WESTMINSTER
COLORADO

Agenda Memorandum   Agenda Item – {{section.number}}.B.

City Council Meeting
May 12, 2025

Strategic Priority 5: Resilient Infrastructure

Maintain and invest in resilient infrastructure that creates the highest return for safety, community connectivity, enjoyment of life, and local economic success.

Subject: Ratification of Information Technology Managed Services and General Support, and Request the Purchase of Network Equipment, Professional Services, and Maintenance Support with The Root Group, Inc.

Prepared By: David Guo, Information Technology Director

Recommended City Council Action:

1. Based on the recommendation of the City Manager, find that the public interest will be best served by ratifying the agreement for information technology managed services and general support with The Root Group, Inc. in the amount of $204,481.

2. Request an additional future expenditure with The Root Group, Inc. for the purchase of network equipment, professional services, and maintenance support in an amount not to exceed $250,000.

Summary Statement:

- In late 2024, the City's Information Technology Department (IT) experienced significant departures from the Network Team, impacting progress on several major projects. To maintain operations, The Root Group, Inc. (Root Group) was engaged to provide external expertise and support.

- Root Group developed a strong understanding of the City's network environment and provided immediate assistance during a critical transition period when multiple network outages occurred during this time, reducing user productivity. The urgent need for response prevented the use of a formal bidding process.

- Root Group helped stabilize the network and identified key infrastructure needs, allowing for

timely repairs and upgrades.

- Due to aging network infrastructure and increasing cybersecurity threats, especially targeting State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial (SLTT) governments, network management has become increasingly more complex. The City's primary internet firewall also failed during this period, and Staff lacked the necessary credentials to resolve the issue. Root Group replaced the outdated firewall with Fortinet equipment, significantly enhancing the City's cybersecurity posture.

- In accordance with the Westminster Municipal Code, any purchases exceeding $50,000 that have already been initiated by Staff require City Council ratification. From January 1, 2025 through March 4, 2025, cumulative expenditures with Root Group totaled $154,481. Additional expenditures of up to $50,000 are anticipated between April 5, 2025 and May 12, 2025 to address critical system outages and failures. Therefore, these expenditures require City Council ratification for a total of $204,481.

- Root Group is now part of an OMNIA Partners cooperative contract following a competitive process. By using this contract, the City benefits from stable pricing and favorable terms through collective purchasing power. Westminster Municipal Code §15-1-5(B) supports the use of such agreements. In 2025, the City plans to procure additional networking equipment, services, and support from Root Group, not to exceed $250,000.

Fiscal Impact:

Not to exceed $454,481 in expenditures – Including $204,481 ratification of spending on already purchased goods and services, and $250,000 authority for future expenditures.

Source of Funds:

General Fund: IT Operating Budget

Policy Issue(s):

1. Should City Council ratify the past expenditures for IT managed services and general support to Root Group?

2. Should City Council approve an additional future expenditure with Root Group for the purchase of network equipment, professional services, and maintenance support?

Alternative(s):

1. City Council could choose not to ratify the information technology managed services and general support provided by Root Group. This is not recommended as the services have already been successfully completed for the City and the expenses have already been incurred.

2. City Council could choose not to approve an expenditure with Root Group for the future purchase of network equipment, professional services, and maintenance support. This alternative is not recommended as the City's aging system needs updating to provide continued, seamless network support to all City operations and Root Group offers competitive pricing through its OMNIA Partners cooperative contract.

Background Information:

Over the past year, the City has partnered with Root Group to support modernization of its network infrastructure. Root Group has demonstrated a strong understanding of the City's technical environment and operational requirements while also offering significant financial discounts compared to other previously engaged resellers.

In late 2024, the Information Technology Department, and specifically the Network Team, experienced significant staffing challenges. Within a 45-day period, both the Network Engineer and Network Administrator resigned, and the existing Network and Telecom Administrator transitioned to different roles. To ensure continued performance and stability of the City's technology infrastructure, the department was required to make prompt decisions regarding short-term support. Given Root Group's expertise in addressing network outages and performance issues, Root Group was identified as a reliable and capable local partner.

During this transition period, the City experienced multiple network outages that impacted a broad range of users and reduced overall productivity. Given the urgency of the situation and the immediate need for support, a formal bidding process was not feasible. Root Group's assistance enabled the City to identify critical infrastructure needs and begin implementing necessary repairs. These efforts not only addressed immediate concerns but also provided valuable insight into the broader state of the City's network systems.

As new staff were onboarded to the Network Team, Root Group collaborated closely with them, facilitating knowledge transfer and enabling internal personnel to take on more in-house repairs. This partnership marked the beginning of a stabilization phase for the City's network.

With the City's technological needs expanding and the network infrastructure continuing to age, new challenges are emerging, particularly in relation to firewall management and cybersecurity.

Pursuant to the Westminster Municipal Code, purchases exceeding $50,000 that have already been initiated by Staff require City Council ratification. From January 1, 2025 through March 4, 2025, cumulative expenditures with Root Group totaled $154,481. Additional expenditures of up to $50,000 are anticipated between April 5, 2025 and May 12, 2025 to address critical system outages and failures. Therefore, City Council ratification is requested for a total amount of $204,481.

Root Group has recently participated in a competitive procurement process and is now a vendor under an OMNIA Partners cooperative contract. As such, the City intends to continue purchasing networking equipment, professional services, and maintenance support from Root Group, with total expenditures for 2025 not to exceed $250,000.

This proposal aligns with the City's Strategic Priority of Resilient Infrastructure. Maintaining a robust and reliable network infrastructure is essential to the success of core City services, supporting both the municipal workforce and the community at large.

Respectfully submitted,

Jody L. Andrews
City Manager