



- **Board of Directors**
Engineering, Operations, and Technology Committee

10/8/2024 Board Meeting

7-3

Subject

Award a \$448,000 contract to Heed Engineering to provide construction materials to support the construction of the helicopter hydrant facility at the Robert B. Diemer Water Treatment Plant; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA

Executive Summary

In November 2023, Metropolitan and the Yorba Linda Water District (YLWD) signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) outlining the commitment to jointly fund and construct a helicopter hydrant facility at the Robert B. Diemer Water Treatment Plant (Diemer plant). The project will be partially funded by a \$500,000 grant previously awarded by the United States Forest Service (USFS) to YLWD to construct the facility. Metropolitan is now a subrecipient of the grant and the grant funds will be used to defray Metropolitan's cost for the project.

A helicopter hydrant facility consists of an open-top tank and support infrastructure that allows helicopters to quickly collect water to fight nearby fires. In accordance with the MOU, Metropolitan will perform the design, procurement, and construction activities related to the facility. To date, design has been completed, and fabrication of the helicopter hydrant tank is underway; the tank is scheduled to be delivered in January 2025. Staff recommends proceeding with a contract to furnish construction materials and install reinforcing steel to expedite site preparation for the tank foundation and the helicopter pad.

This action awards a \$448,000 contract to Heed Engineering to provide construction materials and install reinforcing steel to support construction of the helicopter hydrant facility at the Diemer plant. See **Attachment 1** for the allocation of funds, **Attachment 2** for the Abstract of Bids, and **Attachment 3** for the Location Map.

Proposed Action(s)/Recommendation(s) and Options

Staff Recommendation: Option #1

Option #1

Award a \$448,000 contract to Heed Engineering to provide construction materials and install reinforcing steel to support the construction of the helicopter hydrant facility at the Diemer plant.

Fiscal Impact: Expenditure of \$500,000 in capital funds. All costs will be incurred in the current biennium and have been previously authorized.

Business Analysis: This option will expedite construction of the Diemer helicopter hydrant facility.

Option #2

Do not award the contract at this time.

Fiscal Impact: Unknown

Business Analysis: Under this option, staff would not procure construction materials and instead prepare a construction contract for the entire project. This option would delay the construction of the hydrant facility

beyond the timeline to qualify for the use of grant funds and implementation of a critical fire protection facility.

Alternatives Considered

During design, staff considered the feasibility of completing all the construction work for the Diemer helicopter hydrant facility under a construction contract. In accordance with the terms of the MOU, the project will be partially funded by a \$500,000 grant previously awarded by the USFS to YLWD to construct a new helicopter hydrant in the area. The timeframe for preparation of construction documents, bidding, and performing the work by a contractor would extend the project completion beyond the allowable time of the USFS grant, whose finish date is March 31, 2025. The current approach is to proceed with site preparation while the tank is being fabricated. Then Metropolitan forces will install the tank. This allows staff to complete the project within the timeline established by the USFS to access the grant funding and expedites the construction of an important fire protection facility.

Applicable Policy

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 8121: General Authority of the General Manager to Enter Contracts

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 11104: Delegation of Responsibilities

Related Board Action(s)/Future Action(s)

By Minute Item 53248, dated May 9, 2023, the Board amended the Capital Investment Plan for Fiscal Years 2022/23 and 2023/24 to include the Diemer Helicopter Hydrant Facility project.

By Minute Item 53598, dated April 8, 2024, the Board appropriated a total of \$630 million for projects identified in the Capital Investment Plan for Fiscal Years 2024/25 and 2025/26.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA determination for Option #1:

The proposed action is exempt from CEQA because it involves the operation and minor alteration of existing public facilities and topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use and no possibility of significantly impacting the physical environment. (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.) Additionally, the proposed action is exempt from CEQA because it consists of construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure. (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15303.)

CEQA determination for Option #2:

None required

Details and Background

Background

The Diemer plant was placed into service in 1963 with an initial capacity of 200 million gallons per day (mgd) and was expanded in 1969 to its present capacity of 520 mgd. It delivers a blend of waters from the Colorado River Aqueduct and State Water Project to Metropolitan's Central Pool and to an exclusive service area in Orange County. The Diemer plant is located within the City of Yorba Linda, and is immediately adjacent to the Chino Hills Start Park, which features a hilly, steep terrain populated by dense trees and vegetation.

In November 2008, the Freeway Complex fire burned westward from Corona past the Diemer plant. Slopes on the east, north, and west sides of the plant were burned, which prompted the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) to classify the Diemer site as a high fire hazard risk area. Following this event, Metropolitan retrofitted the Diemer plant's control room with new fire protection measures, including the addition of an independent high-

efficiency heating, ventilating, and air conditioning system to enhance smoke control in the event of a local fire occurrence. The new system allowed staff to continue plant operations during the October 2020 wildfires, which occurred within one mile of the Diemer site.

In recent years, Metropolitan staff continued to assess potential initiatives to enhance safety and reduce the risk of damage or disruption to plant operations in the event of a fire. In May 2023, Metropolitan's Board authorized the implementation of a helicopter hydrant facility at the Diemer plant site, which includes an engineered water tank system to allow helicopters to quickly collect water to fight nearby fires.

In November 2023, Metropolitan and YLWD signed an MOU to jointly fund, design, and construct the Diemer helicopter hydrant facility. In accordance with the terms of the MOU, Metropolitan will perform the design, procurement, and construction activities, and YLWD will provide up to \$500,000 in grant funding previously granted by the USFS to construct a new helicopter hydrant in the area. YLWD will also provide support during design and construction and coordination with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and OCFA to ensure design and operational conditions are acceptable to both agencies. Metropolitan will own and operate the facility after construction is completed. In March 2024, the USFS officially included Metropolitan as a subrecipient of the grant.

To date, the design of the Diemer helicopter hydrant facility has been completed and the procurement contract for the helicopter hydrant tank was awarded under the General Manager's authority. The tank has been custom designed based on its planned operating conditions and control requirements. Manufacture of the tank is underway and is anticipated to be completed in January 2025. Staff recommends moving forward with a contract to furnish materials and install steel reinforcement so that site preparation work, including trenching, grading, and construction of the tank foundation and the helicopter landing pad, can be completed in anticipation of the planned delivery of the tank.

Diemer Helicopter Hydrant Facility Project – Procurement

Planned work by Metropolitan forces for the helicopter hydrant includes the addition of a new 15-foot by 8-foot open-top water holding tank, including piping connections to source water, valves, an auxiliary hydrant, electric power, and data connections; integration into the SCADA control system; trenching for utilities; equipment concrete platform and a concrete helicopter landing pad.

The scope of the procurement contract consists of furnishing sand, ballast rock, aggregate base, slurry, ready-mix concrete, and reinforcing steel, and installing the reinforcing steel. Metropolitan will perform site preparation for placement of reinforcing steel by the vendor, and placement of vendor-furnished aggregate materials.

A total of \$500,000 is required for this work. In addition to the amount of the contract subject of this action, allocated funds include \$15,000 for construction inspection of the steel reinforcement installation; \$25,000 for submittal review, contract administration and project management; and \$12,000 for remaining budget.

Attachment 1 provides the allocation of the required funds.

Award of Procurement Contract (Heed Engineering)

Specifications No. 2142 for furnishing aggregate base materials and ready-mix concrete and furnishing and installing reinforcing steel for the Diemer plant's helicopter hydrant facility was advertised for bids on August 15, 2024. As shown in **Attachment 2**, four bids were received and opened on August 29, 2024. The apparent low bid was deemed to be non-responsive due to the submittal of an incomplete bid and lack of the required California contractor's license. The lowest responsive bid from Heed Engineering in the amount of \$448,000 complies with the requirements of the specification. The other two bids were \$543,400 and \$1,137,000, while the engineer's estimate was \$610,000. For this contract, Metropolitan established a Small Business Enterprise (SBE) participation level of at least 25 percent of the bid amount. Heed Engineering is a certified SBE firm and thus achieves 100 percent SBE participation.

This action awards a \$448,000 contract to Heed Engineering to provide construction materials and install reinforcing steel to support construction of a helicopter hydrant facility at the Diemer plant.

Project Milestone

November 2024 – Delivery of construction materials



Mai M. Hattar
Interim Chief Engineer
Engineering Services

9/19/2024
Date



Deven Upadhyay
Interim General Manager

9/23/2024
Date

Attachment 1 – Allocation of Funds

Attachment 2 – Abstract of Bids

Attachment 3 – Location Map

Ref# es12701163

Allocation of Funds for Diemer Helicopter Hydrant Facility

	Current Board Action (Oct. 2024)
Labor	
Studies & Investigations	\$ -
Final Design	-
Owner Costs (Program mgmt., envir. monitoring)	25,000
Submittals Review & Record Drwgs.	-
Construction Inspection & Support	15,000
Metropolitan Force Construction	-
Materials & Supplies	-
Incidental Expenses	-
Professional/Technical Services	-
Right-of-Way	-
Equipment Use	-
Contracts	-
Heed Engineering	448,000
Remaining Budget	12,000
Total	<u>\$ 500,000</u>

The total amount expended to date for the Diemer plant’s helicopter hydrant facility is approximately \$530,000. The total estimated cost to complete the project, including the amount appropriated to date, and funds allocated for the work described in this action is \$1.5 million, which includes \$500,000 in USFS grant funds.

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Abstract of Bids Received on August 29, 2024, at 2:00 P.M.

Specifications No. 2142
Diemer Helicopter Hydrant Construction Materials and Rebar Installation

The work includes furnishing aggregate base materials, ready-mix concrete, and reinforcing steel; and installing reinforcing steel at the Robert B. Diemer Water Treatment Plant.

Engineer’s estimate: \$610,000

Bidder and Location	Total	SBE \$	SBE %	Met SBE¹
Co Brothers LLC ² Riverside, CA	\$398,000	-	-	-
Heed Engineering Foothill Ranch, CA	\$448,000	\$448,000	100%	Yes
Penta Inc. San Dimas, CA	\$543,400	-	-	-
Minako America Corporation Gardena, CA	\$1,137,000	-	-	-

¹ Small Business Enterprise (SBE) participation level established at 25% for this contract.

² Contract bid was incomplete and contractor did not have the required California contractor’s license

Distribution System

