



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
June 25, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager
 Submitted by: Savita Chaudhary, Director, Information Technology
 Subject: Contract: NextRequest for Public Records Act Response Software System

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a contract with NextRequest for software hosting, implementation, maintenance and related services for a Public Records Act Response Software System, for an amount not to exceed \$65,000 for the period commencing on July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2021.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Funding for this recommendation in the amount of \$65,000 is available in the Department of Information Technology's Fiscal Year (FY) 2019-2021 IT Cost Allocation Fund as itemized below. Spending for this contract and related amendments in future fiscal years is subject to Council's approval of the proposed citywide budget and annual appropriation ordinances.

	FY 2019: Professional Services
\$18,975	Budget Code: 680-35-364-000-0000-000-472-612990 (IT Cost Allocation, 311 Customer Service, Professional Services)
	FY 2020: Software Maintenance
\$23,000	Budget Code: 680-35-364-000-0000-000-472-613130 (IT Cost Allocation, 311 Customer Service, Software Maintenance)
	FY 2021: Software Maintenance
\$23,025	Budget Code: 680-35-364-000-0000-000-472-613130 (IT Cost Allocation, 311 Customer Service, Software Maintenance)
\$65,000	Total FY 2019-2021: Software Maintenance and Professional Services

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The City is currently logging and tracking Public Records Act (PRA) requests in the Verint, Lagan Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. The existing system does not allow the City to adequately respond to the Open Government Commission requirements. Currently, the City is experiencing the following issues:

- There is limited field functionality and the existing system is inadequate for storing and calculating date requirements, performing document searches, and annual reporting.
- The existing system does not allow staff to collect data needed for the yearly reporting to the Open Government Commission and results in manual data entry and review. This is a time consuming task.
- The existing system does not have a customer-facing portal and community members must follow-up by phone, email or letter with the City to determine the status of their PRA request.
- The existing system has limited workflow functionality and does not allow staff to coordinate a multi-department PRA request.
- The existing system does not allow staff to redact confidential information. This work is done manually and poses a risk to the City and can be a liability if not done with great care.

Given the challenges of the existing system, on November 14, 2018, the City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) #19-11255-C for an improved Public Records Act Response System, including a redaction module to enable better management of redacting the sensitive information.

The City received two (2) responses to the Public Records Act Response System RFP by the December 13, 2018 deadline. A committee of 7+ staff from the City Clerk, City Attorney, Planning, Fire, Police, and Information Technology departments conducted a comprehensive evaluation process that included proposal reviews, vendor demonstrations, and reference checks. Staff selected NextRequest as presenting the most comprehensive, user-responsive, and effective solution for the City's current and future public record act responsive requirement and needs.

The Public Records Act Response Software System is a Strategic Plan Priority Project, advancing the city's goal to be a customer-focused organization that provides excellent, timely, easily accessible service and information to the community.

BACKGROUND

The City receives approximately 5,500 Public Record Act (PRA) requests a year. The majority (75%) of the requests are for copies of Police records. The majority of police PRA requests are for copies of incidents and accident reports. Community members submit requests by email, US Mail, in person through the City Clerk's office, or directly to City departments. PRA requests completed using the on-line form posted on the City Clerk's

website get entered by City Clerk staff and are allocated to the responsive division to take action.

In 2011, the City adapted the case forms in the Lagan CRM system, a case management system used by 311 Customer Service Call Center, to capture Citizen's request for Public Records. Lagan CRM captures case information but the system lacks the capability to capture the requirements needed to fulfill PRA requests. In addition, the Lagan CRM is not easily searchable by "key words", and staff responding to a PRA cannot access report information on notes, attachments or case description. This limitation makes searching for past responsive documents challenging. As a result, departments such as, Planning and Public Works who routinely receive multiple requests for the same information are forced to duplicate work that has already been performed in order to full a PRA request.

The administration and overseer of multi-departmental PRA requests changed in 2016, moving from City Manager's Office to City Attorney's office. The City Attorney's Liaison works with City PRA staff for multi-department public requests for documents and prepares the response to the PRA's. This type of PRA request requires workflow and automated email to ensure all departments are coordinating information within the required ten days lead-time. The Lagan CRM workflow does not offer this functionality. Therefore, the City Attorney's liaison has additional workload to manage multi-departmental PRA's to ensure that they are well coordinated and processed in a timely manner.

Open Government Commission requires the City of Berkeley to report annually on the number of PRA's processed. The report is processed by City Attorney's office, and requirements include quantity of PRA's responded to on time, the number of PRA's where primary fulfillment date is beyond the required ten days, and the total number of days to fulfill a PRA. In order to produce this report, the City Attorney's office must work closely with the 311 Customer Service Manager and it can take weeks to prepare. The existing system does not produce the level of detail needed to respond to the Open Government Commission.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

NextRequest provides an improved system with a secure customer-facing portal to allow citizens to conduct self-service searches for public record requests, and receive City generated documents systematically, reducing paper, use of copy equipment and trips to City Clerk's office to view and retrieve documents. This supports the reduction of carbon footprint and goals of the City's Climate Action Plan. Further public can search, find and retrieve document records stored in the PRA portal, reducing the need to enter a new public records request.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends NextRequest PRA processing software as it best meets City needs and they scored the highest in the evaluation performed by City staff. NextRequest excelled at meeting the City's requirements for a secure public facing portal to provide

customers with self-service (24/7/365) technology to make requests and check status for PRA requests. Publishing common documents to the portal will streamline service delivery for customers and eliminate publishing duplicate requests. Both City staff and our community will greatly benefit from the functionality offered by NextRequest.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

Staff considered staying with the existing system, however, this option is not recommended due to the limitations of the existing system.

CONTACT PERSON

Savita Chaudhary, Director, Information Technology, 510-981-6541

Attachments:

1: Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

CONTRACT: NEXTREQUEST FOR PUBLIC RECORDS ACT RESPONSE
SOFTWARE SYSTEM

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has identified the need to improve the efficiency of its management of Public Records Act requests; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley desires to procure a Commercial Off-the-Shelf “turnkey” system to handle Public Records Requests through a customer facing and internal facing portal; and

WHEREAS, on November 14, 2018, the City of Berkeley issued a Request for Proposal No.19-11255-C for an improved Public Records Request Response Software System and received two responding bidders; and

WHEREAS, in response to the City’s Request for Proposal, NextRequest responded with a proposal that received the highest rating among those submitted by competing vendors; and

WHEREAS, funding for this recommendation in the amount of \$65,000 is available in the Department of Information Technology’s Fiscal Year (FY) 2019- 2021 IT Cost Allocation Fund, and spending for this contract and related amendments in future fiscal years is subject to Council’s approval of the proposed citywide budget and annual appropriation ordinances.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager is hereby authorized to execute a contract and subsequent amendments for related services with NextRequest for a Public Records Act Response system, for an amount not to exceed \$65,000 for the projected period commencing on July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2021.

