



**DATE:** June 22, 2021

**TO:** Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Director of Public Works

**SUBJECT** Adopt a Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Award a Contract to Root Tamers, Inc., for Sewer Root Control Services in an Amount Not-to-Exceed \$94,498

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council adopts a resolution (Attachment II), authorizing the City Manager to award a contract to Root Tamers, Inc., for Sewer Root Control Services in an amount not-to-exceed \$94,498.

### **SUMMARY**

The Utilities Division of the Department of Public Works & Utilities oversees the maintenance of approximately 320 miles of sewer mains in the sanitary sewer system. This project will treat approximately 12.8 miles of sanitary sewer pipe at various locations throughout the City with a root foaming material to prevent or delay regrowth, which will extend the longevity of the sanitary sewer system and prevent sewer overflows and backups.

### **BACKGROUND**

Root intrusion is a significant contributor to sewer line clogging, which can result in sanitary sewer overflows. The nature of the City's landscape, numerous trees, as well as the fact that some public sewers are located off public streets in easements where there is an abundance of grasses and shrubs, leaves some City sewer mains vulnerable to root intrusion into the sewer lines, especially in times of drought and low rain fall.

Treatment of the sanitary sewer lines is a cost-effective method to help prevent backups and sewer spills. Root foaming is a standard maintenance method of applying herbicides to the sewer pipe interior to control the growth of roots in sewer system. The herbicides are approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for this use and will not disrupt the City's Water Pollution Control Facility. The foam, containing both an herbicide and growth inhibitors, is pumped through the sewer main, via hydro cleaner, from manhole to manhole to release a foam coating on the interior wall of the pipe. Roots within the sewer pipe are inhibited from growing and eventually the process curbs the new growth of roots upon contact with the herbicide foam. This method leaves a foaming barrier on the pipe walls

without permanently damaging the vegetation producing the roots, and the treatment generally inhibits regrowth for two to three years.

The Utilities Division staff performs regular sewer main cleaning and has an ongoing program to monitor and inspect the condition of the City's sanitary sewer collection system using closed circuit television (CCTV) technology. The inspection is performed by placing a camera, mounted on tracks, inside a sewer pipe, and remotely guiding it through the length of the pipe. As the camera moves forward, it sends back video to a TV monitor that enables staff to inspect the pipe in real time. Based on the CCTV inspections, approximately 12.8 miles of sanitary sewer lines located throughout the City, were selected for treatment to address ongoing problems with root obstructions.

## **DISCUSSION**

On April 30, 2021, the City issued a request for quote (RFQ) and called for bids to provide sewer root control services to be received by May 20, 2021. Public works projects consisting primarily of repair or maintenance work are subject to informal bidding pursuant to the Municipal Code. Contractors for these types of projects may be selected on the basis of price, qualifications, experience with similar projects, and any other factors the City determines to be relevant.

On May 20, 2021, the City received two (2) bids for the project, a bid for \$86,147 and another bid for \$101,627. Root Tamers, Inc., (Root Tamers) submitted the lowest responsive bid in the amount of \$101,627. The lowest bid of \$86,146 was unresponsive due to the inability to provide the specified herbicide and application method as stated in the RFQ. The City specified the use of Sanafoam Vaporooter II as the only acceptable herbicide based on previous sewer root control projects that had the most effective results. In past projects, the City had used another herbicide and found the product did not eliminate or inhibit the roots as effectively as Sanafoam Vaporooter II. Furthermore, the City specified the application of the foaming herbicide must be achieved by a machine that assures the foam will completely fill the pipe and did not allow the use of water activated foaming products. Over 50% of the sewer pipe segments are in easements and challenging areas with limited access to a water source. Given the scope of work, staff requested a best and final offer from Root Tamers, and they offered \$84,498 for the root control services, which is 13% above the engineer's estimate of \$74,615.

Root Tamers has over thirty years of experience performing chemical root control by using cost-effective treatment that inhibits the re-growth of roots. In addition, Root Tamers has provided quality work and excellent service to the City for sewer root control in previous years. Staff has reviewed the bid documents and licenses, and they are all in order. Staff recommends award of contract to the lowest responsive bidder, Root Tamers, in an amount not-to-exceed \$94,498 to treat the 67,832 linear feet identified in the RFQ. This amount also includes a \$10,000 contingency for additional services if required and authorized by the City. Given the complexity and unforeseen nature of working in easement areas, this additional services budget will cover the need to address uncertain field conditions.

This project is statutorily exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Section 15301(b), which allows for maintenance of existing public facilities involving negligible or no expansion of use.

**ECONOMIC IMPACT**

Maintaining the sewer main and appurtenances are part of an effort to, pursuant to Council direction, modernize and upgrade existing infrastructure. The project will reduce operations and maintenance costs associated with servicing the otherwise obstructed sewer mains. The community will enjoy the benefits of the project, including the continued operability and serviceability of the sewer collection system. Furthermore, robust and reliable sewer infrastructure can help foster economic development and viability in the City.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The estimated costs for the Sewer Root Control Services are as follows:

Root Control Services	\$84,498
<u>Additional Services Contingency</u>	<u>\$10,000</u>
Total	\$94,498

This effort will be supported by Fund 610 Sewer Operations, which has sufficient funds.

**STRATEGIC ROADMAP**

This agenda item is a routine operational item and does not relate to one of the Council’s six Strategic Priorities.

**SUSTAINABILITY FEATURES**

The maintenance of sewer lines reduces the risk of sewer overflows, which can cause untreated wastewater to flow into public roadways and waterways.

**PUBLIC CONTACT**

During construction, notices will be provided to affected residents, property, and business owners to inform them of the nature and purpose of the work, potential impacts, work schedule and City contact for additional information.

**NEXT STEPS**

If Council approves this item, staff will finalize an agreement with Root Tamers, Inc., and issue a Notice to Proceed.

The following schedule has been developed for this project:

Award of Contract  
Notice to Proceed  
Services Completion

June 22, 2021  
July 19, 2021  
September 2021

*Prepared by:* Karla Castro, Assistant Civil Engineer  
Tay Nguyen, Senior Utilities Engineer

*Recommended by:* Alex Ameri, Director of Public Works

Approved by:



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Kelly McAdoo, City Manager