



DATE: April 6, 2021

MEMORANDUM TO: The Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

MEMORANDUM THROUGH: Bryant Powell, City Manager
Matt Busby, Assistant City Manager

MEMORANDUM FROM: Janine Solley, Economic Development Director *jsolley*

SUBJECT: Staff Recommendation for Visitor Center Services

For many years, the City of Apache Junction has contracted for a local visitor center where residents, tourists and seasonal guests can go for a one stop shop to find information about the area, things to do, and goods and services they can find locally. Our current contract for services is with the Apache Junction Chamber of Commerce with the term ending June 30, 2021.

Our process in the past has been to release a Request for Qualifications for this service each time the contract is renewed. However, with recent Procurement Code changes, travel and tourism center and marketing efforts are exempt. We now must identify potential qualified providers, assess their level of interest, and propose and negotiate terms for visitor center services.

In an effort to find the most qualified provider, staff utilizes the Arizona Office of Tourism as a resource to find a provider that is affiliated with their accredited Visitor Information Center program. Being a center already accredited by the State means the provider has been vetted, meets established guidelines, receives exposure with listings on official Visit Arizona and multiple official visitor publications and acts as the oversight arm ensuring centers are operating as per requirements of the State's program.

We have also considered if there are other potential locations, businesses or facilities in Apache Junction that might serve as visitor centers that meet guidelines or service deliverables similar to those of the State's accredited program. The goal is to ensure we have identified all potential providers and find the very best options who have the ability to provide the level of service we desire for our visitors.

At this time, staff is recommending the city contract for visitor center services with the Apache Junction Chamber of Commerce for a number of reasons. They have been the single service provider of these services since inception and have a desire to continue. They are one of those accredited centers by the Arizona Office of Tourism and intend to maintain their status as such. They have the ability to perform, are located in the heart of our downtown, get shining reviews from visitors, have the facility and collateral to satisfy visitor needs, and for the budget we receive great value for the service they provide.

After discussion and negotiation with the Apache Junction Chamber of Commerce, staff respectfully requests council approve a three year contract with options for two one-year extensions for the following annual amounts, paid quarterly and subject to council appropriation of funds:

- FY 21/22 \$49,920.00
- FY 22/23 \$51,917.00
- FY 23/24 \$53,994.00

Extension Options:

- FY 24/25 \$56,154.00
- FY 25/26 \$58,400.00

Staff will bring this item back on the May 4, 2021 regular meeting consent agenda.