



Legislation Text

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**TO:** Mayor Richard C. Irvin

**FROM:** Tony Martinez, Director of Communications  
Michael Pegues, Chief Information Officer  
Jeff Anderson, Deputy CIO

**DATE:** November 7, 2023

**SUBJECT:**

A Resolution authorizing an agreement for a three-year subscription with two option years for a complete website redesign and existing digital services from Granicus, Denver, CO for a total amount of \$1,277,459.69

**PURPOSE:**

The City desires a website and digital services platform that is easy and intuitive for visitors to navigate, efficient for City staff to manage and update, all while providing a wide variety of best-in-class services, information, and capabilities to Aurora residents.

**BACKGROUND:**

Resolution 22-160 approved digital services and website software from a previous website vendor. While working on the project, there were challenges encountered with the selected website vendor to provide the desired website solution with all of the capabilities that City staff required. At the same time, there were changes in the website vendor landscape since the start of the project with the merging of two website providers who were highly ranked by City staff. As a result, City staff and the previous website vendor mutually agreed to terminate the prior contract.

Purchasing, Communications and IT staff worked with Marketplace.city to review the scoring from Resolution 22-160 and engaged Granicus for digital services and website software based on some of their acquisitions since the start of the project that enhanced the services they provide.

One of the significant acquisitions was the OpenCities website platform that added to their portfolio of technology engagement solutions. In an effort to achieve the best all-inclusive website and communications solution for the residents of Aurora, City staff made the decision that Granicus' new website solution would be best suited to meet the City's needs.

Staff originally presented the proposed agreement with Granicus to the Infrastructure and Technology Committee at its meeting of October 23, 2023. Members of the committee raised several questions regarding the need for a new website which staff addressed as best it could. Ultimately desiring more information, the Committee voted 3-2 to not advance the item to the Committee of the Whole and

consider it at its next meeting, presently scheduled for November 13 due to October having a 5th Tuesday. Since October 23, staff has worked to provide written responses to as many of the committee's questions as possible.

While the IT Department has a significant role to play in the implementation of a new website, this procurement will require the active involvement of multiple City departments and serves as a resource for all City departments and the members of the public that interact with them. Moreover, submission of the Granicus proposal followed nearly two years of work with the prior vendor during which the City's obsolete website remained in place. Further delay at this point is problematic, given October's 5th week, the density of the City Council's agendas for the remainder of the year, and the length of time the project will take to implement.

In lieu of proceeding with Item 23-0848, the Mayor has directed that a revised item be presented to the Committee of the Whole in accordance with Sec. 2-122(c)(3) of the Code of Ordinances, specifically finding that replacement of the website is a significant citywide concern and requires the attention of the full council. He further finds that the matter is of such urgency that consideration by a standing committee is impractical. Under the code, the Committee of the Whole has jurisdiction over this item, 23-0903 and can act on it as new business.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

Granicus has supplied digital services to the City for many years including software to support the legislative process (Legistar) and Freedom of Information Act requests (GovQA). Granicus has provided quality service and support during this timeframe and has become a trusted partner for the City.

The Granicus OpenCities website solution is utilized by over 170 cities in the US including Denver, Miami, Orlando, Grand Rapids, and San Antonio. Staff was particularly impressed with the OpenCities ability to automate workflows through digital forms on the website. Additionally, the agreement includes Granicus' Communication Cloud and Engagement HQ ("EHQ") tools that will allow the Communications Department to consolidate other task-specific communications solutions into one cohesive website platform to continually engage residents of Aurora with emails, surveys and text messaging. The agreement also includes the Granicus Experience Group which is their top-level consulting services to ensure the design, content, copywriting, and website experience follows the most effective best-practices.

The website-related costs in the agreement are \$584,090 which includes the added Communications Cloud, EngagementHQ, and Granicus Experience Cloud. The website costs in the agreement are less than the previous website vendor and provides more capabilities. The remaining costs in the agreement of \$493,438 are the costs for the existing Granicus products used by the City. These existing costs would still be incurred even if Granicus was not the City website provider. The bundling of services provides cost savings and ease of business by having all Granicus services on one agreement. Granicus will also provide a first-year credit in the amount of \$79,137 as a result of bundling services.

Funds from the 2022 Decision Package will be utilized for this purpose in account 101-1281-419.32.20.

**IMPACT STATEMENT:**

As the City continues to improve digital services and implement the Information Technology Strategic Plan, a website platform that supports new and engaging digital services is paramount to the continued success of City initiatives and to ensure the new City website is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Staff recommends that this resolution be approved.



CITY OF AURORA, ILLINOIS

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE OF PASSAGE \_\_\_\_\_

A Resolution authorizing an agreement for a three-year subscription with two option years for a complete website redesign and existing digital services from Granicus, Denver, CO for a total amount of \$1,277,459.69.

WHEREAS, the City of Aurora has a population of more than 25,000 persons and is, therefore, a home rule unit under subsection (a) of Section 6 of Article VII of the Illinois Constitution of 1970; and

WHEREAS, subject to said Section, a home rule unit may exercise any power and perform any function pertaining to its government and affairs for the protection of the public health, safety, morals, and welfare; and

WHEREAS, a new website platform combined with the existing digital services from Granicus is desired city-wide; and

WHEREAS, increased efficiency and accuracy in maintaining a city website is desired; and

WHEREAS, staff engaged Marketplace.city to find a suitable website platform through Request for Qualifications process; and

WHEREAS, Granicus has provided an agreement for a three-year subscription with two option years through the NCPA Cooperative Contract; and

WHEREAS, funds from the 2022 Decision Package will be utilized for this purpose in account 101-1281-419.32.20.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Aurora, Illinois, as follows: that the Director of Purchasing shall be and hereby is authorized to execute on behalf of the City, a purchase order and a contract to Granicus, for such subscription consistent with this Resolution and substantially in the form as set forth in the exhibits attached hereto.