Meeting Agenda Item Coversheet

MEETING DATE:	November 10, 2026	Submitted By: Howard W. Brown, Jr., ICMA-CM			
SUBJECT:	Discussion, Consideration and Approval of a Procurement Waiver and Authorization for the City Manager to Negotiate and Execute an Agreement with Citibot, Inc. for an AI Resident Engagement and Customer Service Platform				
STAFF RECOMMENDATION: (MOTION READY)	Approve a waiver of procurement procedures pursuant to Section 2-150, based on the findings in the staff report, and authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute a contract with Citibot, Inc., in an amount not to exceed $18,000 per year, in a form acceptable to the City Attorney. Funding shall be provided through the City Manager's Public Relations appropriation.				
SUMMARY *and/or* JUSTIFICATION:	Council directed the City Manager on September 1, 2026, to research resident engagement platforms and return with a recommendation. Following outreach and review of Citibot, CivicPlus, and Granicus, the City Manager recommends Citibot for its combined web and telephone voice functionality and management tools. This is a direct purchase based on the comparative review. Council approval of a procurement waiver under Section 2-150 is requested, subject to City Attorney confirmation. The staff report explains the selection, proposed waiver findings, pricing, and funding.				
	AGREEMENT:		X		
	STAFF REPORT:		X		
	EXHIBIT(S):		X		
ATTACHMENTS:	1. Staff report and comparison of three platforms 2. Proposed Citibot agreement with Most Favored Nations provision 3. CivicPlus pricing correspondence dated October 15, 2026 4. Granicus October 28 investment summary and GXA product sheet 5. Procurement policy excerpt including Section 2-150				
	RESOLUTION:		**ORDINANCE:**		
FISCAL IMPACT *(if any):*	City Manager's Public Relations budget: $18,000 Year 1; $16,275 Year 2; $17,089 Year 3.			$51,364 3 years	

AI Resident Engagement Platform

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Purpose and recommendation

Approve a direct purchase of Citibot's resident engagement platform following the City Manager's evaluation of three alternatives, together with an express waiver of procurement procedures under Section 2-150. Citibot is recommended because the proposed scope combines web chat, telephone voice, multilingual service, and Refresh. The City Manager considers its functionality and management tools the best fit for Westlake's customer service needs.

Background and comparative review

On September 1, Council reached consensus for the City Manager to research platforms and solicit proposals. Public comments supported a reliable City-endorsed source of information outside normal business hours and noted that informal resident inquiries are not fully captured by staff call volumes. Following unsuccessful initial contacts, the City Manager requested assistance obtaining CivicPlus and Granicus pricing by September 25. CivicPlus pricing was provided October 15; Granicus's investment summary is dated October 28, after the agenda cutoff. Staff will coordinate any supplemental packet distribution with the Clerk and City Attorney. The City Manager also reviewed municipal user experience through an October 8 Palm Beach Gardens visit; a Wellington meeting was requested for October 27, but no outcome is assumed here.

Platform and quoted scope	Initial pricing	Later pricing
Citibot Web chat, multilingual service, voice and Refresh	$18,000 Year 1 Includes $2,500 implementation	$16,275 Year 2 $17,089 Year 3 $51,364 total
CivicPlus Website migration plus Agent	$6,361.30 quoted for November 1, 2026	$10,300 combined annually beginning November 1, 2027
Granicus GXA Web experience with web-based voice; telephone integration excluded	$18,000 Year 1 $10,000 setup + $8,000 subscription	$8,560 Year 2 $9,157 Year 3 $35,717 total

Citibot

Recommended. Its proposed scope expressly includes web chat and voice with a 5,000-minute allowance, alongside multilingual service and Refresh. This supports the City's goal of access by both website and telephone. Before execution, staff will confirm the voice allowance period, overage charges, Refresh functions, management reporting, implementation schedule, and support commitments. The three-year total includes all amounts shown in the supplied pricing schedule; unresolved additional charges must remain within the approved limits or return to Council.

CivicPlus

Not recommended. Although less expensive, the City Manager's review found that it did not appear to provide the management tools Westlake needs. Agent requires migration to CivicPlus's new website platform; comparable telephone voice service has not been established in the supplied proposal. Existing codification and website relationships should not determine the AI platform selection. The City should preserve flexibility to change providers through the negotiated agreement; no existing right to cancel other CivicPlus contracts is assumed.

CivicPlus pricing qualifications

Website-only pricing is $2,861.30 for the November 1, 2026 renewal and $5,300 annually beginning November 1, 2027. The calculated incremental Agent cost is therefore $3,500 initially and $5,000 annually thereafter. These are differences between package prices, not a standalone Agent quote. Staff should reconcile the stated $2,500 first-year discount with the quoted totals and confirm effective dates because the quoted billing date precedes this Council meeting. Agenda management and optional accessibility products are excluded from this comparison.

Granicus

Not recommended for the proposed combined web and telephone scope. Its $18,000 first-year price equals Citibot's, but excludes telephone or phone-system voice capabilities. Web-based voice is included; telephone integration requires further discovery, scope, and investment. Its calculated three-year quoted total of $35,717 is $15,647 below Citibot's, so it is not more expensive over those three years as quoted; however, those amounts cover different services. Granicus describes content preparation, project management, staff control of sources, and ongoing Experience Partner guidance. The quote states 77 languages while the general product sheet states up to 75; contracted coverage needs confirmation. General references to SMS and WhatsApp do not establish inclusion in this quote.

Selected procurement method and proposed findings

The selected method is a direct purchase with a Council-approved waiver under Section 2-150 of the supplied procurement policy. The purchase will not use another jurisdiction's contract, and no sole-source claim is made. The supplied policy generally calls for formal competition above $50,000 and Council approval above $35,000. Citibot's three-year commitment is $51,364. Three vendor comparisons document market review but do not independently replace the required procurement procedure.

Section 2-150 permits Council, upon the City Manager's recommendation, to waive procurement procedures when goods or services cannot be acquired through the normal process because of insufficient time, the nature of the goods or services, or other factors. It requires competition as practicable, good-faith review of available sources, and negotiation of price, delivery, and terms. The City Manager requests a waiver based on the nature of the integrated AI services and the differing channel, website, and management capabilities identified through review of three available alternatives. Selection requires consideration of functional fit and service scope in addition to price. The completed outreach and comparative review support the requested findings; the agenda deadline alone is not the justification.

Before presentation for final action, the City Attorney should confirm that the documented circumstances support Section 2-150 and that the cited provisions remain applicable. If those findings cannot be supported, staff should return with the required solicitation process. Council is asked to make an express best-interest finding and approve the waiver, rather than merely authorize execution. Following approval, the City Manager will negotiate price, delivery, and contract terms at an amount not to exceed $18,000 per year, in a form acceptable to the City Attorney.

Funding and contract conditions

Funding will come from the Public Relations appropriation in the City Manager's budget. Citibot's Year 1 price is $18,000, including $2,500 implementation, $6,000 multilingual web chat, $3,500 voice, and $6,000 Refresh. Year 2 is $16,275 and Year 3 is $17,089. Future-year costs will be addressed through annual budgeting and negotiated contract provisions; an annual appropriation or termination right must be included expressly if intended.

The final agreement requires City Attorney approval before execution. Negotiations should address service scope, additional charges, reporting, accessibility, security, data ownership and export, public records, support, termination, and transition assistance. The included Most Favored Nations provision has exclusions and prospective-only adjustments; its limits should be reviewed. Contract dates should reflect actual authorization and execution. No services are authorized by this report before the required approvals.