

City Council Meeting: **September 12, 2017**  
Agenda Item: **3.B**

To: Mayor and City Council  
From: Susan Cline, Director, Public Works, Facilities Maintenance  
Subject: Contract Award for Graffiti Removal Services

### **Recommended Action**

Staff recommends that the City Council:

1. Award Bid #4280 to Woods Maintenance Services (dba Graffiti Control Systems), a California-based company, for graffiti removal services;
2. Authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute an agreement with Graffiti Control Systems in an amount not to exceed \$68,640 (including a \$6,240 contingency) for one year, with four additional one-year renewal options in the amount of \$68,640 plus a 2% increase per year, for a total amount not to exceed \$357,205 over a five-year period, with future year funding contingent on Council budget approval.

### **Executive Summary**

The City provides graffiti removal services for public and private properties in Santa Monica. Due to the frequency of tagging occurrences, the urgency to remove offensive tags, and the lack of proper equipment to handle heavy-duty removals, contractor services are needed to supplement removal efforts by City Staff. In May 2017, the City solicited bids for such services. After reviewing the two bids received, staff recommends Graffiti Control Systems as the best bidder, for one year in an amount not to exceed \$68,640, with four additional one-year renewal options with a 2% increase per year, for a total amount not to exceed amount of \$357,205 over a five-year period.

### **Background**

The City removes graffiti from all buildings and infrastructure. This includes public properties, such as: City buildings, parking structures, sidewalks, benches, utility poles, street signs, or trash bins, and private properties, such as commercial buildings, condos/apartments, homes, or private alley walls. Regardless of location or ownership of the property, graffiti must be removed in an expedient manner because they produce

a negative appearance to the community, harm the public's perceived sense of wellbeing, and directly impact public safety. Graffiti, especially ones that are gang-related, discriminatory, or otherwise offensive, must be removed promptly in order to minimize additional graffiti and crimes, blight, and increased abatement costs down the road.

On August 12, 2014, Council awarded Bid #4160 to Graffiti Control Systems Services to provide graffiti removal services for three years in an amount not to exceed \$200,000, per Attachment A. The contract was based on 24 hours per week (three eight-hour days) plus a contingency for as-needed service calls. Graffiti Control Systems Services has provided contracted graffiti removal services focusing on the Pico neighborhood and pressure washing services for difficult removals since 2006.

### **Discussion**

The Facilities Maintenance Division removes over 43,530 tags per year. City staff removes approximately 87% (37,930) of the annual tags per year; the remaining tags, approximately 5,600, are removed by a contractor.

In-house graffiti removal technicians focus on graffiti tags that are securely accessible and small to medium-sized. Staff contracts out the more difficult graffiti removals to ensure safety and community wellbeing. The City contracts out graffiti removals on properties over two stories high with minimal landing to ensure the safety of City staff. The City also contracts out urgent removals of gang-related or inflammatory graffiti to prevent additional tagging that could occur if the graffiti were not promptly removed. By augmenting in-house graffiti removal services with contracted services, the City has kept the response time to less than 24 business hours. In many cases, tags are removed within one hour.

In 2015, one additional graffiti removal technician position was approved as part of the Contract and As-Needed Staffing Review: Policy, Practice, & Recommendations report (Attachment B), increasing the number of in-house graffiti removal technician positions to four. However, consecutive retirements followed the approval of an additional graffiti

removal technician, reducing the amount of full-time graffiti technicians to two and necessitating graffiti removal contract services. The four graffiti removal technician positions became fully staffed in January 2017. However, City trucks used by the crew are not equipped with mounted pressure washing capabilities to tackle graffiti tags that are more difficult to remove, another reason the Facilities Maintenance Division has used contractor services.

### Vendor Selection

On May 25, 2017, the City published Notices Inviting Bids to provide citywide graffiti removal services in accordance with City specifications. The bid was posted on the City's on-line bidding site, and notices were advertised in the Santa Monica Daily Press in accordance with City Charter and Municipal Code provisions. 28 vendors downloaded the bid. Two bids were received and publicly opened on June 8, 2017 per Attachment C. Bids were evaluated based on the criteria in SMMC 2.24.072, including price, previous experience, ability to deliver, quality of product, and compliance with City specifications. Although Graffiti Control Systems Services bid is \$14,352 higher, they offered a faster response time and have experience with the online Tracking Automated and Graffiti Reporting System (TAGRS). Graffiti Control Systems Services offered a 30-minute response time for emergency graffiti removal requests, while the other bidder, AES Property Services, offered a 24-hour response time. Immediate graffiti removal is essential as tags are often derogatory and tend to attract additional tagging when not promptly removed. Graffiti Control Systems Services also has experience with TAGRS, which is a database where graffiti can be photographed, recorded, and tracked for quick analysis and subject identification. AES Property Services does not have any experience with TAGRS. Staff recommends that the City continues to utilize TAGRS to support enforcement efforts against graffiti tagging. Based on the faster response time and direct experience with TAGRS, Graffiti Control Systems Services is recommended as the best bidder.

The contract to be awarded to Graffiti Control Systems Services would be based on 16 hours per week (two eight-hour days), at prevailing wage rates, plus contingency for as-needed service calls and urgent removals.

**Financial Impacts and Budget Actions**

The contract to be awarded to Graffiti Control Systems is for an amount not to exceed \$357,205. Funds of \$68,640 are available in the FY 2017-18 budget in the Public Works Department. The contract will be charged to account 014523.544220. Future year funding is contingent on Council budget approval.

**Prepared By:** Kyla Johnson, Administrative Analyst

**Approved**

**Forwarded to Council**



Susan Cline, Director

8/31/2017



Rick Cole, City Manager

9/5/2017

**Attachments:**

- A. August 12, 2014 Staff Report
- B. January 13, 2015 Staff Report
- C. GRAFFITI REMOVAL BID RESULTS
- D. Oaks -Woods Maintenance dba Graffiti Control Systems