

ITEM # 10a+b
DATE January 6, 2009

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: PROPOSAL FOR WIFI HOTSPOTS AT CITY FACILITIES

BACKGROUND:

Based on direction from City Council related to meeting the goal to facilitate one community through both physical and relationship connections, City staff solicited proposals to provide wireless broadband data connectivity (WiFi hotspots) at City Hall, the Community Center, Ice Arena, Municipal Pool, and at the new Furman Aquatics Center. WiFi in those locations would provide free public Internet access as well as City business access.

The request for proposals was issued to five potential providers known to provide systems compatible with the network infrastructure in place at the targeted locations. Proposal documents were provided to an additional three firms following advertisement of the project. On November 25, 2008, one proposal was received from ICS Advanced Technologies of Ames. The proposal was evaluated based on responsiveness to the submittal requirements, qualifications of the offeror, completeness of the technical solution, and price.

The proposal asked for two wireless controllers that would create a connection between themselves, isolating the public data traffic from City business traffic. Only one controller was specified. The proposal documents also asked for the wireless control system software to be specified. This software performs configuration management and monitors the access points. The control software was not addressed in the proposed solution.

The approved budget of \$46,207 was to include the components in this proposal, (including the controllers and software) plus wiring at the various locations and an additional server. If this proposal is accepted, the total estimated project cost including the additional necessary components would exceed the approved budget:

Proposal cost	\$39,337
Controller and software	12,995*
Wiring	2,868*
Server	3,500*
Miscellaneous	<u>2,500*</u>
Total	\$61,200
Approved budget	<u>(46,207)</u>
Balance needed	\$14,993

* Estimated cost

The anticipated discount on major hardware items included in the proposal was not realized. These hardware items, with the control software, are over 50% of the estimated project cost. These items may be included in State of Iowa contract pricing, and recent information indicates that a Western States Contracting Alliance (WSCA) contract may also soon be available to the City. It may therefore be more cost effective to purchase the hardware, installation, and public Internet connection components separately rather than from a single provider. ICS Advanced Technologies could submit bids or proposals on any or all of these components.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Reject the proposal from ICS Advanced Technologies for WiFi hotspots at City facilities, and direct staff to solicit new bids and/or proposals including the purchase of the hardware, installation, and public Internet connection components separately.
2. Accept the proposal from ICS Advanced Technologies and purchase additional necessary project components separately for a total estimated project cost of \$61,200.
3. Reject the proposal from ICS Advanced Technologies and delay implementation of wireless connectivity at City facilities.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

This project is to provide wireless broadband data connectivity (WiFi hotspots) at City Hall, the Community Center, Ice Arena, Municipal Pool, and at the new Furman Aquatics Center. WiFi in those locations would provide free public Internet access as well as City business access. The one proposal received does not include a complete technical solution and exceeds the approved budget amount.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, thereby rejecting the proposal from ICS Advanced Technologies for WiFi hotspots at City facilities and directing staff to solicit new bids and/or proposals including the purchase of the hardware, installation, and public Internet connection components separately.

Council should note that this will have not impact on the public WiFi hotspots located at Brookside Park, Campustown Court, Hunziker Youth Sports Complex, and Tom Evans Plaza. These locations will be ready for an early Spring grand opening.