

City of Culver City, California
City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: 05/29/07		Item Number: <u>A-10</u>	
AGENDA ITEM: Authorization of a Contract with Core Computing for the Purchase of Refuse Billing and Tracking Software to Support and Enhance the City's Waste Management Operations.			
Contact Person/Dept.: Michele Williams (IT) Damian Skinner (Sanitation)		Phone Number: 310.253.5959 310.253.6402	
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☒ No ☐		General Fund: Yes ☒ No ☐	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☒ Attachments: ☒	
Public Notification: E-mail Master Notification List on 05/24/07; Core Computing on 05/14/07, Crystal Alexander, City Treasurer on 05/07/07.			
Department Approval: John Richo 05/04/07 Charles Herbertson 05/04/07		City Attorney Approval: Carol Schwab (by H. Iker) (05/16/07)	
City Controller Approval: Marlee Chang (05/21/07)		City Manager Approval: Jerry B. Fulwood (05/23/07)	
<u>RECOMMENDATION:</u> Staff recommends the City Council authorize a contract with Core Computing (Jacksonville, FL) for the purchase of <i>EnCore</i>, a refuse billing and tracking system, to support and enhance the City's waste management operations. <u>BACKGROUND:</u> The City's Sanitation Division provides refuse collection for residential and commercial properties. Since the early 1990's, the division has used a Route Account Management System (RAMS) for work order processing, customer billing, bin inventory tracking and route maintenance. While staff has made it work, the RAMS software has numerous issues which have not been easily resolved. The system is built on older technology and as a result, is unstable and prone to introducing program errors when hardware or software is updated. The system also does not provide much flexibility for customization. As a result, customer invoices and operational reports are inconsistent and not easily interpreted. This creates additional workload for staff who receives phone calls from the public requiring assistance to understand monthly invoices. Additionally, the RAMS software does not easily accommodate integrating with other software or ancillary components. This has hindered the Division by not being able			

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to implement technology which would enhance customer services such as online payments, efficient / intelligent routing, and vehicle locator systems.

The vendor who supports RAMS has provided limited support in addressing these issues and staff has determined that it is in the best interest of the City to identify another software solution to support this operation.

DISCUSSION:

In September 2006, staff from Sanitation, Accounting (A/R) and IT combined efforts to identify refuse tracking and billing system requirements with the objective of replacing the RAMS software. A plan was established to make every attempt to identify a vendor supplied solution that would meet the City's requirements given the budget parameters. If a viable software solution could not be identified, an alternative action would be to use in-house programming resources to develop the software. After conducting the preliminary analysis, this effort was temporarily halted until a Sanitation Manager was hired.

In February 2007, the project was reinitiated; staff began by identifying software vendors that provided a waste management solution. Seven vendors were selected as meeting the initial requirement of providing a solution targeted at refuse agencies of similar size to Culver City. Contacts were made with each of these vendors to request additional product information and to initiate dialogue with their representatives. One vendor was eliminated as a result of not responding to the request for information. Three vendors were eliminated due to not meeting one or more of the following criteria:

- Enterprise Solution (system functionality supports, Customer Billing, Roll-off Management, Collection Tracking, Bin Inventory, and Efficient Routing)
- Compliant Technology (hardware and software requirements compatible with City's technology standards)
- Open Architecture (ability to expand functionality and easily integrate with other systems such as City's cash receipting and accounts receivable)

Staff developed a list of system requirements that would meet the City's needs for use in evaluating refuse management software. The list included baseline requirements and items that will also result in enhanced functionality. The three remaining vendors were given the list of system requirements in an effort to further evaluate their software solution (Attachment 1). The vendors were also asked to provide staff with a demonstration of the product highlighting how their respective system could meet the City's requirements.

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After evaluating the vendor responses and product demonstrations, the EnCore product from Core Computing ranked the highest and appeared to fully meet the City's refuse operational needs (Attachment 2).

Core Computing's primary business focus is to provide premier waste management and recycling software. The company's marketing focus is to target agencies who manage roll-off, landfill, residential/commercial garbage pickup, transfer stations, recycling plants, and delivery services. The company provided a list of client references that have similar operations to Culver City. The clients who were contacted and interviewed are listed in the table below. All of the responses were exceptionally positive (Attachment 3). Two of the clients also made mention of the problems they had with their previous system prior to obtaining EnCore. The systems they previously had were the solutions staff reviewed and eliminated from the initial selection process. This provided further confirmation regarding the results of the initial product evaluation.

Client References Interviews

Agency	Location	Business Activity
Econ Refuse Services	Kirkwood, PA	Residential refuse collection, roll-off services
North Slope Borough	Prudhoe Bay, Alaska	Roll-off and waste disposal services for the oil companies
Sunset Waste	Visalia, CA	Garbage collection, commercial roll-offs, transfer station

EnCore is built on technology which will enable the integration of the software with the City's financial systems. This will facilitate staff efficiencies by reducing duplicate data entry and automate processes which are currently performed manually. Currently, there is no interface between the RAMS software and the City's cash receipting software. Invoices are created in RAMS and duplicate data entry occurs for entering the payments into the financial system and into RAMS. This duplicate entry would be eliminated with the implementation of *EnCore*. Additionally, Accounting staff must manually verify and often times re-calculate penalties for past due invoices. The RAMS system was incorrectly calculating the fee penalty and after months of manually computing and adjusting the fee, the vendor provided a temporary work-around. However, Accounting staff must spend extensive time verifying every fee penalty to ensure accuracy. Staff has verified that the *EnCore* system can correctly apply the City's penalty fee structure. This process will be automated with each billing cycle and will no longer require extensive monitoring and manual adjustments.

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FISCAL ANALYSIS:

The authorization to purchase *EnCore* from Core Computing would result in an expenditure not to exceed \$44,275 (Attachment 4). Sufficient funds have been allocated in the Refuse Fund for Capital Improvement Project – Account # 20200884 (Sanitation Software Upgrades) for this purchase.

The following table outlines the estimated expenditures:

Software (10 user licenses)	\$23,225
Training (3 days) & Travel Expenses	\$7,550
Professional Services (Implementation and Interface Development)	\$13,500
Total Expenditure	\$44,275

Core Computing is including one year of annual maintenance at no additional fee. The annual maintenance fee beginning FY08-09 will be \$4,500. Typically, the annual maintenance costs increase nominally, if any.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Response from Vendors – System Requirements List
2. Matrix of Responses from Vendors
3. Client Reference Interviews
4. Quote from Core Computing

MOTION:

That the City Council:

- 1) Authorize a contract with Core Computing for the purchase of *EnCore* and one (1) year of software maintenance for an expenditure not to exceed \$44,275 plus any applicable taxes; and
- 2) Authorize the City Attorney to prepare/review any necessary contract documents and authorize the City Manager to execute such documents on behalf of the City.