



Agenda Item: 12.C
Date of Meeting: November 27, 2023
Department: Public Works

STAFF REPORT

To: City Council
From: Nora Gamino
Subject: **Building Permitting and Inspection Memorandum of Understanding with Inyo County, Amendment 3**
Prepared On: November 17, 2023
Attachments: Amendment 3_Inyo Co MOU Building Permitting and Inspection
Inyo Co MOU Building Permitting and Inspection
OpenGov Permitting Proposal
OpenGov Quote for Inyo County
OpenGov Master Service Agreement

Background/History:

The City has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Inyo County Public Works Department to provide Building Permitting and Inspection services. This MOU, signed in 2016, states that Inyo County will provide building official, building inspection, and plan check services to the City of Bishop. Office support activities are shared between the two agencies, which allows for better customer service to the public, and the City provides office space to the County employees. Amendments 1 and 2 added on-call technical review for parcel and subdivision maps and on-call City Engineer services, respectively, to the scope of County provided services.

Amendment 3 includes two changes to the MOU. The first is a \$15,000 increase in the annual contribution the City pays for building permitting and inspection services. The second is for 20% of the cost of the OpenGov permitting software that will be utilized by the Building Department. The City's cost for the first year of the software, which includes development and deployment, is \$23,449. Subsequent years will cost \$15,400 with a 5% increase annually.

Analysis/Discussion:

Building Permitting and Inspection Services

In 2023, the County Public Works Director requested an increase in City's fiscal contribution to the MOU due to the increased operational costs. An analysis was performed to determine an appropriate fee for the services provided based on the amount of time County employees spend on City work, employment costs, and the cost of office space. An adjusted fee of \$75,000 per year for the services outlined in the MOU and amendments was found to be appropriate and agreed upon by both parties. This is an increase of \$15,000.

Building Permit Software

In an effort to modernize business functions, the Public Works and Building Departments started researching options for building permitting software in late 2022. The departments identified following goals they hoped to accomplish by instituting building permit software:

- Increased customer service through online self service functions and increased process transparency.
- Reduction of paperwork handling and storage, with an end-goal of a near “paperless” office.
- Streamlined interdepartmental transmittals with increased accountability.
- Expansion to other permitting and licensing functions, such as planning and zoning approvals, public works encroachment, and special events.
- Increased processing efficiencies through automated workflows.
- Real time inspection updates and reporting through use of mobile technology.

Several companies hosted demonstrations of their software, however the OpenGov platform was able to meet the needs of the departments. An additional benefit of OpenGov is that the configuration and creation of the record types is easily managed by system administrators, meaning that City staff will be able to modify, create, and manage how the system works for our end users. Refer to the attached proposal from OpenGov for more information about the software.

Because the City and County share Building Permitting and Inspection, the County will hold the contract for the OpenGov software through a third-party GSA vendor, Vertosoft. In anticipation that the City might need to procure services directly from OpenGov in the future, such as assistance in development of an additional record type that the County does not want or need, the City will also enter into a Master Services Agreement with OpenGov. This MSA is a no-cost agreement until the time in which we choose to employ their services.

The City will reimburse the County for 20% of the total amount of the cost. This 80/20 split of the cost is based on population. Other methods of determining proportionate cost were analyzed, such as number of permits issued and use cases based on jurisdiction. However, due to a wide range of factors and the variations from year to year, it was agreed that a simple method based on population would suffice. The City's first-year cost, which includes the fee for product development and training, is \$23,449. The second-year cost, which is only for the software subscription, is \$15,400. There is a 5% increase annually.

It is anticipated that once the software is deployed and running smoothly, it will initially save approximately 20% of staff time. As the department becomes more proficient with the program efficiency will also increase. It is expected that it will fill in communication gaps between departments and help expedite permitting, filing, and communication interdepartmentally.

Economic Impacts:

OpenGov permitting software is anticipated to bring economic benefits for the City of Bishop, primarily through operational efficiencies, improved customer service, potential cost savings, and the ability to expand services in the future to foster economic vitality of the City. Citizens, developers, and businesses seeking permits or approvals could experience faster and more accessible services that could expedite the construction process and lead to cost savings.

Efficiencies gained through automation, streamlined workflows, and reduced administrative burdens may lead to staff time cost savings and allow time for more strategic or customer-facing roles.

Budget Impacts:

This item is included in the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year Budget in the General Fund, Building, Miscellaneous Dues and Subscriptions account 001-022-52019.

Legal Review:

City Attorney Pucci has reviewed this item and finds that the recommended action complies with the law.

Recommended Action:

Council to approve Amendment 3 to the Memorandum of Understanding Between the City of Bishop and Inyo County for Building Permitting and Inspection.

Approved By: Ethan Aukee 11/21/2023

Approved By: Robin Picken 11/21/2023

Approved By: Dean Pucci 11/22/2023

Approved By: Deston Dishion 11/22/2023