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# Lake Oswego City Council approves consulting firm for wastewater treatment plant project

👤 Clara Howell 📅 July 22 2021

**Carollo Engineers, Inc. will help with project oversight, technical advisory services over next 13 months.**



PMG FILE PHOTO - The Lake Oswego City Council approves a consulting firm to help with the wastewater treatment plant project.

(<https://pamplinmedia.com/images/artimg/00003709719340-0889.jpg>)The city of Lake Oswego took another step forward in the wastewater treatment plant project and hired a consulting firm to ensure the work produced by developer EPCOR Foothills Water Partners will meet the city's needs.

During the July 20 City Council meeting, the council unanimously voted to authorize a special procurement — meaning the city will not send out a request for proposal, which could take a couple months — for Carollo Engineers, Inc. to help with project oversight and technical advisory services.

"As the City does not currently own or operate a Wastewater Treatment Plant, we do not have staff with the capacity or expertise to provide targeted and technical input on design and engineering products provided by EPCOR," the city's July 20 staff report read. "In addition, there is an estimate of about 3,600 hours of work that is needed to provide adequate technical oversight of the work products that EPCOR will deliver to the City over the next year."

The current Tryon Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, which is owned by the city of Portland, was built in 1964 and needs to either be rebuilt or upgraded to meet regulatory requirements. At this point, the city intends to build a new plant that would be owned by Lake Oswego, operated by EPCOR and provide service for Lake Oswego and parts of the greater Portland area.

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This past May, the council selected EPCOR Foothills Water Partners to design, build, finance, operate and maintain the new plant.

The contract with Carollo Engineers to assist the city consulting services, like oversight and design review, over the next 13 months would not exceed \$932,800 — or about \$71,800 a month. Carollo Engineers would essentially review EPCOR's results under the preliminary services agreement.

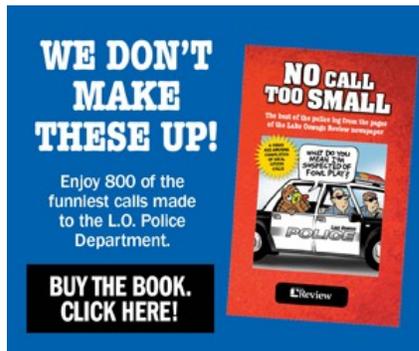
Dan Laffitte, project manager with Carollo Engineers, said he would bring expertise to the design process to make sure the city is comfortable with the approaches presented by EPCOR, essentially acting as an "extension of your staff."

Deputy City Manager Anthony Hooper said Carollo has developed knowledge of the project "that would be hard to replace."

Hooper added that Carollo had designed the city's 2013 Wastewater Master Plan and worked on the secondary process expansion for the wastewater treatment plant.

"Since 2019, Carollo has developed a substantial body of technical work to develop the specifications used in the procurement process to select EPCOR as the Project Company. Any other firm, solicited through an RFP (Request for Proposal), would need to invest substantial time (and money) to be able to become knowledgeable in the current status and parameters of the Project," the staff report read. "Additionally, the RFP solicitation timeline would impact the City's schedule by needing to delay approving technical EPCOR work products until a technical advisor can be hired."

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Councilor Daniel Nguyen expressed concerns about engaging another firm to work on the project, given the possibility that the city could decide not to move forward with the project at some point. He asked if this would impact the city's "off-ramps" — points when the city could decide to cancel the project.

Hooper said they still have control over the process and they're only paying Carollo for the work they do.

"We need the services basically in order to make sure the quality of the project we're doing is to the city's needs," said Hooper, adding that Carollo is bringing 14 experts to the table. "This is a service we need regardless."

Hooper noted the consulting costs are being split between Lake Oswego and Portland.

Over the last few months, according to Hooper, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality has been receptive to the recently selected AquaNereda technology for the plant.

This technology is more financially feasible and adaptable to high flows caused by rain infiltration into the wastewater system. Hooper said the plant will look like a commercial building and won't smell like a typical wastewater plant. He also said EPCOR is working to submit an application for a \$30 million loan for this project.

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"EPCOR is going to be the first private company to submit on behalf of the city," Hooper said.

Hooper also noted that they're working on robust outreach and plan to do a sustainability workshop in fall, which will be followed by a survey. Staff plans to come before the council in October for a study session and anticipates having completed 50% of the design plans by then.

Councilor Aaron Rapf said Hooper and the team have done "incredible" work so far on this project.

"We have a responsibility to continue to push this forward," Rapf said.

For more information, visit the city's website. (<https://bit.ly/3eCH07Z>)



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