



Board Report

File #: 2023-0702, **File Type:** Contract

Agenda Number: 27.

**OPERATIONS, SAFETY, AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE
JANUARY 18, 2024**

SUBJECT: TREE TRIMMING MAINTENANCE SERVICES METRO G LINE (ORANGE)

ACTION: APPROVE CONTRACT AWARD

RECOMMENDATION

AUTHORIZE the Chief Executive Officer to award a firm fixed unit rate Contract No. OP496040008370 to Thrifty Tree Service, Inc., the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, to provide tree trimming maintenance services along the Metro G Line (Orange), in the not-to-exceed (NTE) amount of \$1,415,000 for the three-year base period, and \$914,500 for the one, two-year option, for a total combined NTE amount of \$2,329,500, effective February 29, 2024, subject to the resolution of any properly submitted protest(s), if any.

ISSUE

The existing contract for tree trimming maintenance services along the Metro G Line (Orange) expires on February 28, 2024. To avoid a lapse in service and continue providing safe, quality, as-needed tree trimming services, a new contract award is required effective February 29, 2024.

BACKGROUND

In March 2019, Metro awarded a firm fixed unit rate Contract No. OP1238940003367 to Thrifty Tree Service, Inc., to provide tree trimming maintenance services along the Metro G Line (Orange) 18-mile long dedicated busway with lush landscaping and mature trees. Under the existing contract, Thrifty Tree Service, Inc. has been providing satisfactory tree trimming services along the Metro G Line (Orange). Tree trimming maintenance services for Metro's systemwide facilities and Rights-Of-Way (ROWs), excluding Metro G Line (Orange), are performed under a separate contract.

DISCUSSION

On October 16, 2023, Metro received three (3) bids. Based on the evaluation of the bids, Thrifty Tree Service, Inc. was deemed the lowest responsive and responsible bidder.

Under the new contract recommended for award, the contractor is required to provide tall tree trimming services for trees over 13 feet in height along the Metro G Line (Orange). The Metro G Line (Orange) is an 18-mile long dedicated busway that connects the East and West San Fernando Valley

communities. There are roughly 2.3 million square feet of landscaping and approximately 8,000 tall trees over 13 feet in height along the Metro G Line (Orange) which include stations, areas behind the sound wall, park-and-ride lots, and areas on the North and South sides of the fence along Chandler Blvd. While San Fernando Valley weather is known for intense wind conditions and heavy rains, the lush and mature trees require special attention with proactive approach for trees' assessment and trimming.

Under this new contract, the annual count of trees to be trimmed has been increased from 1,360 to 2,465, to keep up with the surge in tree growth due to the significant rainfall associated with the 2023 El Niño season, anticipated to continue in 2024. Safe, timely, proactive, and quality tree trimming services are necessary to ensure maintaining visibility with clear line of sight for bus operators and mitigating service interruption due to safety hazards associated with falling overgrown tree branches.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

The approval of this item will ensure meeting Metro's maintenance standards by providing the necessary tree trimming maintenance services with prompt response time to mitigate safety hazards and deliver timely and reliable services.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Funding of \$75,279 for tree trimming services along Metro G Line (Orange) for the remainder of FY24 is allocated under cost center 8370 - Facilities Contracted Maintenance Services, account 50308, Service Contract Maintenance, under project 301012.

Since this is a multi-year contract, the cost center manager, Deputy Chief Operations Officer, Shared Mobility will be accountable for budgeting the costs for future years.

Impact to Budget

The current source of funds for this action include Fares, Proposition A/C, Measures R/M (Transit Operations), State Transportation Assistance, and the Transportation Development Act. These fund sources are eligible for bus and rail operations.

EQUITY PLATFORM

Providing ongoing proactive tree trimming maintenance services will ensure a clear line of sight of the roadway, traffic signals, and signs along the travel path, and also mitigate service interruptions due to safety hazards associated with falling tree branches. This will result in maintaining safe working conditions for bus operators and provide safe reliable service for all patrons along the Metro G Line (Orange).

Metro customers, staff, and Transit Ambassadors can report tree maintenance related problems through the Customer Relations phone numbers posted throughout Metro's system. Customers have

the option of communicating with Metro in nine (9) different languages using our translation service. Metro also ensures translated signage is posted for those reporting tree issues on the Metro system.

This contract is part of the Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Prime (Set-Aside) Program. Thrifty Tree Service, Inc. is a Metro certified SBE contractor and fulfilled a 100% SBE commitment as the Prime.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

This Board action supports Strategic Goal 5: Provide responsive, accountable, and trustworthy governance within the Metro organization. Performing ongoing tree trimming maintenance services contributes to facilities' overall cleanliness, minimizes safety hazards and service interruptions along with enhancing customers' experience.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board may elect not to approve the recommendation. This option is not recommended as it would result in a gap in service impacting Metro's operations, system safety and reliability.

With the completion of a financial-based insourcing/outourcing study based on a quantitative and qualitative assessment, staff has analyzed insourcing/outourcing options for tree trimming services among other services. Based on the findings, tree trimming services were not recommended for insourcing as it would require Metro to create a new job classification, hire a certified arborist and purchase additional equipment, vehicles, and supplies to support tree trimming service delivery.

NEXT STEPS

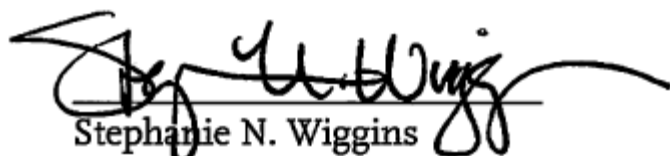
Upon approval by the Board, staff will execute Contract No. OP496040008370, with Thrifty Tree Service, Inc., to provide tree trimming maintenance services along the Metro G Line (Orange), effective February 29, 2024.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Procurement Summary
Attachment B - DEOD Summary

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Stephanie N. Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer

PROCUREMENT SUMMARY

**TREE TRIMMING MAINTENANCE SERVICES METRO G LINE (ORANGE) /
OP496040008370**

1.	Contract Number: OP496040008370	
2.	Recommended Vendor: Thrifty Tree Service, Inc.	
3.	Type of Procurement (check one) : <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IFB <input type="checkbox"/> RFP <input type="checkbox"/> RFP-A&E <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Competitive <input type="checkbox"/> Modification <input type="checkbox"/> Task Order	
4.	Procurement Dates:	
	A. Issued: September 13, 2023	
	B. Advertised/Publicized: September 13, 2023	
	C. Pre-Bid Conference: September 20, 2023	
	D. Bids Due: October 16, 2023	
	E. Pre-Qualification Completed: December 11, 2023	
	F. Ethics Declaration Forms Submitted to Ethics: October 16, 2023	
	G. Protest Period End Date: January 23, 2024	
5.	Solicitations Picked up/Downloaded: 13	Bids Received: 3
6.	Contract Administrator: Shannon Thoene	Telephone Number: (213) 922-2790
7.	Project Manager: Maral Minasian	Telephone Number: (213) 922-6762

A. Procurement Background

This Board Action is to approve the award of Contract No. OP496040008370, issued in support of tree trimming services for trees 13 feet and above in height, along the G Line (Orange), an 18-mile dedicated Busway that connects the East and West San Fernando Valley communities. The entire length of the Busway includes 18 transit stations that are landscaped and irrigated. There are roughly 2.3 million square feet of landscaping and nearly 8,000 trees on the right-of-way, south and north of the fence along Chandler Blvd., rail stations, behind the soundwall, and Metro park-and-ride lots. Tree trimming services include enhancing tree shapes to encourage new growth, reporting tree condition, and tree removal. Board approval of contract award is subject to the resolution of any properly submitted protest.

On September 13, 2023, Invitation for Bids (IFB) No. OP49604 was issued as a competitive sealed bid procurement in accordance with Metro's Acquisition Policy and the contract type is firm fixed unit rate. This IFB was issued as a Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Prime Set Aside solicitation.

One Amendment was issued during the solicitation phase of this IFB:

- Amendment No. 1, issued October 3, 2023, revised Exhibit 5 - Bid Letter to extend the validity period of bids to 180 calendar days after bid opening.

A virtual pre-bid conference was held on September 20, 2023, with seven firms in attendance.

Thirteen firms downloaded the IFB and were included on Metro's planholders' list. Five questions were received, and responses were released before the bid due date.

A total of three bids were received by the due date of October 16, 2023, and are listed below in alphabetical order:

1. Far East Landscape and Maintenance, Inc.
2. Golden West Arbor Services Inc.
3. Thrifty Tree Service, Inc.

B. Evaluation of Bids

The procurement was conducted in accordance with Metro's Acquisition Policy for a competitive sealed bid.

The recommended firm, Thrifty Tree Service, Inc. (Thrifty Tree) was the apparent lowest bidder, and its bid was further evaluated to determine responsiveness to the solicitation requirements. Areas of responsiveness include meeting the minimum qualifications requirements, such as years of commercial arboriculture experience performing tree trimming and tree removal maintenance services in safety-sensitive areas, possession of required licenses to perform the required services, and having an arborist and tree worker certified by the International Society of Arborists (ISA). Thrifty Tree Service, Inc. was determined to be qualified to perform the required services based on the IFB requirements.

C. Price Analysis

The recommended amount has been determined to be fair and reasonable based on adequate competition, price analysis, technical analysis, and an independent cost estimate (ICE). The recommended amount is 8.6% higher than the original bid amount due to a calculation error in the bid by the bidder. Verification revealed that the bidder failed to include the "as-needed services" in the total bid amount for the three-year base term.

	Bidder Name	Original Bid Amount	Metro ICE	Recommended Amount
1.	Thrifty Tree Service, Inc.	\$2,146,000	\$2,669,475	\$2,329,500
2.	Far East Landscape and Maintenance, Inc.	\$3,045,925		
3.	Golden West Arbor Services Inc.	\$3,756,750		

D. Background on Recommended Contractor

The recommended firm, Thrifty Tree Service, Inc., incorporated in 1997, is located in Murrieta, California. It provides a wide range of tree care and advice services to residential, commercial, and public agency clients within the Los Angeles and Ventura Counties, including all surrounding areas. Public agency clients in Los Angeles County include the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks and the Department of Public Works.

Thrifty Tree is a Metro-certified Small Business Enterprise (SBE).

Thrifty Tree has been performing tree trimming services for Metro since January 2019 and performance has been satisfactory.

DEOD SUMMARY

TREE TRIMMING MAINTENANCE SERVICES / OP496040008370

A. Small Business Participation

This procurement was subject to the Small Business (SB) Prime (Set-Aside) policy and was open to **SBE Certified Small Businesses Only**. Thrifty Tree Services, Inc., an SB Prime, will perform 100% of the work with its own workforce and is compliant with the SB Prime (Set-Aside) requirements established for this project.

SMALL BUSINESS SET-ASIDE

	SBE Prime Contractor	SBE % Committed
1.	Thrifty Tree Services, Inc. (Prime)	100%
	Total Commitment	100%

B. Living Wage and Service Contract Worker Retention Policy Applicability

The Living Wage and Service Contract Worker Retention Policy is not applicable to this contract.

C. Prevailing Wage Applicability

Prevailing Wage requirements are applicable to this project. DEOD will monitor contractors' compliance with the State of California Department of Industrial Relations (DIR), California Labor Code, and, if federally funded, the U S Department of Labor (DOL) Davis Bacon and Related Acts (DBRA).

D. Project Labor Agreement/Construction Careers Policy

Project Labor Agreement/Construction Careers Policy is not applicable to this Contract. Project Labor Agreement/Construction Careers Policy is applicable only to construction contracts that have a construction contract value in excess of \$2.5 million.