



MEMORANDUM

TO: Greenbelt Advisory Commission
FROM: Rosie Pahl Donaldson, Land Acquisition Supervisor
DATE: April 9, 2026
SUBJECT: Recommendation to Approve a General Services Agreement for Conservation Easement Services with Legacy Land Conservancy (\$500,000)

For your review is a resolution to recommend approval of a General Services Agreement with Legacy Land Conservancy in the amount of \$500,000.00 for conservation easement services. The \$500,000 agreement is comprised of \$100,000 per year for three years, with an optional two year renewal.

Background: The Open Space and Parkland Preservation (OSPP) 30-year millage and corresponding charter amendment were approved by City of Ann Arbor voters in November 2003 to provide funding for the preservation and protection of open space, natural habitats, sourcewater and working landscapes surrounding the city, and for parkland within the city, via acquisition of land and land rights. Two-thirds of the OSPP millage funds land preservation surrounding the city for the Greenbelt (and Bluebelt) Program.

The Greenbelt Program engages in permanent land preservation predominantly using conservation easements, of which the City currently holds 43. Each conservation easement must have a baseline documentation report recorded with it upon acquisition, which is a detailed collection of maps, photos, descriptions, and property narratives, used as a "baseline" to monitor change on the property. Additionally, every conservation easement must be visited and monitored each calendar year, to ensure the terms of the easement are being met. As conservation easements age or significant changes are made on the properties, it may become prudent to conduct current conditions reports, which are akin to major updates to baseline documentation reports. These documents are critical to the legal strength of conservation easements, and staff wish to ensure they follow the highest standards.

Services Description: The City of Ann Arbor sought proposals for comprehensive conservation easement monitoring services for the City of Ann Arbor Greenbelt's conservation easements and additional conservation easements as acquired over the course of the contract; baseline documentation reporting services as requested by City

for new conservation easement acquisitions; and current conditions reporting services for conservation easements.

Request for Proposals: Park staff solicited proposals through Request for Proposals #26-19 through the City's Procurement Unit. The scope of work was distributed electronically through the City of Ann Arbor's procurement website and MITN.info. Notice of the RFP was also sent to the local accredited land trusts as well as to the statewide umbrella organization of Michigan land trusts.

On March 25, 2026, one proposal was received, from Legacy Land Conservancy. A selection committee comprised of Parks staff evaluated the proposal, with Legacy Land Conservancy receiving full marks on professional qualifications and past involvement with similar projects, and high marks for technological capabilities and fee proposal. Legacy Land Conservancy is a nonprofit land trust, accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. Since their founding in 1971, they have acquired 118 conservation easements for which they write baseline documentation reports and monitor annually. Legacy Land Conservancy has experience working for governments, having provided the sought services for the Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission since 2011, as well as for the City of Ann Arbor Greenbelt program since 2023 (under a smaller contract).

Budget/Fiscal Impact: Funding is available from the Open Space and Parkland Preservation fund.

RESOLUTION

Whereas, In November, 2003, the City of Ann Arbor voters approved the Open Space and Parkland Preservation millage, to provide funds for the preservation and protection of parkland, open space, natural habitats, and City source waters by acquisition and management of land and land rights within and outside the City of Ann Arbor;

Whereas, Chapter 42 of Ann Arbor City Code establishes the Greenbelt District and authorizes the City to purchase and manage land and conservation easements on property within the district with Open Space and Parkland Preservation Millage proceeds;

Whereas, Conservation easements require baseline documentation reports, annual monitoring, and potentially current conditions reports;

Whereas, Park staff solicited proposals for conservation easement services through the City's Procurement Unit and Legacy Land Conservancy was the only respondent and a high scoring respondent;

Whereas, The City has been satisfied with the work of Legacy Land Conservancy;

Whereas, Legacy Land Conservancy has submitted all required Non-Discrimination, Prevailing Wage, Living Wage, and Conflict of Interest Disclosure forms and complies with the requirements of the City's Non-Discrimination, Prevailing Wage, and Living Wage Ordinances; and

Whereas, Funding is available from the Open Space and Parkland Preservation Millage Fund;

RESOLVED, That the Greenbelt Advisory Commission recommends that City Council approve a general services agreement with Legacy Land Conservancy in the amount of (\$500,000.00) for Conservation Easement Services.