



STAFF REPORT
7/22/2026

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Gustavo J. Romo, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Lincoln G. Bogard, Finance Director
Jason Stevens, IT Manager

SUBJECT: Approval of a Three-Year Professional Services Agreement/Order Form with Granicus, Inc. for Migration of the City's Website to the OpenCities Platform to Achieve ADA/WCAG 2.1 Level AA Accessibility Compliance (Total Not-To-Exceed \$122,981.12), Utilizing the OMNIA Partners Cooperative Purchasing Agreement

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council take the following actions: (1) approve the Order Form with Granicus, Inc. (Quote No. Q-528995) migrating the City's website from the legacy govAccess platform to Granicus's OpenCities platform and Web Experience – Enhanced Package, in an amount not to exceed \$45,189.36 in combined one-time and prorated first-year subscription fees, year two subscription of \$37,580.56, and year three subscription of \$40,211.20; and (2) authorize the City Manager, or designee, to execute the Order Form and any related agreements, utilizing the OMNIA Partners cooperative purchasing agreement (Agreement No. 159768) in lieu of independent formal bidding, consistent with the City's purchasing policy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City's website is currently hosted on Granicus's legacy “govAccess” platform. Staff identified two drivers for evaluating a platform migration. The primary driver is a new federal accessibility mandate: the U.S. Department of Justice has adopted enforceable technical accessibility standards for state and local government websites, and the City's current platform can only be made to meet those standards through continual manual retrofitting rather than automated, built-in tools. The secondary driver is a recurring concern, raised by both Council Members and residents, that the current site is difficult to navigate.

Staff evaluated three paths: (1) retrofitting the existing govAccess site for approximately \$18,000; (2) retrofitting the site and separately purchasing CivicPlus's DocAccess add-on product for automated document conversion; and (3) migrating to Granicus's newer OpenCities platform,

which is designed from the ground up to automatically prepare and check content for accessibility on an ongoing basis, and which also offers a modernized design and substantially improved search and navigation. Staff recommends migration to OpenCities.

Granicus provided the attached Order Form (Quote No. Q-528995, dated July 13, 2026) under the City's existing OMNIA Partners cooperative purchasing agreement, which satisfies the City's competitive purchasing requirements without the need for a separate solicitation. The quote expires July 31, 2026.

BACKGROUND:

The City has contracted with Granicus for website hosting and related communications services under the “govAccess” platform, which also includes the Communications Cloud communications suite. Granicus continues to support and host the City's site at www.coachella.org under this legacy platform.

In April 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice published a final rule under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act establishing, for the first time, an enforceable technical standard – the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), Version 2.1, Level AA – for the websites, mobile applications, and other digital content that state and local governments make available to the public. Compliance deadlines under the rule are tied to the jurisdiction's population as of the 2020 Census. In April 2026, the Department of Justice issued an interim final rule extending those compliance dates to April 26, 2027, for public entities serving a population of 50,000 or more, and to April 26, 2028, for smaller entities and special district governments. Based on the City's 2020 Census population of 41,941, Coachella's applicable compliance deadline is April 26, 2028.

The rule includes a small number of limited exceptions (for example, certain archived content and pre-existing documents no longer used to deliver services), but the great majority of the City's active, public-facing web content – including web pages, PDFs, online forms, and third-party or vendor-hosted tools used to deliver City services – will need to comply. Separate from the new federal web rule, the City's existing obligations under Title II to provide effective communication and equal access to programs and services already apply, so accessibility barriers on the current site carry legal and complaint risk independent of the 2028 deadline.

Independent of the accessibility issue, Council Members and residents have periodically raised concerns about the difficulty of locating information on the current site, including through its search function and page organization.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

A. Applicable Accessibility Standards

WCAG 2.1 Level AA is the technical standard adopted by the Department of Justice's Title II rule and is the standard directly applicable to the City's website. For additional context, the State of California requires its own state-agency websites to meet the newer WCAG 2.2 Level AA standard under Government Code Sections 7405, 11135, and 11546.7, and Assembly Bill 434 imposes similar requirements specifically on state entities. These particular provisions are written to apply to state agencies rather than cities; however, Government Code Section 11135's broader nondiscrimination mandate has been applied to programs and activities receiving state funding,

which may reach certain City programs depending on funding source. Staff recommends the City Attorney confirm the precise scope of any state-law obligations applicable to the City in addition to the federal ADA Title II requirement, which unambiguously applies to Coachella as a local government. Section 508 of the federal Rehabilitation Act imposes a comparable WCAG-based standard on federal agencies and their contractors; it does not independently bind the City, but vendors – including Granicus – commonly design government platforms to meet WCAG and Section 508 together as a combined technical benchmark.

B. Options Considered

1. Retrofit the existing govAccess platform. Granicus quoted just under \$18,000 to retrofit the current site to meet accessibility standards. This is essentially a one-time patch: because govAccess does not automatically evaluate or convert new content, every future addition (an agenda packet, a staff report, a new form) would require manual remediation to remain compliant, creating ongoing staff or consultant labor and continuing compliance risk as content is added or changed. It would not address the navigation and search complaints, since it retains the platform's existing site structure and search tools.

2. Retrofit plus the DocAccess add-on. The City could pair a govAccess retrofit with CivicPlus's DocAccess product, a separate add-on subscription that automatically converts documents to accessible formats. This would reduce, but not eliminate, the manual document-remediation burden, but it adds another vendor product and ongoing subscription cost on top of an aging platform, and it would not check or remediate web-page-level accessibility or resolve the navigation and search concerns.

3. Migrate to OpenCities (recommended). Granicus's newer OpenCities platform was built to automate accessibility: it is designed to automatically prepare and check content for WCAG compliance on an ongoing basis, with built-in accessibility-checking tools, rather than requiring a one-time manual retrofit. It also provides a modernized, cleaner design framework and materially improved search and content indexing, directly addressing the navigation complaints raised by Council and residents. The accompanying Web Experience – Enhanced Package includes a UX consultation, a redesigned modular homepage, migration of up to 100 pages of existing content, and staff training.

C. Procurement

The quote was issued under the OMNIA Partners cooperative purchasing agreement (Agreement No. 159768, effective December 8, 2025), which satisfies the City's purchasing policy requirements for competitively solicited cooperative contracts, consistent with the City's practice on other recent technology procurements. The quote does not itemize a separate “cooperative discount” line. Instead, the “Terminating Subscriptions” table in the quote shows the City's current annual govAccess/Communications Cloud fees (\$24,298.61) ceasing upon signature, with any prepaid balance for those services prorated and credited toward the new OpenCities subscription fees. Staff recommends confirming with the Granicus account representative whether the OMNIA cooperative rate reflects any further reduction from standard list pricing before execution. The quote expires July 31, 2026; Council action on July 22, 2026 allows time to execute before that date.

D. Cost Summary

The table below summarizes the pricing provided in Granicus Quote No. Q-528995:

Item	Amount
One-Time Fees	
GXC Service Cloud Essentials – Setup, Config, Training	\$4,476.15
Web Experience – Enhanced Package	\$27,562.50
OpenCities Subsite – Setup and Configuration	\$0.00
One-Time Fees Subtotal	\$32,038.65
New Annual Subscription Fees (Year 1, effective 7/31/26)	
GXC Service Cloud Essentials (up to 10,000 unique contacts)	\$33,380.51
OpenCities Subsite License	\$1,741.50
Annual Subscription Subtotal	\$35,122.01
Prorated Fee for Partial Period (7/31/26 – 12/14/26)	\$13,150.71
Future Year Annual Pricing	
Year 2	\$37,580.56
Year 3	\$40,211.20
Terminating Subscriptions (govAccess/Communications Cloud, ceasing upon signature)	(\$24,298.61)/yr

The Agreement's initial term begins upon signature and continues through the end of the then-current billing cycle, plus an additional 24 months, for a total commitment of approximately three years, consistent with the Year 2 and Year 3 pricing shown above.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the Order Form with Granicus, Inc. (Quote No. Q-528995) migrating the City's website to the OpenCities platform and Web Experience – Enhanced Package, utilizing the OMNIA Partners cooperative purchasing agreement, and authorize the City Manager to execute the Agreement. (Recommended)
2. Approve only a retrofit of the existing govAccess platform to meet accessibility standards, for approximately \$18,000. This lowers the immediate cost but requires ongoing manual remediation of new content, does not resolve the navigation and search complaints, and continues the City's reliance on an older platform.
3. Approve a govAccess retrofit together with a separate purchase of CivicPlus's DocAccess add-on for automated document remediation. This adds an additional vendor product and subscription cost without fully modernizing the platform or resolving the navigation and search concerns.
4. Do not approve the Agreement at this time and direct staff to issue a competitive solicitation for website platform services. This could surface additional market alternatives, but would delay ADA remediation, risk losing the current cooperative pricing (the quote expires July 31, 2026), and prolong existing navigation and accessibility complaints.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Approval of the recommended alternative would obligate the City to combined one-time and prorated first-year costs of \$45,189.36 (\$32,038.65 in one-time implementation fees plus \$13,150.71 in prorated subscription fees for the period of July 31, 2026 through December 14, 2026), payable per the milestone billing schedules specified in the quote.

Beginning with the subscription's first full annual renewal, the City's ongoing annual subscription cost is \$35,122.01, increasing to \$37,580.56 in Year 2 and \$40,211.20 in Year 3 under the quote's future-year pricing. These new fees replace the City's current annual govAccess/Communications Cloud fees of \$24,298.61, which cease upon signature, resulting in a net first-year annual cost increase of approximately \$10,823 (growing to approximately \$15,912 by Year 3), before accounting for any prorated credit applied to the terminating subscription.

First year costs of \$45,189.36 are included in the General Fund – Information Technology budget for Capital improvements in GL Account 101-11-161-90-741-0000 and contractual services 101-11-161-10-334-000 in the FY 2026-27 adopted budget.

RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE(S):

Alternative 1 – approve the Order Form with Granicus, Inc. for migration of the City's website to the OpenCities platform and Web Experience – Enhanced Package, utilizing the OMNIA Partners cooperative purchasing agreement, as recommended by staff.