AF-322-2025 Supplementary Information Narrative

Starting in May of 2023 the BMP Commission began formulating the Park Improvement Plan (PIP). A premier Otter habitat is a focal point of the PIP and a priority of the Commission. The Commission and staff visited numerous Otter Habitats including the Baltimore Zoo at Maryland, the Smithsonian National Zoo, Knoxville Zoo, Grandfather Mountain, and Western North Carolina Nature Center among others. From the visits the commission and staff determined the two key priorities of the project are underwater viewing and multiple viewing angles. The habitat can accommodate up to 3 Otters.

The Otter habitat has been designed to have a 4' underwater viewing area at the deep pool. The design also has Otter viewing from the shallow pool as well as the balcony of the Nature Center, seamlessly blending the animal habitats with the Nature Center. The underwater viewing, the life-support system necessary for clear underwater viewing, the multiple viewing angles, and proximity to the Nature Center will make the Otter habitat the premier habitat at BMP.

The project was originally let to bid in August 2025. The solicitation was ultimately cancelled due to lack of interest, specifically with competing interest from the Town Acres Elementary bid which opened in early September. Staff worked diligently with contractors on bid timing and contractor availability. The project was rebid and opened on October 29th with five responsive bidders with BurWil Construction Company being the lowest responsible bidder.

The total cost of the project is $2,616,000 ($2,400,000 BurWil Contract, $144,000 contingency, and $72,000 for engineering. Public Art funding will be evaluated as other LPRF projects are awarded) plus rock allowance of $150/cu. yard. The estimated completion time will be determined at the pre-construction meeting.

The base bid is within 10% of the original estimate, which has aged and is not inclusive of electrical work related to the relocation of a transformer.