

April 18, 2023

C-24

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Specifications No. RFP PR-23-217 and award a contract to Innovative Playgrounds Company, a California corporation located in Whittier, CA, for an immersive, interactive, educational, and fun technology-based solution to provide engaging experiences for youth, teenagers, and older adults at City of Long Beach (City) parks, at no cost to the City, for a maximum six-month pilot period; and, authorize the City Manager, or designee, to execute all documents necessary to enter into the contract;

Adopt Specifications No. RFP TI-23-216 and award a contract to Citibot, a corporation located in Charleston, SC, for a responsive tool to efficiently connect users to the information, services, and contacts they need across the City's website increasing accessibility and user satisfaction, at no cost to the City, for a maximum six-month pilot period; and, authorize the City Manager, or designee, to execute all documents necessary to enter into the contract;

Adopt Specifications No. RFP TI-23-205 and award a contract to BuzzClan LLC, a Texas corporation located in Dallas, TX, for a solution that integrates with ServiceNow service management ticketing system to improve efficiency of City Desktop Support staff, so they can group the tickets by region to reduce the travel time as well as the resolution time for City employees' requests for support, at no cost to the City, for a maximum 6-month pilot period; and, authorize the City Manager, or designee, to execute all documents necessary to enter into the contract;

Adopt Specifications No. RFP TI-23-206 and award a contract to Aisera Inc., of Palo Alto, CA, for a software solution that uses smart technologies to improve the quality of help desk call center operations, improve user satisfaction, and improve tracking of first call resolution, at no cost to the City, for a maximum 6-month pilot period; and, authorize the City Manager, or designee, to execute all documents necessary to enter into the contract; and,

Adopt Specifications No. RFP TI-23-206 and award a contract to Qualtrics, LLC, a Utah based corporation in Provo, UT, for a software solution that uses smart technologies to improve the quality of help desk call center operations, improve user satisfaction, and improve tracking of first call resolution, at no cost to the City,

for a maximum 6-month pilot period; and, authorize the City Manager, or designee, to execute all documents necessary to enter into the contract. (Citywide)

DISCUSSION

2023 Smart City Challenge

These five pilot opportunities are part of the City's 2023 Smart City Challenge led by the Technology and Innovation Department (TID) and the Financial Management Department (FM). The Smart City Challenge follows the principles of a challenge-based procurement, where City staff articulate their challenge without prescribing how they want it solved, allowing City Departments to collaborate with solution providers to address civic problems. The pilot projects are intended to provide City staff with the opportunity to quickly understand how we might adopt technology and leverage partnerships to drive innovative service delivery to benefit residents. Interested submitters were requested to provide summarized information about their proposed solution, with the full scope and details of the solution finalized through subsequent rounds of interviews and scoping conversations.

The pilot opportunities were advertised via four Request for Proposals (RFP) across a variety of methods and the City procurement platform, Long Beach Buys. Information about each pilot opportunity was additionally made available through the TID Smart City Program, located on the seventh floor of City Hall, and on the program's website at www.longbeach.gov/smartcity, and the Purchasing Division, located on the sixth floor of City Hall, and on the Division's website at www.longbeach.gov/purchasing. In addition, TID and FM representatives held a voluntary vendor information session on January 26, 2023. An announcement was also included in the Purchasing Division's weekly update of Open Bid Opportunities, which is sent to 44 local, minority-owned, and women-owned business groups. Lastly, the opportunities were shared with over 750 vetted technology vendors across the country via the Marketplace.city national government technology platform.

By strengthening standards of transparency and accountability, the Smart City Initiative works to ensure that all residents, regardless of technical ability, can trust the tools that are tested and deployed by City officials. This includes investing in digital literacy, codifying robust privacy and data security standards, and partnering with communities to develop a collaborative approach to deploying civic technology. Furthermore, gaining experience with a potential solution via a low stakes commitment allows City staff the opportunity to collect meaningful data in order to evaluate a service before committing to a larger implementation.

Local Business Outreach

To align with the City's outreach goal, Long Beach businesses are encouraged to submit proposals for City contracts. The Purchasing Division also assists businesses with registering on the Long Beach Buys database to download RFP specifications, and in this case, also provided assistance, as needed. The Purchasing Division is committed to continuing to perform outreach to local vendors to expand the bidder pool. The four Smart City Challenge pilot opportunities were promoted to 150 attendees at the Procurement Division's 'Doing Business with the City' event in December 2022.

2023 Smart City Challenge Contracts

City Council approval is requested to enter into contract with the following selected vendors, all of which have zero dollar contract amounts.

1. *Challenge: Parks, Recreation, and Marine Department- Immersive Travel Experience*
Selected Vendor: Innovative Playgrounds Company
Contract Expiration: 6 months

City Council approval is requested to enter into a contract with Innovative Playgrounds Company for an immersive, interactive, educational, and fun technology-based solution to provide engaging experiences for youth, teenagers, and older adults at City parks.

The Parks, Recreation, and Marine Department (Department) would like to expand their Summer 2023 programming and leverage technology resources to provide engaging experiences to participants who don't have access to travel to certain locations or to learn about fun topics. The selected technology solution will offer a wide array of engaging play options and educational services in one platform. The technology solution will complement and generate interest in the Department's in-person events.

There were two proposals received on February 10, 2023. Of those two proposers, none were Minority-owned Business Enterprises (MBEs), Women-owned Business Enterprises (WBEs), certified Small Business Enterprises (SBEs), or Long Beach vendors (Local). The selection committee determined that Innovative Playgrounds Company of Whittier, CA, was the most qualified firm to provide the services given their ability to engage multiple generations through place-based play challenges. Additionally, the service can support multiple languages thereby increasing the accessibility of the services to all Long Beach residents. Lastly by utilizing mobile phones, the Department will have access to timely data about park use and make better data-informed decisions about future programming and investments.

2. *Challenge: Technology and Innovation Department- Digital Front Door*
Selected Vendor: Citibot
Contract Expiration: 6 months

City Council approval is requested to enter into a contract with Citibot for a responsive tool to efficiently connect users to the information, services, and contacts they need across the City's website increasing accessibility and user satisfaction.

The City of Long Beach's website hosts information about the City's 24 Departments across more than 7,000 pages. With this much information available, it can be challenging for a visitor to know where to find the exact information they need. This becomes even more cumbersome when a user needs information from multiple departments for the same task. Additionally, 60 percent of our visitors access the site through a mobile device further complicating a user's ability through limited functionality.

There were three proposals received on February 10, 2023. Of those three proposers, none were Minority-owned Business Enterprises (MBEs), Women-owned Business Enterprises (WBEs), or certified Small Business Enterprises (SBEs), and one was a Long Beach vendor (Local). All three proposers were invited for interview and demo sessions and the selection committee determined that Citibot of Charleston, SC, was the most qualified firm to provide the services. Citibot has an excellent track record with other cities across the nation and a high level of customer support to address implementation and maintenance challenges. Furthermore, they have a robust portfolio of offerings, that pending a successful pilot, could be utilize to further increase the access to City services including language support and SMS messaging.

3. *Challenge: Technology and Innovation Department- Geographic Ticketing System*
Selected Vendor: BuzzClan LLC
Contract Expiration: 6 months

City Council approval is requested to enter into a contract with BuzzClan, LLC, for a solution that integrates with the City's ServiceNow service management ticketing system to improve efficiency of the Desktop Support staff, so they can group the tickets by region to reduce the travel and resolution time for City employees' requests for support.

TID uses ServiceNow for their ticketing system. Desktop Support staff get incidents and requests for service by city employees located at various City facilities all over Long Beach. The selected application will integrate with ServiceNow to group incidents and/or tasks geographically based on a person's location (as specified in their ServiceNow user profile) so that Desktop Support staff can respond to requests that are geographically close together.

There was one proposal received on February 10, 2023. This proposer was a Minority-owned Business Enterprise (MBE) and a Women-owned Business Enterprises (WBE). The selection committee determined that BuzzClan, LLC, of Dallas, TX (MBE and WBE), was the most qualified firm to provide the services. The vendor will develop a custom application based on the City's requirements

4. and 5. *Challenge: Technology and Innovation Department: Help Desk Improvement*
Selected Vendors: Aisera, Inc., and Qualtrics, LLC
Contract Expiration: 6 months

City Council approval is requested to enter into contracts with Aisera, Inc., and Qualtrics, LLC, for software solutions that uses smart technologies to improve: the quality of help desk call center operations; user satisfaction; and tracking of first call resolution.

TID currently uses Help Desk call center software in conjunction with Service Now Service Management system. The current software is able to record calls but does not provide any kind of AI type features or analysis functions which would allow the Desktop Support staff to flag terms spoken during the call. The selected solution will help TID review and improve the interaction between Help Desk staff and our users in a more automated and intelligent way.

There were five proposals received on February 10, 2023. Of those five proposers, one was a Minority-owned Business Enterprise (MBE) and one was a Women-owned Business Enterprise (WBE). Of the five vendors that submitted proposals, three vendors were invited for interview and demo sessions. The selection committee determined that Aisera, Inc., of Palo Alto, CA, and Qualtrics, LLC, of Provo, UT, were the most qualified firms to provide the services. Neither of the selected vendors were classified as MBE or WBE. Aisera, Inc., was selected for its ability to expand the knowledge base for support resolution by bringing in available content from the internet and its application integration with ServiceNow to aid Help Desk agents with suggested knowledge base documentation to aid first call resolution. Qualtrics was selected for its reporting dashboards and ability to identify knowledge gaps based on content of user inquiry to the Help Desk agent.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Erin Weesner-McKinley on March 31, 2023 and by Budget Operations and Development Officer Rhutu Amin Gharib on March 29, 2023.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

City Council approval is requested on April 18, 2023, to proceed with contracts to support the 2023 Smart City Challenge and the objectives of each pilot project.

EQUITY LENS

The City has incorporated the Equity Toolkit in this recommendation, as requested by the City Council on April 21, 2020. Providing this action will allow for a streamlined process to efficiently implement the 2023 Smart City Challenge pilot opportunities intended to improve outcomes for Long Beach residents and improve staff efficiency. Specifically, program staff developed challenges and evaluated proposals by assessing each solution's anticipated benefits to Long Beach residents and customers.

Program data will be tracked by TID and FM and be reported throughout the program's implementation.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this recommendation. The 2023 Smart City Challenge pilot services will be provided by the following five vendors: Innovative Playgrounds Company, Citibot, BuzzClan LLC, Aisera, Inc., and Qualtrics, LLC; at no cost to the City. Additional contract extensions, if necessary, will return to the City Council for approval. This recommendation has no staffing impact beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is consistent with City Council priorities of successful implementation of the Smart City Initiative. There is no anticipated direct impact on local jobs, however these pilot projects promote place-based growth by supporting Long Beach entrepreneurs and businesses, improving workforce job readiness, and strengthening networks.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,

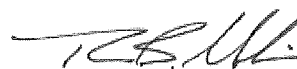


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