

**CHARLOTTE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
& RURAL FIRE ASSOCIATION  
111 E. Lawrence Avenue**

**CHARLOTTE  
Ph. 517-543-0241**



**MICHIGAN  
48813**

**KEVIN FULLERTON  
Fire Chief**

6/7/2016

To: Gregg Guetschow – City Manager

From: Kevin Fullerton – Fire Chief

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Fullerton', written over a horizontal line.

RE: Purchase of BS&A Software for Building Inspections, Fire Inspections and Code Enforcement

As you are aware we have requested to upgrade our inspection software during the budget process for the last several years. Because of slow building activity we have always agreed with you and mutually decided to cut this expense from previous budgets.

However, in the last three months it is apparent that we need to upgrade to the new versions as soon as possible. The old version that we have been using only works on computers with Windows XP and we now have a problem that we cannot overcome with our current Windows software. The issue is that if we try to use the older computer at the downtown station and also at the Westside station, the entire system locks up and we cannot issue any permits. In order to continue to operate, we have had to shut down the computer at the Westside station which means no building permits or inspections can be entered any place but downtown. We have worked with our computer techs and with the company that supplies the software and have learned that our software is so old that no technical support is available. In essence we have used the software for the maximum time and must upgrade to a system that works.

The good part about this upgrade is that we can use the software to track not only building permits but we will also be able to use it to manage fire inspections and code enforcement activity. Our current system of managing fire inspections is still a paper method and the code enforcement activity is tracked on a system set up by the city manager but is somewhat problematic. The new system would be much more professional and would allow our inspectors to access the system from their iPhones while they are out of the building performing inspections. Further, this is the exact system that the county uses and therefore we would be compatible with Eaton County.

The approximate cost of this upgrade is \$6,300 to \$9,000 depending on how much time would be needed to set up our inspection forms. We propose to use the money from the fire budget; this money comes from the following:

-Siren Maintenance (Because of New Sirens) - \$2,000.00

-MCT Radio / Computer Purchase (Central Dispatch Donated MCT) - \$3,500.00

-Weather Radar (Signed Up With a Cheaper Company) \$1,000.00

-Washer / Dryer (Came In Under Budget) \$800.00

-Computer Replacement (We do not need to do this because we can access on all of our machines)  
\$1,500.00

Total: \$8,800.00

Another fact about this project is that the Rural Fire Association will also be sharing in the cost of the upgrade because we will be using the system for fire inspections that we do in the rural areas. They will be paying approximately 40% of the cost of the upgrade.

This new system will allow building inspections, fire inspections and code enforcement activities to be accessed by every computer in the fire department, not just one at each station (or downtown only as we currently have to operate). Additional City of Charlotte users will also be able to access this program, which they currently are not able to do. It is also important to note that we have no other choice than BS&A if we want to inter mix with our city assessor records. This function is very important to us when we are trying to obtain owner information and what address to send letters to. Therefore it would not be prudent to bid this project out to any vendor that does not handle BS&A software.

It is our request that the city council allow us to purchase BS&A software to handle our inspection program for an amount not to exceed \$9,000.00. It is also our request that this purchase be granted immediately so that we can pay for the project out of the 2015-2016 budget which ends July 1.