



## Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
CC: Members of Administration and Public Works Committee  
From: Stefanie Levine, Senior Project Manager.  
CC: Edgar Cano - Public Works Agency Director; Audrey Thompson - Parks and Recreation Director; Lara Biggs - City Engineer  
Subject: Approval of a Contract Award with Christopher B. Burke Engineering Ltd. for the Ladd Arboretum Canoe Launch Project (RFP No. 22-42)  
Date: February 13, 2023

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Recommended Action:

Staff recommends that City Council authorize the City Manager to execute a contract with Christopher B. Burke Engineering Ltd. (820 Davis Street, Suite 520, Evanston, Illinois 60201) for engineering services for the Ladd Arboretum Canoe Launch Project (RFP No. 22-42) in the amount of \$125,498.

Funding Source:

Funding will be provided from the Capital Improvement Program 2021 General Obligation Bonds in the amount of \$62,749, and from a private donation from the Evanston Environmental Association in the amount of \$62,749. A detailed financial analysis is included in the attached memo.

CARP:

Urban Canopy & Green Space

Council Action:

For Action

Summary:

The Ladd Arboretum is a 17.4-acre arboretum that borders the north bank of the North Shore Channel between Emerson Street and Green Bay Road. Amenities located within the Ladd Arboretum include the Evanston Ecology Center, walking/biking paths, specialty gardens, plant community habitats, and an apiary. A now-defunct canoe launch was located immediately south of the Ecology Center and was historically used to support summer camps, a 3-season canoeing program, and classes and field trips from Evanston Township High School. Due to significant degradation and lack of compliance with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA),

the wooden canoe launch and access stairs became unsafe and were permanently closed several years ago. Without an operable launch, North Shore Channel programming has been substantially reduced, and the remaining programming has been relocated to other area boat launches outside of Evanston.

In 2007, the City Council approved the [Ladd Arboretum Master Plan](#), which identified the canoe launch as an important and needed recreational resource for the City. The master plan recommended performing an engineering study to thoroughly evaluate the design and cost of constructing a new launch and suggested it be relocated to the west side of Bridge Street for improved accessibility and public access.

In 2019, the City received a Coastal Management Grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and private funding from the Evanston Environmental Association (EEA) to perform a feasibility study for the canoe launch project. The Public [Canoe Launch Feasibility Study](#) was completed in 2020 and verified the master plan’s suggested site. The study also provided a preliminary design solution, including improvements to an adjacent parking lot, a cost estimate, and an evaluation of permitting requirements for the project.

The EEA has since identified the design and construction of the canoe launch as a priority project. Since the mid-1970s, the EEA has supported the Ecology Center and championed ecology-based programming and community awareness in Evanston, partnering multiple times with the City to raise funds for capital improvements to the Ecology Center. Continuing this long-standing tradition, the EEA is actively raising funds to support this project and will be involved in the design and implementation process. An MOU outlining the EEA’s financial commitments to this project is scheduled to go before the City Council for approval on February 13, 2023.

Analysis

On August 4, 2022, the City issued a Request for Proposal for consultant services to design the canoe launch. On September 13, 2022, proposals were received from the following four consulting firms:

<b>Firm</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Proposed Cost</b>
Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd.	820 Davis Street, Suite 520, Evanston, IL 60201	\$319,442
ESI Consultants	1979 N. Mill Street, Suite 100, Naperville, IL 60563	\$326,479
GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc.	915 Harger Road, Suite 330, Oak Brook, IL 60523	\$437,953
MKSK, Inc.	200 S. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46225	\$284,275

The proposals were reviewed by the following staff and EEA members:

- Lara Biggs, Capital Planning and Engineering Bureau Chief / City Engineer – Public Works Agency
- Patricia Broughton, EEA Member
- Michael Callahan, Assistant Director – Parks and Recreation Department

- Stefanie Levine, Senior Project Manager – Public Works Agency
- Matt Poole, Recreation Manager – Parks and Recreation Department
- Karen Taira, EEA President
- Linda Thomas, Purchasing Specialist – Administrative Services Department

Following the initial scoring, the selection committee met to discuss the proposals received and develop a shortlist for interviews. After discussion, interviews were conducted with Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd. (CBBEL), GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc. (GZA), and MKSK, Inc. (MKSK). The selection committee felt that CBBEL and GZA were the strongest two candidates and sent each firm additional questions to better understand their proposal and capabilities. After receiving responses from these two firms, the selection committee met again to discuss the responses and finalize the recommendation. Below is a chart indicating the scoring following the interviews and additional selection committee discussions:

Consultant	Firm Qualifications and Experience	Project Approach	Price	Organization and Completeness of Proposal	Willingness to Execute City Contract	MW/EBE Participation	Interview	Total
Maximum Points	25	25	20	10	10	10	10	110
CBBEL	19	21	18	8	10	10	7	93
GZA	21	20	14	8	8	10	8	89
MKSK	20	17	20	8	8	9	6	88

CBBEL demonstrated the overall highest level of project understanding and represented the best value to the City and EEA in performing the required services. City staff has worked with CBBEL on multiple past projects with favorable results. CBBEL's overall consulting fee is \$319,442. However, as the project's implementation will depend substantially on the EEA's ability to raise funding, staff recommends the award of Task 1 (Site Investigation, Concept Design, and Public Engagement) and Task 2 (Construction Documents) only at this time. Limiting the award to these tasks will provide the EEA with a detailed design solution which is expected to assist them with their construction fundraising initiative. Staff plans to return to the City Council for approval of CBBEL's future consulting tasks (Task 3 – Bidding and Negotiations, Task 4 – Construction Administration, and Task 5 – Post Construction) utilizing a contract amendment once construction funding is available. Thus the selection committee recommends the award of this contract to CBBEL for Task 1 and Task 2 work in the amount of \$125,498 at this time.

A review of the project for compliance with the City's M/W/EBE program goals is attached.

Detailed Financial Analysis

EEA has agreed to provide 50% of the funding for consulting services. The breakdown of the funding for this contract is as follows:

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Account No.</b>	<b>Remaining Budget</b>	<b>Project Cost</b>
EEA Donation	415.40.4219.62145 - 520009	\$62,749	\$62,749
2021 GO Bonds	415.40.4121.62145 - 520009	\$133,000	\$62,749
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$125,498</b>