



Legislation Text

File #: 21-0445, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to adopt resolution authorizing City Manager, or designee, to execute a contract, and any necessary documents including any necessary amendments, with Zencity Technologies US, Inc., of Wilmington, DE, for a subscription and licensing agreement for the use of its online civic engagement platform for an annual amount of \$128,340, with a 30 percent contingency in the amount of \$38,502, for a total amount not to exceed \$166,842, for a period of one year, with the option to renew for two additional one year periods, at the discretion of the City Manager. (Citywide)

City Council approval is requested to enter into a contract with Zencity Technologies US, Inc. (Zencity), for a subscription and licensing agreement for its online civic engagement tool. Zencity's online civic engagement tool was specifically designed to assist local governments with understanding resident feedback pertaining to City services made available through public comments on social media, local media, and other online platforms. This annual subscription and licensing agreement will provide access to Zencity's software, a dashboard portal, statistically significant survey quarterly reports, and customized analysis of community trends and emerging civic-related topics.

The City originally procured a one-year subscription to Zencity's software in June 2020 as part of the COVID-19 pandemic response. Since onboarding Zencity, the use of the platform has expanded to 14 City departments and 92 users. Collectively, the City is using the Zencity tool to better understand a wide variety of City service priorities including the impact of COVID-19 vaccine messaging, recycling programs, parking, public safety, and homelessness assistance. Zencity has developed customized analysis, reports for the 2020 Census outreach strategies, and community feedback related to digital services accessibility.

Zencity is the only provider of its online platform, which is composed of proprietary technology currently used by over 200 U.S. cities and counties. The Zencity platform was specifically created for the use of local government organizations. The accessibility of online dashboards, compilation of summative online community feedback, periodic representative feedback from proactive surveys, and the ability to prepare customized analysis of resident sentiment allows the City to harness data analytics to help the City improve efficiency and efficacy in the way it communicates with residents.

City Charter Section 1801 requires that contracts for City purchases be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder after a competitive bid process but allows for awards without a competitive bid process when authorized by a Resolution adopted by the City Council. Zencity is the only tool of its kind built and tailored specifically for state and local government, and no other platform provides Zencity's breadth of data sources and capabilities, effectively negating the need for other tools that provide only partial value and, as a result, no useful purpose would be served by advertising for bids and to do so would constitute an unnecessary expenditure of public funds.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Erin Weesner-McKinney on April 27, 2021, Business Services Bureau Manager Tara Mortensen on April 20, 2021, and by Budget Management Officer Rhutu Amin-Gharib on May 3, 2021.

City Council action to adopt a Resolution and award a contract concurrently is requested on May 18, 2021, to ensure continuity in services received by the City.

The total annual amount will not exceed \$166,842, inclusive of a 30 percent contingency. There is sufficient appropriation budgeted in the General Services Fund Group in the Technology and Innovation Department. Additional appropriation for future subscriptions will be requested through subsequent budget development processes. This recommendation has no staffing impact beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is consistent with existing City Council priorities. There is no local job impact associated with this recommendation.

Approve recommendation.

[Enter Body Here]

LEA D. ERIKSEN
DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

APPROVED:

THOMAS B. MODICA
CITY MANAGER