



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
September 12, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager
Submitted by: Mark Numainville, City Clerk
Subject: Contract: NetFile for Online Campaign Report, Public Financing, and Form 700 Filing and Tracking

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a contract with Westcoast Online Information Systems, Inc. dba NetFile for an amount not to exceed \$170,700 for the period October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2028 for online campaign report, public financing, and Form 700 filing, processing, web posting, and tracking.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Funds to pay for the services in the contract will be paid from General Fund account #011-32-314-000-0000-000-411-611120.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

In accordance with the provisions of the Government Code, the Berkeley Charter, the Municipal Code, and the Conflict of Interest Code, the City Clerk is the Filing Officer for campaign reports for city campaign committees and candidates as well as Form 700 reports filed by commissioners, employees, and consultants. The City Clerk Department also administers the public financing program for city elections.

The City accepts forms from over 40 campaign committees, numerous candidates, and ballot measure committees during an election cycle. The public financing system requires staff to review and process over 50 matching funds requests with hundreds of corresponding transactions. In addition, over 600 Form 700 filers consisting of commissioners, employees and city consultants file their forms electronically with the City. Tracking this volume of filings requires a robust and efficient system such as NetFile.

NetFile allows the City to publicly post campaign disclosure statements and Form 700 instantly after they are filed. In addition, the data in the campaign filings is more searchable and the data can be easily downloaded for analysis by the public.

The continued use of the NetFile system is a Strategic Plan Priority Project, advancing our goal to be a customer-focused organization that provides excellent, timely, easily-accessible service and information to the community.

BACKGROUND

The NetFile system has been a proven success for the City since 2007. Over the past 16 years NetFile has worked closely with City staff on the development and improvement of the software. In 2014, NetFile performed significant work to assist with the City's transition to mandatory electronic filing. After the passage of the public financing program, NetFile completed significant work to tailor a special module for the City to administer the program. This new five-year contract will seamlessly allow the City to continue to use NetFile to maintain a high level of public transparency and process efficiencies through automation.

The NetFile system is web based and hosted by the vendor. The original purchase and use of NetFile in 2007 was approved by the city's Technology Governance Group, and it has not resulted in additional ongoing workload commitments for IT staff.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

Electronic filing of Form 700s, public financing filings, and campaign statements reduces the amount of paper filings as well as vehicle trips to downtown to file forms in person. The automation and electronic disclosure of public information provides greater access with less use of durable resources and fossil fuels.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

As more compliance filings move toward electronic filing, and with the added complexity of the public financing program, an online administrative tool is required to manage the process. The online tool also provides public access and transparency by automatically posting the compliance filings on the web.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

Revert back to paper-based systems and hire additional FTEs to manage and process the intake and posting of mandated filings.

CONTACT PERSON

Mark Numainville, City Clerk, (510) 981-6900

Attachments:

1: Resolution

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

CONTRACT: WESTCOAST ONLINE INFORMATION SYSTEMS, INC. DBA NETFILE FOR ONLINE CAMPAIGN REPORT, PUBLIC FINANCING, AND FORM 700 FILING AND TRACKING

WHEREAS, in accordance with the provisions of the Government Code, the Berkeley Charter, the Municipal Code, and the Conflict of Interest Code, the City Clerk is the filing officer for approximately 40 city campaign committees as well as over 600 Form 700 filers; and

WHEREAS, since 2018 the City Clerk Department has administered the public financing program and NetFile completed significant work to tailor a special module for the City to administer the program; and

WHEREAS, tracking this volume of mandated filings requires an automated system that is powerful and efficient; and

WHEREAS, since the implementation of the NetFile in 2007, staff efficiencies have increased, overtime costs have been reduced, errors on campaign filings have decreased, time that it takes to post filings to the web has been shortened, and public access to filings has improved; and

WHEREAS, funds are available in the current year budget in the General Fund, budget code #011-32-314-000-0000-000-411-611120.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager is authorized to execute a contract with Westcoast Online Information Systems, Inc. dba NetFile for an amount not to exceed \$170,700 for the period October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2028 for online campaign report, public financing, and Form 700 filing and tracking. A record signature copy of said contract and any amendments to be placed on file in the Office of the City Clerk.

