

COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

	Number:	26-280	Meeting:	August 3, 2026
	Agenda Item:	41	Roll Call:	
	Submitted by:	Benjamin R. Page, Parks and Recreation Director		

AGENDA HEADING:

Resolution approving procurement and execution of contract with Ramaker and Associates, Inc. for Cemetery Information Management System (CIMS) Cemetery Management Software in a total amount not to exceed \$264,148.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend approval of the procurement and execution of a contract with Ramaker and Associates, Inc. for CIMS software. This agreement will replace and update three (3) in-house, aged systems used for receipt, internal and external cemetery search for interment records, and historical record keeping using block books, notecards, receipts, purchase agreements, lot owner agreements, and scanned records, some of which are over 170 years old.

Additionally, recommend approval to procure services and software from Ramaker and Associates, Inc., a contractor that is a local government unit or agency, without conforming to the competitive bidding requirements of the Procurement Ordinance, provided that the City Manager determines and declares in writing that such services were competitively procured by said local government by procurement procedures substantially equivalent to those set forth in the Procurement Ordinance and can be procured without mark-up from Ramaker and Associates, Inc., if this determination has been made by the City Manager.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: A not to exceed amount of \$264,148 during the five (5)-year initial term of the agreement.

Funding Source: 2026-27 CIP, Page 76, Cemetery Infrastructure and Improvements, PK138

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- The City of Des Moines owns and operates, through its Parks and Recreation Department, eight (8) cemeteries that span more than 400 acres with more than 190,000 interments, including:
 - Glendale Cemetery – 4909 University Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50311
 - Glendale Masonic Cemetery – 1550 48th Street, Des Moines, IA 50311
 - Woodland and Saint Ambrose Cemeteries – 2019 Woodland Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50312

- Laurel Hill Cemetery – 3601 East Court Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50317
 - Oak Grove Cemetery – 3903 Southwest 31st Street, Des Moines, IA 50321
 - Sims Cemetery – 3605 East University Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50317
 - Elm Grove Cemetery – 6501 Indianola Road., Des Moines, IA 50320
- The Parks and Recreation Department desires to procure CIMS software that will support modernizing operations by centralizing information, automating tasks, preserving history, improving services for families, and streamlining burial management. For the past decade, the need to update current cemetery information systems has been known. For the past two (2) years, achieving this has been reflected as a priority in Capital Improvement Plan funding.
 - Beginning in 2024, a team of representatives from multiple departments including Parks and Recreation, Information Technology, Procurement, Finance, and Legal formed the Evaluation and Selection Committee to evaluate potential cemetery information management vendors. During this process, with consensus from participating departments, a potential suitable vendor has been identified.
 - On February 9, 2026, by Roll Call #26-0192, City Council approved and authorized an execution of confidentiality agreement with Ramaker and Associates, Inc., a potential vendor for cemetery information management system software. This allowed information to be shared to determine system abilities to best function for City cemetery needs and kept shared information confidential.
 - The agreement outlines Phase 1 and Phase 2 deliverables, a timeline and scope of services to be rendered. The software will centralize information/data, automate tasks, and electronically preserve history by documenting interments, burial locations, type of services, burial space purchaser, purchased price, and who the Right of Interment was issued to. This will improve service quality for families, by streamlining burial management, inventory management, sales, reports, finances, and work orders for layouts, request cards and foundations for monuments. It will provide easy-to-use maps for visitors and staff. It will also improve the process for filing right of interments to families and the State of Iowa Annual Report filing as a perpetual care cemetery. It prevents issues like double-selling, protects historical records from loss, and enhances efficiency for staff and accessibility for the public, building a more reliable platform for cemetery operations.
 - Product delivery includes reports, connectivity with accounting software (general ledger, receivables, payables), a five (5)-year maintenance agreement, five (5)-year licensing for four (4) users, 12 read-only licenses, form development, mapping, and burial searches for the general public to locate burial locations.
 - Scheduled installation, data migration, mapping, customization and testing will occur over 26 weeks and the projected go-live date is anticipated for April 2027.
 - On May 22, 2023, a Request for Proposal #61062323, Cemetery Management Software (“RFP”) was issued by the City of Tampa, Florida, and the Service Provider was selected and awarded the project by purchase order based on its submitted proposal including its Main Solicitation Response and Cost Proposal Section.

- Pursuant to Des Moines Municipal Code Section 2-726(b)(19), the City may procure services and software from Service Provider from a local government unit or agency, without confirming to the competitive bidding requirements of the Procurement Ordinance, provided that the City Manager determines and declares in writing that such services were competitively procured by said local government by procurement procedures substantially equivalent to those set forth in the Procurement Ordinance and can be procured without mark-up from said government unit or agency. This allows the City of Tampa, Florida RFP to be procured and applicable for the City of Des Moines with the City Manager declaration that a competitive procedure occurred.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: February 9, 2026

Roll Call Number: [26-0192](#)

Action: [Confidentiality](#) Agreement with Ramaker & Associates, Inc., potential vendor for cemetery information management system software for use by the Parks and Recreation Department. Moved by Gatto to adopt. Second by Voss. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE**ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:**

- A renewal may be proposed after Year 5 if this agreement is successful and continuing this agreement is deemed favorable for residents of Des Moines and cemetery customers.

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