

Community Services Report to
Priorities and Finance Committee
2021 June 8

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PFC2021-0793
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Council Innovation Fund Application – Clear Justice Guided Police Complaints App

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Priorities and Finance Committee recommend that Council:

1. Approve this application to the Council Innovation Fund for the Clear Justice Guided Police Complaints App (Attachment 2) in the amount of \$45,000; and
2. Direct Administration to report back to the Priorities and Finance Committee on the outcomes of this project no later than Q4 2022.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE PRIORITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE, 2021 JUNE 08:

That Council:

1. Approve this application to the Council Innovation Fund for the Clear Justice Guided Police Complaints App (Attachment 2) in the amount of \$45,000; and
2. Direct Administration to report back to the Priorities and Finance Committee on the outcomes of this project no later than Q4 2022.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The proposed Council Innovation Fund application (Attachment 2) sponsored by Councillor Woolley would support the development of the Clear Justice Guided Police Complaints App by members of the Digital Law & Innovation Society at the University of Alberta. The project meets the requirements of the Council Innovation Fund as laid out in the terms of reference for the fund (Attachment 3).
- **What does this mean to Calgarians?** In the future, a guided complaint process in an accessible, user-friendly system offered in eight languages will be available to Calgarians seeking to find a way to make complaints against police.
- **Why does it matter?** A more accessible, user-friendly guided complaints system would make it easier for all Calgarians to submit a complaint, including those who are not fluent in English and those who are not familiar with Canada's legal system. The guidance provided through the app is also expected to improve the quality of data that police receive, resulting in a more efficient complaint management process.
- Strategic Alignment to Council's Citizen Priorities: A city of safe and inspiring neighbourhoods
- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as Attachment 1.

DISCUSSION

The proposed Clear Justice app is led by members of the Digital Law & Innovation Society at the University of Alberta. Following the 2020 July 7 meeting of the Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services on Calgary's Commitment to Anti-Racism, members of the Digital Law & Innovation Society created the Clear Justice app prototype in response to the needs expressed for a better police complaint process. This Council Innovation Fund application, sponsored by Councillor Woolley, requests \$45,000 to advance the development of the prototype app. A letter of support from the Digital Law & Innovation Society is included as Attachment 4.

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As noted in Attachment 2, the Clear Justice app will guide Calgarians through the process of making a police complaint, using plain language questions that assist the person making the complaint to provide all the information that is relevant and necessary to investigate the complaint. The prototype was developed with the objectives of being functional and easy to use, accessible to people of diverse backgrounds and abilities, a legally sound and technologically secure in design, and helpful to the Calgary Police Service to address complaints effectively. The prototype won the 2020 UAlberta Access to Justice Technology Competition and the International Iron Tech Lawyer Competition. The Calgary Police Service has been engaged in an initial conversation about the project.

Funding through the Council Innovation Fund would support the final stages of the development of the app, including consultation with professional services and translation into eight languages. Professional consultation includes legal, technical, data security, and the services of a trauma psychologist to consult on trauma-informed language to be used in the app. The project timeline and budget also includes project management and user testing prior to the launch and widespread public use of the Clear Justice app.

The project meets the definition of innovation because it involves translating a new idea (i.e. using a guided interview app for police complaints) for new or improved services, products, processes, or social interaction (i.e. the police complaint process), that create value for the community (i.e. increased access to justice). It is aligned with Council's Citizen Priority of a city of safe and inspiring neighbourhoods, as it contributes to Calgarians having the right and opportunity to participate in public life. This project also contributes to the priority of a prosperous city as it is an example of an innovative use of technology that has received international recognition and has the potential to provide a sustainable, city-wide process to address an aspect of social inequity.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION (EXTERNAL)

- ☐ Public Engagement was undertaken
- ☒ Public Communication or Engagement was not required
- ☐ Public/Stakeholders were informed
- ☐ Stakeholder dialogue/relations were undertaken

Although public engagement has not been undertaken for this project, the project was informed by the 2020 July 7 meeting of the Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services on Calgary's Commitment to Anti-Racism.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

This project aligns with the Social Wellbeing Policy, and specifically with the principles of equity and Truth and Reconciliation. The Clear Justice app aims to provide a more equitable and accessible police complaints process through the use of plain language, translation into eight languages, and guidance and confirmation that all information relevant to the complaint has

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been received. It contributes to Call to Action # 39 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action and The City of Calgary's White Goose Flying report: to partner with Calgary Police Service to collect data on the criminal victimization of Indigenous people.

Environmental

Not applicable

Economic

This project contributes to Council's Citizen Priority of a prosperous city through its innovative use of technology that has been recognized internationally. The project also demonstrates fiscal responsibility through its choice of free and open source app platform that minimizes costs to The City, Calgary Police Service, and Calgarians who will be the users of the app.

Service and Financial Implications

\$45,000

The current balance of the Council Innovation Fund is approximately \$2.46 million. This application is a one-time funding request of \$45,000. A detailed budget is outlined in Attachment 5.

RISK

The risk of not supporting the proposed project is the loss of an opportunity to support the development of a prize-winning prototype that has the potential to improve equity and accessibility of the police complaints process and to facilitate a user-friendly and efficient complaints management process.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Previous Council Direction, Background
2. Clear Justice Application for the Council Innovation Fund
3. Terms of Reference for the Council Innovation Fund
4. Letter from the Digital Law & Innovation Society at the University of Alberta
5. Budget for Clear Justice Guided Police Complaints App

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Carla Male	Chief Financial Officers Department	Inform