



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR  
May 21, 2024

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
 From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager  
 Submitted by: Jordan Klein, Director, Planning and Development Department  
 Subject: Contract: Online Solutions, LLC (DBA Citizenserve) for Housing Inspection and Code Enforcement Software

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a contract with Online Solutions, LLC (DBA Citizenserve) for software licensing, implementation, maintenance and related services for housing inspection and code enforcement software, for an amount not to exceed \$622,215, from June 17, 2024 through June 16, 2029.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The five-year costs for implementation, including data migration and integrations, is \$622,215. The cost will be shared between the Rental Housing Safety Program from Fund 129 (RHSP), and the Land Use and Building & Safety Divisions from Fund 621 (PSC).

**Fund 129 (RHSP) Share of Costs**

For Fiscal Year 2024, funding in the amount of \$69,137 is available in account number 129-53-585-635-0000-000-441-613130. Funds for FY 2025 and FY 2026 are included in the FY2025 and FY2026 budget and are subject to appropriation for each year. Funding for FY 2027 and FY 2028 will be requested in the budget for those years.

Fund 129 (RHSP)	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28
Implementation Fees	29,290	87,869			
Annual Subscription Payment	39,848	39,848	39,848	39,848	39,848
Total	69,137	127,716	39,848	39,848	39,848

**Fund 621 (PSC) Share of Costs**

For Fiscal Year 2024, funding in the amount of \$6,129 is available in Land Use Division account number 621-53-584-622-0000-000-472-613130 and \$58,384 is available in Building & Safety Division account number 621-53-585-634-0000-000-472-613130 to cover the full FY 2024 PSC Fund expense of \$64,513. Funding for FY 2025 through FY 2028 will be appropriated via the AAO and budget processes for those years, as needed.

Fund 621 (PSC)	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28
Implementation Fees	16,745	50,236			
Annual Subscription Payment	47,768	47,768	47,768	47,768	47,768
Total	64,513	98,004	47,768	47,768	47,768

**CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS**

In 2023, the Planning and Development Department began seeking a system to integrate housing inspection and financial management functions in a single, cohesive system and to manage building and zoning code enforcement. The Department seeks to improve tracking of information collected during inspections, and management of communications and documentation required for inspection follow-through. A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued for Housing Inspection and Code Enforcement Software (Specification No. 24-11628-C) on November 1, 2023. This initiative was in response to the recognized inefficiencies of operating disparate systems for housing inspection data and financial management, and less than satisfactory performance of the inspection data system since 2015.

Five firms responded to the RFP. An interdepartmental panel including IT and Planning staff reviewed the proposals, hosted demonstrations, and gathered references.

The adoption of the Citizenserve platform aligns with the City’s strategic objectives to deliver outstanding, timely, and accessible services and information to our community and helps advance the City’s Strategic Plan Goal to be a customer focused organization that provides excellent, timely, easily-accessible service and information to the community.

**BACKGROUND**

Since 2015, the City has utilized the Accela Housing module along with the FUND\$ Miscellaneous Receivables module for housing inspections. When the Planning and Development Department implemented the Accela system for housing inspections in 2015, only inspection data was migrated, with financial information remaining in FUND\$. As a result, staff have had to work in two separate systems to result housing inspections and generate invoices for fees. While the Accela Housing module was custom configured from an Accela code enforcement software module, and modified over subsequent years, it never provided fully satisfactory utility. The City is seeking a new system that includes both the inspection and financial components of the program to reduce the workload and streamline operations.

Building and zoning code enforcement activities are currently tracked with Excel spreadsheets. Citizenserve will improve these code enforcement efforts by providing a system with workflows to manage notices of violation and other correspondence, inspection notes, owner contact information, reminders, and citations when necessary. View access will be provided to staff in other departments, including Neighborhood

Services Code Enforcement, the Fire Department, and the Rent Board, to facilitate citywide coordination of code enforcement efforts.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

The proposed software is expected to significantly enhance operational efficiencies, enabling inspectors to complete more inspections weekly, thereby achieving higher inspection goals with fewer resources. It also offers the potential to further reduce the Department's carbon footprint through the adoption of more paperless processes.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The proposed housing inspection and code enforcement software represents a pivotal upgrade for RHSP, and for building and zoning code enforcement, ensuring the continuation of essential services in a more efficient and integrated manner. The system will provide a portal for property owners, where they can make payments and fill out exemption correction forms online, which will save time for owners and staff alike, and will continue to provide tenants with an online portal to submit requests for service.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

During the RFP evaluation process, alternatives, including the adoption of different vendors' solutions, or not acquiring new software and continuing with inefficient processes, were thoroughly considered. However, the selection team determined that Citizenserve offered the most significant operational and fiscal advantages.

Staff also considered incorporating housing inspection and code enforcement functionalities into a broader RFP that is planned to procure a vendor to develop a new permitting system. This alternative was ultimately set aside in favor of the proposed solution specialized in code enforcement processes.

CONTACT PERSON

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Attachments:

1: Resolution

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

CONTRACT: ONLINE SOLUTIONS, LLC (DBA CITIZENSERVE) FOR HOUSING  
INSPECTION AND CODE ENFORCEMENT SOFTWARE

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has identified the need to improve the efficiency of its housing inspection, code enforcement and revenue collection processes; and

WHEREAS, five firms responded to a Request for Proposals released on November 1, 2023 (Specification No. 24-11628-C); and

WHEREAS, a selection committee reviewed the proposals and determined that Online Solutions, LLC (DBA Citizenserve) was the best qualified to provide the services needed and offered the best combination of cost, software functionality and customer service; and

WHEREAS, funding for licensing, implementation and maintenance services in the amount of \$133,650, is allocated for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 in the Planning Department's budget and spending in future fiscal years is subject to Council approval of the proposed citywide budget and annual appropriation ordinances.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager or their designee is authorized to execute a contract, and any amendments with Online Solutions, LLC for housing inspection and code enforcement software for a total contract period of five years in an amount not to exceed \$622,215 for the Planning and Development Department (from accounts 129-53-585-635-0000-000-441-613130-, 621-53-584-622-0000-000-472-613130-, and 621-53-585-634-0000-000-472-613130-).