



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

11/19/2024 Board Meeting

7-1

Subject

Amend an agreement with Roesling Nakamura Terada Architects to provide design and architectural services for Stage 1 improvements of the District Housing and Property Improvements Program; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA

Executive Summary

Metropolitan maintains employee housing, kitchens, and short-term lodging facilities at the Colorado River Aqueduct (CRA) pumping plants due to their remote locations. After decades of use, these facilities are showing signs of deterioration and require replacement. In Spring 2023, a community planning effort was undertaken to identify options and recommend an approach for employee housing at the pumping plant villages. As presented to the Engineering, Operations, and Technology (EOT) Committee in October 2024, the community planning effort is complete, and staff recommends implementing the new CRA housing strategy in four stages.

This action authorizes an amendment to the previously authorized agreement with Roesling Nakamura Terada Architects (RNT Architects) for design and architectural services of the District Housing and Property Improvements Program. While this amendment revises the scope of the agreement to be consistent with the new housing strategy, an increase to the agreement amount is not required for design and architectural services for Stage 1 of the housing program. See **Attachment 1** for the List of Subconsultants and **Attachment 2** for the Location Map.

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

Staff Recommendation: Option #1

Option #1

Authorize an amendment to an agreement with Roesling Nakamura Terada Architects to provide design and architectural services for Stage 1 improvements at Metropolitan's desert facilities.

Fiscal Impact: Expenditure of \$10.3 million in capital funds will be incurred in the current biennium and has been previously authorized. The remaining funds for this action (\$3 million) will be accounted for in the Capital Investment Plan budget for the next biennium following board approval of the budget.

Business Analysis: This option will preserve Metropolitan assets and maintain an appropriate standard of living for staff stationed at Metropolitan's desert facilities.

Option #2

Do not proceed with amending the agreement at this time.

Fiscal Impact: None

Business Analysis: This option would forgo or defer an opportunity to preserve Metropolitan assets at the desert facilities.

Alternatives Considered

Alternatives considered for completing Stage 1 design of the District Housing and Property Improvements Program included assessing the availability and capability of in-house Metropolitan staff to conduct this work. Metropolitan's staffing strategy for utilizing consultants and in-house Metropolitan staff has been: (1) to assess current work assignments for in-house staff to determine the potential availability of staff to conduct this work, and (2) for long-term rehabilitation projects when resource needs exceed available in-house staffing or require specialized technical expertise.

Staff has determined that specialized technical expertise is required to complete the design for Stage 1 improvements. Metropolitan staff does not routinely perform design related to community development and housing replacements. After assessing the current workload for in-house staff and the relative priority of this project, staff recommends using a professional services agreement for the housing and property improvements using consultants with expertise in this area. This approach will allow for the completion of this program and other budgeted capital projects within their current schedules and ensure the work is conducted in the most efficient manner possible.

Staff also considered initiating a new solicitation process to select a firm to perform the architecture and engineering support services for the revised Stage 1 design work. It was determined, however, that the revised design work is consistent with the scope of services in the prior solicitation and that initiating a new process would delay the completion of the Stage 1 design work unnecessarily.

Applicable Policy

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 11104: Delegation of Responsibilities

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

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

By Minute Item 52179, dated November 10, 2020, the Board authorized preparation of conceptual master plan and to conduct property assessments for District housing.

By Minute Item 52381, dated May 11, 2021, the Board authorized two new agreements for environmental documentation and geotechnical services in support of the District Housing and Property Improvements.

By Minute Item 52448, dated July 13, 2021, the Board authorized an increase to an agreement with Roesling Nakamura Terada Architects for preliminary design and architectural services in support of the District Housing and Property Improvements.

By Minute Item 52980, dated September 13, 2022, the Board authorized an increase to an agreement with Roesling Nakamura Terada Architects for final design and architectural services in support of the District Housing and Property Improvements.

Board Informational Item 9-2, dated July 9, 2024, transmitted the final report from the community planner on the District Housing and Property Improvement Program.

Board Informational Item 6a, dated October 7, 2024, recommended implementing the new CRA housing strategy in four stages.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA determination for Option #1:

The proposed action is exempt from CEQA because it involves only feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions which the Board has not approved, adopted, or funded. (Public Resources Code Section 21080.21; State CEQA Guidelines Section 15262.) In addition, the proposed action is exempt from CEQA because it consists of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. These may be strictly for information-

gathering purposes or as part of a study leading to an action that a public agency has not yet approved, adopted, or funded. (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15306.)

CEQA determination for Option #2:

None required

Details and Background

Background

The CRA is a 242-mile-long conveyance system that transports water from the Colorado River to Lake Mathews in Riverside County. The CRA includes five pumping plants, which are in remote, isolated areas of the California desert. The aqueduct system was constructed in the late 1930s and was placed into service in 1941. Since the CRA's inception, Metropolitan has provided lodging or housing to employees involved in constructing, operating, and maintaining the aqueduct system. Due to the remoteness of the pumping plants, providing housing ensures that staff can respond to emergency events promptly.

Houses, kitchens, and short-term lodging were initially constructed at the CRA pumping plants in the early 1940s. The expansion of the CRA's capacity in the 1950s led to the construction of additional houses. Metropolitan has performed routine maintenance on these facilities since they were built. After decades of continuous use and exposure to the harsh desert environment, the houses have deteriorated and need to be replaced.

In May 2019, Metropolitan initiated a housing improvements program and hired a consultant, RNT Architects, to perform conditional assessments of the existing houses across Metropolitan's four pumping plants (Hinds, Eagle Mountain, Iron Mountain, and Gene). In 2020 and 2021, the consulting agreement was amended to prepare a master plan and preliminary design, respectively, to replace the CRA houses in-kind while incorporating additional amenities. Upon completion of both those efforts, in September 2022, the Board authorized an increase to this agreement for final design of 96 single-family residence houses, village enhancements, and kitchen and lodging improvements. In the Spring of 2023, it was decided to pause design and engage a community vision planner to explore the best long-term workforce housing strategy in the context of a changing workforce, advancements in technology, and expansion of some adjacent desert communities. The community planning process included in-person site visits to each village, meetings with residents to hear their perspectives regarding current housing and future housing plans, and meetings with Metropolitan's Executive and Desert management and labor leadership to review alternative housing strategies.

In April 2024, staff provided a summary update to the EOT Committee regarding the community planning vision and strategy, including steps taken during the planning process. The recommended community vision plan strategy: (1) maintains current housing for the existing employees; (2) consolidates Hinds and Eagle villages to create a single, larger village with combined resources; (3) provides short-term housing at Hinds pumping plant for staff that are on standby to comply with the 15-minute response time; (4) tests a new townhome housing model which provides townhome housing for employees only; and (5) provides recreation amenities at Eagle Mountain and Iron Mountain villages. This fourth item is a philosophical shift from Metropolitan's current practice of houses for families in these villages. In July 2024, the Community Planning Report was transmitted to the Board through a board report update, and in October 2024, staff recommended proceeding with the four-stage approach outlined below. The community planning effort is complete, and staff recommends implementing the program in a manner consistent with the report recommendations using a staged approach beginning with Stage 1.

Stage 1 of the program will: (1) construct eight new 750-square foot townhomes comprised of 1-bedroom and 1-bath at each of the three villages for a total of 24 townhomes; (2) upgrade the existing kitchens and lodges at Eagle Mountain and Iron Mountain; (3) construct a second guest lodge at Gene pumping plant; (4) construct three 350-square foot rooms at Hinds village for staff working standby shifts; and (5) provide amenity packages at Eagle Mountain and Iron Mountain villages. The first stage will test the new townhome model over several years at the Eagle Mountain, Iron Mountain, and Gene pumping plants. The anticipated construction cost for Stage 1 is approximately \$82 million.

Based on the success of the new housing model, three subsequent stages would then be implemented over multiple years to replace all the current single-family residences with townhomes at Eagle Mountain, Iron Mountain, and Gene pumping plants. Stage 2 of the program would construct 24 townhomes; Stage 3 would construct 39 townhomes, and Stage 4 would construct 18 townhomes. The total anticipated construction cost of Stages 2 through 4 is approximately \$68 million for a total of \$150 million for all four stages. This does not include the costs required to upgrade all utilities and water treatment systems. The staged approach ensures a smooth transition for employees to the new housing model and amortizes the capital cost over multiple years.

District Housing and Property Improvements Program – Design, Stage 1

Staff recommends beginning design activities for Stage 1 of the District Housing and Property Improvements Program. Design phase activities include: (1) conceptual design for the townhomes, including a comparison between modular construction and “stick construction” where a structure is assembled piece by piece on site; (2) conceptual village site layouts incorporating the new townhomes; (3) phasing strategy to optimize construction sequencing; (4) preparation of preliminary and final drawings and specifications; (5) development of a construction estimate; and (6) advertisement and receipt of competitive bids. Staff will assess the number of bid packages required for construction contracts to optimize construction sequencing and ensure minimum impacts on plant operations.

Staff plans to use the previously allocated funds from the September 2022 Board Action and will not need additional funds to complete Stage 1 design activities, as described earlier. The final design cost for Stage 1 as a percentage of the estimated construction cost is approximately 10.2 percent. Final design costs are \$8.4 million, which includes \$7.5 million for consultant design and \$895,000 for Metropolitan staff review. The construction cost for Stage 1 is estimated at \$82 million. Engineering Services’ goal for the design of projects with construction costs greater than \$3 million is 9 to 12 percent. Staff will return to the Board at a later date for the award of construction contracts.

The total cost for the District Housing and Property Improvement Program is estimated to range from \$200 million to \$210 million.

Engineering & Architectural Design Services (Roesling Nakamura Terada Architects) – Amendment to Agreement

RNT Architects was originally prequalified to provide architecture and engineering support services via Request for Qualifications No. 1198. As described above, the Board awarded the agreement in May 2019 and authorized three agreement amendments for a total agreement amount of \$13.5 million. To date, RNT Architects has spent \$5.1 million on the completion of housing assessments, master planning, and preliminary design for the in-kind replacement of single-family houses, village enhancements, and replacement of the existing kitchens and lodges, as well as the community planning efforts, for the Desert Housing and Property Improvements Program. The remaining agreement amount (\$8.4 million) is sufficient for RNT Architects to perform Stage 1 design activities.

This action authorizes an amendment to the existing agreement with RNT Architects to modify the final design services from single-family residences to townhomes while maintaining the scope of work for village enhancements and replacement of the kitchen and lodge buildings. The amended planned activities for RNT Architects include: (1) conceptual design for the townhomes; (2) conceptual village site layouts incorporating the new townhomes; (3) development of preliminary and final design drawings and specifications for the addition of 24 new townhomes, replacement of the kitchens, lodges, and various village enhancements; (4) preparation of an engineer’s cost estimate; (5) preparation of fire and health department submittal packages for Riverside and San Bernardino Counties; and (6) technical assistance through bidding. The estimated cost for these services is \$7.5 million.

For this agreement, Metropolitan has established a Small Business Enterprise participation level of 25 percent. RNT Architects has agreed to meet this level of participation. RNT Architects will provide design and architectural services in support of implementing Stage 1 improvements, as described above.

Project Milestone

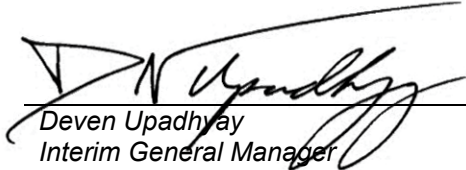
September 2026 – Completion of final design of Stage 1 improvements



Mai M. Hattar
Interim Chief Engineer
Engineering Services

10/18/2024

Date



Deven Upadhyay
Interim General Manager

10/28/2024

Date

Attachment 1 – List of Subconsultants

Attachment 2 – Location Map

Ref# es12703991

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Subconsultants for Agreement with Roesling Nakamura Terada Architects

Subconsultant and Location	Service Category; Specialty
Civitas Denver, CO	Community Planning
Fuscoe Engineering Inc. Irvine, CA	Engineering Services – Civil & Geotechnical
Spurlock Landscape Architects San Diego, CA	Landscape Architect
KPF Consulting Engineers Los Angeles, CA	Engineering Services – Structural
MA Engineers San Diego, CA	Engineering Services – Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing, & Fire Sprinklers
Webb Foodservice Design Anaheim, CA	Architectural – Commercial Kitchens
Cumming Group Los Angeles, CA	Project Management & Cost Estimation
Aquatic Design Group Carlsbad, CA	Recreation Architect
WSP USA Inc. Los Angeles, CA	Engineering Consultant

Location Map

