990-), set at \$930,000 per year and any additional funding above the baseline will be available from the Fund 621 fund balance to be appropriated as part of a future amendment to the appropriations ordinance (AAO).

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager execute a contract, and any amendments with West Coast Code Consulting for plan checking services for a total contract period of three years in an amount not to exceed \$1,500,000 for the Planning and Development Department (from account 621-53-585-634-0000-000-472-612990-).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a record signature copy of said contract and any amendments will be on file in the Office of the City Clerk.

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

CONTRACT: TRB AND ASSOCIATES FOR PLAN CHECKING SERVICES

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has utilized the services of private plan checking consultants since 1989 to provide expertise and the flexibility to respond to varying work demand; and

WHEREAS, there is a continuing need for flexibility to provide timely plan review when City staff are not available to provide the required services within the timeframe established to meet the City's performance requirements; and

WHEREAS, thirteen firms responded to a Request for Proposals released on October 5, 2021 (Specification No. 22-11467-C); and

WHEREAS, a selection committee reviewed the proposals and determined that Telesis Engineers, West Coast Code Consulting, and TRB and Associates were the best qualified to provide the services needed; and

WHEREAS, the cost of the contracted service and overhead is fully recoverable in fees; and

WHEREAS, the contract has been entered in the Citywide contracts database and assigned; and

WHEREAS, funding for miscellaneous professional services is a baseline budget item (621-53-585-634-0000-000-472-612990-), set at \$930,000 per year and any additional funding above the baseline will be available from the Fund 621 fund balance to be appropriated as part of a future amendment to the appropriations ordinance (AAO).

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager execute a contract, and any amendments with TRB and Associates for plan checking services for a total contract period of three years in an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000 for the Planning and Development Department (from account 621-53-585-634-0000-000-472-612990-).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a record signature copy of said contract and any amendments will be on file in the Office of the City Clerk.