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April 9, 2026

Board of Public Works
West Allis City Hall
West Allis, Wisconsin

Re: Project No. 2026-11 – Private Property Work: Lead Service Line Replacements Contract Award

Dear Board Members:

The Engineering Department opened bids for several projects over the past few weeks. Three of the projects relate to the installation of private side lead water service lateral installations. Specifically, the projects are:
2026-6 – 2026 CIP Lead Service Line Replacements
2026-11 - Private Property Work: Lead Service Line Replacements
2026-12 – Private Property Work: Private Water Service Replacements, Sanitary Lateral Rehabilitations, Storm Lateral Extensions, and Sump Pump Installations

MJ Construction is the apparent low bidder on all three projects. They are also the subcontractor for the W. Mitchell St. reconstruction project awarded at the March 24, 2026 Council meeting (the prime contractor is LaLonde Contractors. The work that MJ Construction is responsible for on the W. Mitchell St. project is large diameter storm sewer, watermain, and sanitary sewer removal and replacement. This includes new laterals to properties.

These three projects have a total of 290 private side lead water service laterals to be replaced. The lateral breakdown per project is as follows:

2026-6 – 46 private side lead water service laterals

2026-11 – 227 private side lead water service laterals

2026-12 - 17 private side lead water service laterals (along with 37 sanitary and 21 storm sewer laterals)

As you can see, 2026-11 has the most water laterals to be replaced. With MJ Construction being the apparent low bidder on all 3 of these projects along with being the subcontractor on W. Mitchell St., we thought it was necessary to review the estimated working days for all the projects and determine if MJ could complete all the work in a timely manner.

There are a total of approximately 175 working days for all four contracts for MJ Construction. There are only 147 working days between May 1 and November 30, 2026 which is the last deadline for contract completion. This would require at least two crews to work on these projects. Even with two crews, MJ Construction would run up to the deadline of the latest project completion date. This all presumes that the working conditions are perfect and there are no weather delays or delays by other contractors or other factors.

There are some other considerations that were taken into account when reviewing the feasibility of MJ Construction being able to perform all the work in the required timeframes. MJ Construction has performed satisfactory work in the past; however, it has frequently been beyond the completion date. Last year, the work done was substantially beyond the completion date due to starting the work very late in the year. MJ Construction did complete the work in a short amount of time once they started, but again, it was beyond the completion date. Engineering is working through what the consequences of that are contractually. We



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do believe had MJ Construction started earlier in the year, they would have completed the contracts within the required deadlines. Also, the previous private side lead water service lateral and MMSD PPII projects have been smaller in scope and at times, MJ Construction struggled with those deadlines.

In 2024, all five road reconstruction projects were awarded to one contractor. Of those five projects, three projects were completed after the contractual deadlines. The City did assess liquidated damages on those projects. The contractor for those jobs is a much larger contractor than MJ Construction with more resources and they still struggled. There was discussion with the City Administrator at that time about reviewing the scope of each project and comparing it to the bidder's experience and capacity, including capacity to handle simultaneous city projects.

I have determined that MJ Construction is a responsible bidder for projects 2026-6 – 2026 CIP Lead Service Line Replacements and 2026-12 – Private Property Work: Private Water Service Replacements, Sanitary Lateral Rehabilitations, Storm Lateral Extensions, and Sump Pump Installations. Both of these are similar in size and scope to the previous projects they have worked on, and MJ Construction appears to have the experience and capacity to perform both simultaneously.

However, I have determined that MJ Construction is not a responsible bidder specifically for project 2026-11 - Private Property Work: Lead Service Line Replacements. Based on past performance and experience, this project appears to exceed MJ Construction's experience and capacity to perform the work by the deadline, especially given the other two projects for which I find MJ Construction to be responsible. Instead, I recommend that the contract be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder, MidCity, in the amount of \$1,433,812.50.

By making this determination, I believe all projects have the greatest chance to finish on time and on budget. It's also an opportunity for MJ Construction to establish that it can manage multiple projects and complete work within deadlines. If MJ Construction is able to timely complete the work awarded this year, that will be considered when determining if MJ Construction is a responsible bidder for larger jobs in the future.

Please reach out with any questions.

Thank you,

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