TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL
FROM: CITY MANAGER
DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS
DATE: AUGUST 4, 2008
CMR: 330:08
SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF A CONTRACT WITH GROUP 4 ARCHITECTURE RESEARCH + PLANNING, INC. IN THE TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $195,400 FOR FORMER LOS ALTOS TREATMENT PLANT FEASIBILITY STUDY (INCLUDING SPACE NEEDS AND SITING FOR A NEW ANIMAL SERVICES AND RECYCLE CENTER) CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM PROJECT PE-09004

RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that Council approve and authorize the City Manager or his designee to execute the attached contract (Attachment A) with Group 4 Architecture Research + Planning, Inc., in the total amount of $195,400 for the former Los Altos Treatment Plant Feasibility Study.

BACKGROUND
On November 13, 2007, Council approved an agreement with the City of Los Altos (CLA) that provided for the purchase of the CLA’s one-half interest in a 13.26 acre site at 1237 North San Antonio Road, commonly known as the Los Altos Treatment Plant (LATP) site. Following the January 2008 close of escrow on the purchase of the site, staff has worked with the CLA and the Santa Clara County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to complete the annexation process so that the site will fall within Palo Alto city limits (CMR:409:07).

Staff had been exploring a streamlined procedure for annexing the property, but it now appears that LAFCO will be the lead agency and that the process will take approximately 6 months.

The LATP site is divided into three areas. The northernmost piece, Area A (4.0 acres), is undeveloped and currently consists of non-native grasslands on top of fill material and brackish marsh along the perimeter of a remnant slough channel, separated from Area B by a levee. Area B (6.64 acres) is the site of the former LATP, which contains a vacant industrial facility, non-native grassland and six abandoned treatment ponds. Area C (2.62 acres) is adjacent to the Los Altos metering and lift station and is primarily undeveloped, mostly non-native grassland.

DISCUSSION
With the closing of Palo Alto’s landfill and the recycling center in 2011 and with the potential relocation of an automobile dealership to the existing Animal Services Center (ASC) at 3281 East Bayshore Road, there is a need to identify new locations for these and other uses. The Utility Department also uses the front portion of the ASC to store construction material which would also need to be relocated. Staff from various departments began meeting in April 2008 to
discuss the current status of the LAFCO process, environmental review needs and to identify other potential sites for a future recycling center, ASC and other uses.

Three sites and various uses were identified as meriting inclusion in a LATP Feasibility Study, which is proposed as a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Project for Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-2009. The sites are the LATP; a non-parkland area adjacent to and on the west side of the Regional Water Quality Control Plant (RWQCP); and the current Palo Alto Sanitation Company (PASCO) office on Geng Road. The third site, would only be available however, if it is not needed by a future refuse contractor. The selection of the next refuse contractor is currently underway.

The uses that would be considered for one or more of these sites are:

- **Household Hazardous Waste Facility (HHWF).** The HHWF involves the collection, packaging and short-term storage of household wastes such as paints, pesticides, motor oil, etc. Presently, a temporary HHWF is operated one day a month in the guest parking lot of the RWQCP.

- **Recycling Center.** The space currently occupied by the Recycling Center will be filled with debris as part of the landfill closure and will need to be relocated.

- **Animal Services Center (ASC).** The ASC may need to be relocated from its current site in order that an expanded automobile dealership could be built on the current East Bayshore Road site. The Utility Department uses the area in front of the ASC for storage of construction materials and equipment.

- **Drying Bins.** Drying bins are areas where wet spoils from storm drains or other maintenance work are deposited until they have dried and can be put into the landfill (or, in the future, put into a transfer station to await transport to the Sunnyvale Materials Recovery and Transfer (SMaRT®) Station). Drying bins are currently located in an area south of the RWQCP that will revert to parkland as part of Byxbee Park.

- **Transfer Stations.** Transfer stations are bins where construction debris left over from daily maintenance activities can be deposited until there is enough of a load to warrant hauling it to the SMaRT® Station. This debris is currently taken to the Palo Alto landfill.

- **Utility Department Staging Yard.** Area C of the LATP site is currently used for equipment and material storage by the Utility Department. This use may need to be relocated to other areas of the LATP, space permitting.

- **Resource Recovery Station (RRS).** As part of the City’s goal of zero waste, a RRS will be evaluated for placement at one of the potential sites. The RRS is envisioned as an area where useable construction materials (sinks, doors, lumber, etc.) can be salvaged from a construction or demolition site and offered for re-use. There is currently no funding identified for the construction of a facility of this type, nor an operating policy. The objective of the LATP Feasibility Study is to identify whether it would be feasible to locate an RRS on the LATP or other site, and if so, to identify a proposed location, size and approximate construction cost.
The contract with Group 4 Architecture Research + Planning, Inc. is for study purposes only and
does not constitute a design contract. The study will balance the various space needs against the
available sites and develop a conceptual site plan showing the possible layout and circulation
patterns for the various uses. This feasibility study together with a further environmental
assessment can then be used by Council to make further decisions regarding appropriate site
uses. Once the uses are approved by Council, detailed design of the various facilities could
commence.

An environmental risk assessment and remediation plan for the former LATP site will be
provided for under a separate agreement with Geosyntec Consultants (CMR:313:08). Previous
studies have revealed relatively minor levels of contamination at the site and cleanup of the site
is required whether or not any development occurs. This remediation plan will include removal
of all existing structures on the site; dewatering and disposal of contaminated water within the
sludge ponds; removal or capping of contaminated soils and soil backfill, sampling and testing
before any new facilities can be located at the site. Any facilities or uses at the former LATP site
will be coordinated so that they do not impact the wetlands area in Area A. In addition, certain
portions of Area B may require approvals from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the State
before site development.

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<th>Summary of Solicitation Process</th>
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An evaluation committee consisting of staff members from the Public Works Operations and
Public Works Engineering reviewed the proposals. The evaluation committee unanimously
selected Group 4 Architecture Research + Planning, Inc. as the top proposer. Group 4
Architecture Research + Planning, Inc. is a large, local design firm with strong experience with
the design of municipal facilities, including storage facilities and animal shelters. They are also
experienced in the design of green buildings.
**RESOURCE IMPACT**
The total contract amount for this study is $195,400. Funding for the Animal Services Center portion of this study in the amount of $100,000 has been budgeted in Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Project PE-09004 for fiscal year 2008-2009. Since the project will also address the needs of the Public Works Operations Division and the Utility Department, $47,700 of the remaining cost will be paid through CIP RF-07001 (relocation of landfill facilities) and $47,700 through RF-10003 (Drying Beds, Material Storage and Transfer Area).

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**
Approval of the contract is consistent with City policies and previous Council direction.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**
This is a planning and feasibility study and therefore not a project subject to environmental review under Section 15262 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. Environmental review will be conducted in connection with the Council’s final approval of uses at the site.

**ATTACHMENTS**
Attachment A: Contract

PREPARED BY:  
__________________________  
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DEPARTMENT HEAD:  
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Director of Public Works

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