



Request for City Council Committee Action From the Department of Public Works

Date: September 14, 2006
To: Honorable Sandra Colvin Roy, Chair Transportation & Public Works Committee
Referral to: Honorable Paul Ostrow, Chair Ways & Means Committee
Subject: **Contract services for Snow Emergency, automated telephone broadcast alerts.**

Recommendation:

Authorize the proper City officials to extend contract C-21289 with SwiftReach Networks, Inc., to provide automated telephone alerts to residents regarding the declaration of snow emergencies and other emergency and non emergency purposes from October 30, 2006 to August 31, 2007. The maximum expenditure is estimated at \$90,000.

Previous Directives:

Transportation & Public Works Committee-November 23, 2004 - Authorize the proper City officers to enter into a contract with SwiftReach Networks, Inc., to provide automated telephone alerts to Minneapolis residents when snow emergencies are declared.

Prepared by: Michael D. Kennedy, P.E., Director, Winter Operations (612) 673-3759

Approved by: Steven A. Kotke, City Engineer/Director of Public Works

Steven A. Kotke, P.E., City Engineer/Director of Public Works

Presenters: Michael D. Kennedy, P.E., Director, Winter Operations

Financial Impact (Check those that apply)

No financial impact - or - Action is within current department budget.
(If checked, go directly to Background/Supporting Information)

Action requires an appropriation increase to the Capital Budget

Action requires an appropriation increase to the Operating Budget

Action provides increased revenue for appropriation increase

Action requires use of contingency or reserves

Other financial impact (Explain):

Request provided to the Budget Office when provided to the Committee Coordinator

Background/Supporting Information:

The Public Works Department recommends that the proper City Officials extend contract C-21289 with SwiftReach Networks Inc. for community notification services, from October 30, 2006 to August 31, 2007.

After approval by the PRC, this vendor was originally selected using the results of a City of St. Paul Request for Proposals (RFP). In January 2005, the City entered into a contract with SwiftReach Networks, with the intent of using the service to send Snow Emergency alerts to the community. The contract included an option to extend an additional year beyond the initial expiration date of October 31, 2005. That option was exercised and the new expiration date is October 31, 2006.

Originally it was estimated that annual charges for the services would be approximately \$90,000. Actual expenditures have turned out to be more in the range of \$51,000. The difference was due to an overestimation of how many actual calls we would be charged for. However use of the system has been increasing as new ideas for its use are realized.

After some initial problems that were solved, this mode of community outreach has been quite successful and several other exciting applications beyond Snow Emergency Alerts have been found. City Emergency Response leaders have recognized its value and are pursuing grant funding to secure services or a system for use on an City enterprise wide basis. At this time funding has not been forthcoming but will be applied for again in 2007. However, Public Works needs to continue with its public outreach efforts and has the funding to do so. As part of the Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) initiative, we have arranged with Emergency Operations staff to make the service available to them in the event of a disaster or emergency until an enterprise system is secured.

Public Works requests approval to extend this contract for the following reasons:

- The contract is currently scheduled to expire during the middle of the Fall Sweeping program where we have utilized it successfully in the past year to alert residents to street sweeping and parking enforcement. It would be complicated and disruptive to change contractors half way through.
- Setting the new expiration date to the end of August 2007 moves it out of the expected use windows of the snow and sweeping seasons, and is a better time to change vendors if SwiftReach is not selected in a new RFP process.
- This would allow the time to see if grant funding for 2007 could be secured and analysis for the most appropriate service or system for use on a citywide basis.
- SwiftReach Networks has developed additional functionality in their service specifically for Minneapolis that will allow us to offer the Snow Emergency Alerts in alternate languages. We would like to try this in support of the City's Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Program.

- SwiftReach Networks has stated they would be willing to extend the contract at the existing terms, conditions and pricing, which Public Works feels is still competitive.

At its meeting on July 27, 2006, the Permanent Review Committee approved Public Works request to extend the contract with SwiftReach Networks and recommended that Public Works move forward with a recommendation to the Committee to enter into the extension.

The final contract amount depends upon the eventual number of calling campaigns, such as the number of Snow Emergencies, use by other departments to pilot notification programs, and unforeseen emergencies. Some increased usage is anticipated over the average use to date stated above so it is anticipated that the contract expenditure would be up to \$90,000.

cc: Procurement
Finance