



STAFF REPORT

DATE: NOVEMBER 18, 2025

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: KIRSTEN GRAHAM, PUBLIC WORKS MANAGER

SUBJECT: AWARD OF PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACT TO SS+K CONSTRUCTION INC. FOR GEORGE F CANYON NATURE CENTER PROJECT - PHASE ONE

OVERVIEW

The following is a request for the City Council to award a Public Works Contract for the George F Canyon Nature Center Project to SS+K Construction Inc. in the amount of \$3,720,743.00, plus a 10% contingency of (\$372,074.30) for a grand total of \$4,092,817.30.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

The George F Canyon Preserve and Nature Center in Rolling Hills Estates, jointly operated by the City and the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy, serves as a hub for environmental education, community engagement, and access to the canyon's native habitats. Fully envisioned, a new state-of-the-art Nature Center will replace the existing facility, expanding the space to over 3,000 square feet with flexible indoor and outdoor areas, interactive exhibits featuring local flora, fauna, and live animals, a viewing deck, an outdoor classroom, and improved trail access. Designed with sustainability in mind, the project incorporates photovoltaic panels, EV charging stations, stormwater capture systems, and California native and drought-tolerant landscaping. Although educational and outreach programs continue to be offered and supported by Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy, the original modular building constructed in the 1990s has exceeded its service life and does not meet current building and accessibility standards and was closed in Fall 2024.

Over the past several years, staff have advanced planning for the new Nature Center through architectural, engineering, and environmental design phases, including plan check review completed by Willdan Engineering. In August 2024, the project was formally bid for construction. The City received two bids, both of which exceeded \$5 million and were rejected by the City Council as not financially feasible. Since that time, staff have worked closely with the project architect Rosling Nakamura Terada Architects, Inc. (RNATA) and project manager, Transtech Engineers, to refine the project approach, while also exploring other funding opportunities. At City Council direction, the project was then

divided into phases to allow the City to focus on the main Nature Center building as the primary construction phase, while deferring the outdoor classroom deck and canyon walkway to a future phase once additional funding is secured.

The Phase One project represents the initial component of a multi-phase reconstruction effort. This first phase includes construction of the new Nature Center building and associated site work, grading, utilities, and landscaping around the building pad. Future phases will include additional outdoor education features such as the amphitheater and classroom spaces.

In August 2025, staff presented a project update and City Council approved proceeding with bid solicitation for Phase One of the Nature Center Project (main building construct, excluding the walkway and outdoor classroom) and authorized staff to pursue financing options to close an estimated \$1.1 million funding gap.

The project was advertised for public bid on September 12, 2025, and bids were received and opened on October 29, 2025 at 11:00 a.m. with six responsive bids.

Bid Results

BIDDER	TOTAL BID AMOUNT
SS+K Construction, Inc.	\$3,720,743.00
Foundation Builders Corp.	\$3,992,269.70
Newman Midland Corp.	\$4,119,004.00
Loghmani & Associates, Inc.	\$4,120,250.00
CALTEC Corp.	\$4,400,000.00
MLC Constructors, Inc.	\$4,485,507.00

Bid Analysis

The City's consultant for this project, Transtech Engineers, Inc., conducted a comprehensive bid review of all submittals, verifying mathematical accuracy, license status, bid bond validity, and compliance with the project specifications. The analysis confirmed that SS+K Construction, Inc. submitted all required bid documents and that both the contractor and all listed subcontractors hold active California contractor licenses and current DIR registrations. The firm also meets the self-performance and subcontractor participation requirements specified in the contract documents.

Following the bid opening, the City received a bid protest from Newman Midland Corp., the third-lowest bidder, regarding alleged omissions and pricing irregularities in SS+K Construction's bid. The City and its consultant, Transtech Engineers, reviewed the protest in detail and determined that the issues raised did not constitute material irregularities or grounds for disqualification. The City Attorney's office also reviewed the bid protest, which was found to lack merit. The protest was therefore denied, and SS+K Construction, Inc. remains the lowest responsive and responsible bidder.

Based on this evaluation, SS+K Construction, Inc. was determined to be the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, with a total bid amount of \$3,720,743.00, which is 11

percent lower than the average bid of \$4,139,629.00 received from all six bidders and 8 percent below the Engineer's Estimate of \$4,000,000.00. These results reflect a competitive and reasonable proposal for the Phase 1 project scope.

Reference checks from comparable public agencies confirmed that SS+K Construction has delivered high-quality work, maintained clear communication, and completed projects on schedule.

A detailed Bid Analysis Report prepared by Transtech Engineers, Inc. is provided as Attachment B.

On-site Construction Project Management

Staff is currently refining the proposal with Transtech Engineers, Inc. for on-site construction management and materials testing services, including the provision of hazardous materials (asbestos and lead) testing and soils/materials testing. Staff are estimating a budget of \$300,000 for this task order, which will be finalized after the City holds the pre-construction meeting and receives a detailed schedule from the awarded contractor. Staff expect to present the task order for City Council authorization in December or January.

Funding Summary

Professional services costs, including architectural and engineering fees, budgeted or expended to date total \$824,523. This amount also includes consultant services for bid document preparation, project and construction management, payroll certification, inspection services, and ongoing architectural firm costs. Following the award of the construction bid, additional professional services will be needed to support construction management.

Based on the bid received, the estimated construction cost for Phase One, which covers all contractor-related expenses, is \$3,720,743, with a contingency of \$372,075. Furnishings, equipment, and interpretive design are expected to cost approximately \$850,000, with the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy contributing a significant portion toward the educational components.

Phase One with October 2025 bid

<i>Estimated Costs</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Professional Services	\$ 824,523
Total Estimated Construction Cost w/ no alternatives	\$ 3,720,743
Contingency	\$ 372,075
Estimated on-site Construction Management	\$ 300,000
Furnishings/Education	\$ 850,000
Total Project Cost	\$ 6,067,341

**Includes costs currently incurred and contracted*

The Phase One project is funded through a combination of local and grant sources as summarized below:

Grants	Amount
City Park Facility Fees budgeted or expended to date	\$ 387,000
CA State Dept Parks & Rec (Sen. Allen)	\$ 1,200,000
LA County- Supervisor Hahn commitment	\$ 500,000
Prop 68 - Per Capita Program	\$ 177,952
Prop 68 - Urban Area	\$ 5,040
Rolling Hills Partnership (Prop 68)	\$ 177,952
Rolling Hills Partnership (Prop 68-urban area)	\$ 1,156
Measure A	\$ 318,482
Estimate PVPLC contribution	\$ 850,000
Allocated City contribution (2025/26 Measure W)	\$ 120,000
Allocated City contribution (Park Facilities Fees)	\$ 1,200,000
Rivers and Mountains Conservancy Grant	\$ 424,200
Total Funds Allocated/Granted	\$ 5,361,782

The remaining balance needed to fund the first phase of the Nature Center building (excluding the outdoor classroom and walkway) is estimated at \$705,559, down from the initial estimate of \$1.1 million. To address this funding gap, at the meeting of August 26, 2025, City Council approved the allocation of reserve funds, with an alternative financing option available if needed.

City staff continue to seek private donations and have submitted a Los Angeles County Measure A Competitive Grant Request for \$4 million. If awarded, this grant would support Phase One by closing the funding gap, covering the cost of educational exhibits managed by the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy, and offsetting a portion of the expenses currently supported by the City’s Park Facilities Fees. In addition, this funding would allow us to complete Phase Two, which includes the outdoor learning pavilion and the ramp/gateway to the canyon. The grant award announcement is expected in Spring 2026.

If approved by the City Council, the Public Works Contract will be awarded to SS+K Construction Inc. Staff will execute the construction agreement and issue the Notice to Proceed once all required bonds and insurance are received. Construction is expected to begin in early 2026 and is anticipated to last approximately 12 months.

FISCAL IMPACT

As stated above, there is an estimated \$5,361,782 in allocated funds for the project, which includes City restricted funds and reimbursable grants. The City currently has \$1,200,000 in Park Facilities Fees allocated in the next two fiscal year budgets (FY 2025-26 = \$600,000 and FY 2026-27 = \$600,000) to support the project. Staff will return at mid-year with a budget adjustment to fully accommodate expenditures and incorporate all funds that will support the full scope of Phase One of the project.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The agenda and staff report for this item were posted and noticed as required.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council accept the bid from SS+K Construction Inc. in the amount of \$3,720,743.00, plus a 10% contingency (\$372,074.30) for a grand total of \$4,092,817.30.

Attachments:

- A. *Bid Summary*
- B. *Bid Analysis from Transtech Engineering*
- C. *Bid from SS+K Construction Inc.*