


## MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

THRU: Richard Berrios, City Attorney 

FROM: Bryan Pankhurst, Legal Operations Administrator

SUBJECT: Legal Software Subscription Upgrade

DATE: November 14, 2024

This memo addresses the requested implementation of Thompson Reuter's solution known as Westlaw CoCounsel and its potential contribution to achieving Goal 7 of the City's strategic plan: High-Performing Government Organization. Westlaw CoCounsel offers several key benefits that directly support this goal by enhancing efficiency, improving legal research capabilities, and strengthening decision-making processes within the City government.

### **Cost and Cost History**

The City Attorney's Office has utilized the services of Thompson Reuters since 1997 in various capacities. We currently utilize a lesser tier of Westlaw which lacks the full capability desired. Last fiscal year the City paid \$66,046.71 to the vendor for the service agreement and roughly \$201,000 over the last 4 fiscal years. Additionally, on average, the annual service agreement has increased by approximately 7.3 percent each year over the last 4 fiscal years. While remaining on the annual service agreement will ensure compliance under the purchasing threshold, we have been informed that doing so would incur a 10 percent increase in cost for the upcoming renewal. Maintaining a 10 percent increase annually over the next 5 years will push the total cost over \$450,000. Due to this, we desire to lock-in a more favorable rate resulting in a 2 percent increase each year over the next 5 years accumulating to the sum of approximately \$412,000 over the 5-year term, which in turn saves the City approximately \$38,000 during that span.

### **Increased Efficiency**

Westlaw CoCounsel streamlines legal workflows through features such as automated document review, legal research, and case management tools. These

features reduce the time spent on routine tasks, allowing legal staff to focus on more complex and strategic matters. This increased efficiency translates to a more productive use of taxpayer resources and a quicker response to legal issues facing the City.

### **Improved Legal Research Capabilities**

Westlaw CoCounsel provides access to a vast database of legal information, including statutes, case law, and regulations. Its advanced search functionalities and AI-powered tools enable more comprehensive and efficient legal research. This ensures that legal decisions are well-informed and based on the most current and relevant legal authorities, minimizing the risk of legal challenges and improving the quality of legal advice provided to the City.

### **Enhanced Decision-Making Processes**

By providing quick access to relevant legal information and streamlining communication among legal staff, Westlaw CoCounsel facilitates better-informed and more timely decision-making. This improved process allows the City to respond more effectively to emerging legal issues and make strategic decisions that are legally sound and aligned with the City's best interests.

### **Contribution to a High-Performing Government Organization**

The benefits outlined above directly contribute to the objectives of Goal 7. By increasing efficiency, improving legal research, and enhancing decision-making, Westlaw CoCounsel empowers the City's legal team to operate at a higher level of performance. This, in turn, contributes to a more effective, responsive, and responsible government organization that is better equipped to serve the needs of its citizens.

We believe that the implementation of Westlaw CoCounsel is a significant step towards achieving the City's strategic goals and building a high-performing government organization. We are confident that this technology will continue to provide substantial benefits to the City and its residents.

Our request to Council for the approval of this integration will be on the December 9, 2024 agenda for consideration. Representatives for the City Attorney's Office stand ready to discuss this further should any member of the City Council desire. Your consideration in this matter is greatly appreciated. Questions regarding this can be directed to Bryan Pankhurst, Legal Operations Administrator, at (772) 344-4185.

Very Respectfully,



Bryan Pankhurst, Legal Operations Administrator

CC: Jesus Merejo, City Manager