

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: AUTOMATIC TRAFFIC RECORDER PURCHASE FROM SOLE SOURCE PROVIDER

BACKGROUND:

In the 2011/12 Capital Improvement Plan under the Traffic Signal Program, \$175,000 was identified from Road Use Tax for implementation of the initial phase of a city-wide traffic count program. This project will provide continuous annual traffic data collection using Wavetronix HD automatic traffic recorders (ATRs). These ATRs are radar based sensors that can collect bidirectional-multilane speed, volume, and vehicle classification data. The data will then be used to significantly improve several other critical business processes of the City, such as regional traffic modeling, traffic signal operations, safety performance, and pavement performance.

City staff worked with the Office of Systems Planning at the Iowa Department of Transportation to apply the State's criteria for selecting the number and location of ATRs within the Ames area. The ATRs will be located along Federal Aid roads (arterial and collector streets), and will be distributed spatially to ensure proper statistical sampling of the City's road network. The data from these ATRs will be used to annualize other spot counts and studies conducted throughout the City. The process of annualizing counts is done by applying adjustment factors by month based upon the yearly traffic activity totals collected from the ATRs.

It is staff's recommendation that the City utilize Wavetronix HD sensors for this purpose. These sensors were vetted by the Iowa DOT through multiple field tests of various manufacturers' products, and are currently in use across the State. This provides assurance that the City is investing in a proven product, as well as one that supports an ongoing partnership with the Iowa DOT for sharing traffic data. The price has previously been competitively established through the IDOT's purchasing policies.

Mid-American Signal (MAS) is the sole provider of Wavetronix products for the State of Iowa. The overall plan created with Iowa DOT staff has identified 38 total locations across the city. Since the current budget only provides for the purchase of 26 units, this leaves around 12 ATR locations to be installed at a future date under a second phase.

Based upon the power requirements at various locations, the project will need 17 stations at a cost of \$6,723.52 and nine stations at a cost of \$6,306.24, bringing the total estimated project cost to \$171,056. The remainder of the \$175,000 budget will be

used for miscellaneous mounting hardware, wiring, or other parts as needed during installation.

In order to move forward with acquiring the ATR equipment using the State's bid, the City Council must waive a portion of the City's Purchasing Policies under Section 6.06C: "Utilization of State of Iowa, General Services Administration (GSA), U.S. Communities, and Western States Contracting Alliance (WSCA) Contracts," which includes a \$25,000 limit. This purchase meets the definition of GSA pricing under similar state contracts; but since the cost exceeds the \$25,000 threshold, City Council approval is required.

This project will be a major step forward for the City taking a proactive approach to estimate and forecast system performance of the City's transportation system. It will not only help meet future Federal requirements, but will also provide valuable data for City decision making.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. a) Approve Mid-American Signal of Kansas City, Kansas, as the sole provider of Wavetronix equipment for Iowa,

b) Waive the \$25,000 limit under Section 6.06C of the City's Purchasing Policies, and

c) Approve the use of Iowa DOT pricing to purchase 26 Wavetronix ATRs in the estimated amount of \$171,056.
2. Reject the project.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

By approving this purchase, the City will be able to begin 24-hour a day traffic data collection across much of its transportation system. Data will be used to evaluate, trend, and predict travel demand during critical times of the year. As a university community, Ames experiences significant changes in traffic volumes throughout the year, as well as during various special events. Data collected from these count stations will be a vital tool in the planning and improvement of City services and facilities used by our citizens.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1 as described above.