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Construction management contract awarded for Canyon Bridge project

By Vera Kochan



Delays are expected during the tree removal project beginning Jan. 13 at the temporary Canyon Bridge. Photo Vera Kochan

After receiving proposals from six firms, the field was narrowed to three by the Moraga Public Works Department in regards to awarding a time and materials contract toward the construction of a new Canyon Bridge slated to begin in the spring.

According to Interim Public Works Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp, after a Dec. 11 presentation to the town council, Harris and Associates, Inc. of Concord was chosen as consultant to perform construction management services which includes inspection, materials testing and construction engineering.

Harris and Associates is familiar with Moraga's Canyon Bridge issues, having been the firm that successfully managed the opening of the temporary bridge in three months and 5.5% under budget. The firm has vast experience dealing with federal, state and county measures, which should come in handy with the town's Caltrans and Measure J grants funding the project.

The council unanimously voted to award the fully-funded contract to Harris in the amount of \$999,738, which includes a 15% contingency. The Caltrans Highway Bridge Program grant is expected to cover \$885,068 of costs, while the additional \$114,670 will come from Contra Costa County Measure J grant funds.

Before the new bridge can even begin a construction process, tree removal measures must be taken. In order to avoid any future landslide impacts on the new bridge, it has been designed for installation further east. In doing so, 31 trees need to be eliminated from its path by a separate contractor, Julian Tree Care of Richmond, this month. These trees could potentially serve as nesting sites for endangered species beginning February until the end of their nesting season, as late as July. If trees are not removed prior to that period and an endangered species were discovered it could delay the project and increase costs.

Knapp stated, "The work is anticipated to start Monday, Jan. 13 and go on for about 10 working days (Monday thru Friday), but the contractor may have the option to work on the weekends. The work hours are tentatively scheduled from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m." He added, "If the weather was severe enough to cancel work activities for a day, the contractor would be granted another day to resume work."

With public safety in mind, traffic flow may be stopped occasionally with delays of up to 15 minutes at a time. The contractor will provide informational signs and warnings for drivers and cyclists.

The tree removal contract awarded to Julian Tree Care comes to \$43,955.30 (including a 15% contingency). Once again the costs are fully funded with Caltrans HBP grant funds of \$38,913.63 and CCC Measure J funds of \$5,041.67 taking care of the rest.

Reach the reporter at: vera@lamorindaweekly.com

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