

## **CITY CLERK'S REQUEST TO RE-PURPOSE A PORTION OF APPROVED 2014 OPERATING BUDGET**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

City Clerk's is projecting a positive variance in its 2014 Operating Budget. This positive variance presents an opportunity for City Clerk's to address project work and repurpose operating funds towards previously unbudgeted initiatives. City Clerk's is seeking Council approval to proceed with two larger-scale projects.

### **ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That Council approve City Clerk's re-purposing a portion of their previously-approved 2014 Operating Budget towards the projects contained in the Background section of this report as follows:

1. Council approve a transfer of \$475,000 from City Clerk's Operating Budget Program 778 to the Lifecycle Maintenance and Upgrade Reserve and also approve a capital appropriation of \$475,000 to City Clerk's Capital Program 796 to be funded from the Lifecycle Maintenance and Upgrade Reserve.

### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY**

N/A

### **BACKGROUND**

For 2014, City Clerk's Operating Budget is \$12.5M, and the business unit is projecting a positive variance. In large part, this variance is attributable to a lower filing rate of complaints at the Quasi-Judicial Boards, particularly the Assessment Review Board. Projecting budget requirements for the Board is difficult as there can be significant variance in rates from year to year. Budgets have been built to accommodate high-filing rates as a precaution, with any remaining revenue going back to general revenues.

City Clerk's has several unbudgeted projects proposed for completion this year and is seeking Council approval to allocate funding from the previously approved 2014 Operating Budget. While some small projects have already been undertaken or are actively planned, two projects are of a higher dollar value and are being brought forward for Council's information and approval.

#### **1) Audio/Visual digital upgrade to Council Chamber and the Control Room (\$300K):**

#### **Description:**

Council and Committee deliberations are supported by a system of audio-visual (A/V) and other supports that allow for meeting management and, importantly, broadcasting of meetings to the public and The Corporation via live streaming, archived video, and cable television. Technological features are built into Council Chambers and the Engineering Traditions

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Committee room, and are both locations are supported by a Control Room located off the Council Chamber. At the time the systems were initially installed and until recently, the only available technology was analog. A Council Chamber rebuild in 2010 did not include an upgrade to the A/V system as part of the project scope, focusing primarily on A/V features that enhanced accessibility (captioning display, hearing assist, etc.). Some infrastructure was installed, however, to facilitate a future digital upgrade, such as digital signal capable cabling.

The analog equipment currently in place has passed or is nearing the end of its life cycle. Several pieces are at risk of failing imminently, which could occur during a broadcast of a Council or Committee meeting. Many other components can no longer be repaired and replaced with analog equipment, which is no longer readily available. Based on advice from the contracted vendor, 75 individual electronic devices need to be upgraded to replace all of the analog equipment currently in use. The vendor has sought pricing from a variety of manufacturers and has included design and installation in all cost estimates.

### **Expected Benefit:**

Upgrading the existing equipment to digital technology would reduce the risk of failure of the older equipment, while also mitigating against potential future failures for which replacements are unavailable. Adoption of digital technology will align The City with broader trends and developments in the A/V industry.

Providing access to the proceedings of Council and Committees, whether in person, via cable TV or internet streaming, is a core service for the City Clerk's Office. Providing citizens and City staff with the ability to follow deliberations and decisions is key to delivering open, transparent and accessible municipal government. The benefits of upgraded A/V technology for the public, media, and The Corporation will be immediately evident with the clarity of their chosen broadcast. Speakers, presentations, and Members of Council will be far more clearly projected to the viewing audience. The use of digital technology will also enhance mobile streaming options and allow presenters greater flexibility in using devices to conduct presentations to Council or Committees.

### **Strategic Alignment:**

Modernizing the audio/visual broadcast transmissions from Council and Committee deliberations improves and safeguards Council's ability to remain transparent, accessible and accountable. These goals have been articulated by Council in Action Plan 2015 – 2018, and were heard by the engagement team through its public engagement sessions.

### **2) Backup Council Chamber at Deerfoot Junction III (\$175K):**

#### **Description:**

During the flood in 2013, the Municipal Complex, including the Council Chamber and Engineering Traditions Committee Room, was unusable. On short notice, City Clerk's and the

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contracted vendor acquired and installed enhanced meeting management and broadcast technology in the hearing room ordinarily used by the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB) at the Deerfoot Junction III facility. With this technology in place, the facility was able to host all Council and Committee meetings during July 2013. In procuring the equipment, careful consideration was paid to future uses. As such, following the return to operations of the Municipal Complex, much of the equipment acquired to fit up the hearing room was re-purposed to the Engineering Traditions Committee Room. This included digital cameras and supporting equipment.

Since that time, as part of post-flood disaster resiliency work, City Clerk's has worked with Corporate Properties and Buildings to assess the appropriateness of other facilities, and determined that the Deerfoot Junction III facility is currently the most appropriate back-up location. In order to ensure that the facility is available as a backup at any time, moderate upgrades and installation of equipment will need to take place. Careful consideration is being given to equipment that will simultaneously enhance the A/V support to the SDAB, which meets in the facility weekly. In this way, the acquisition of technology to support a back-up Council Chamber has the potential be used on a regular basis.

City Clerk's will work with the vendor to determine the scope of equipment necessary to meet these needs. Initial consideration is being given to cameras, streaming capacity, and extra monitors.

**Expected Benefit:**

Providing a facility that could, in the event of a disaster or catastrophic occurrence, allow Calgary's civic government to continue its business with full public and media access as well as full broadcast capability is prudent disaster resiliency and business continuity planning.

**Strategic Alignment:**

Building flood resiliency and business continuity planning are key priorities under Action Plan 2015 – 2018, as is ensuring an open, accessible, and transparent government.

**Other initiatives:**

Other projects have already been undertaken or are planned. For instance, acting on Council direction "that the City Clerk [...] create and implement a plan to enhance the Board's communication with citizens, including but not limited to [...] a new website and searchable database.", the Quasi-Judicial Boards division of the City Clerk's Office will utilize some existing 2014 operational funding to build a new website for the SDAB. The website will be on a domain unique to the Board; introduce a number of short videos to introduce the appeal board and its procedures to the public; present an infographic illustrating the appeal process, and build a mapping portal so that individuals can view details of appeals in their geographic context.

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In addition, City Clerk's has been able to proceed with temporary staffing to assist with project work to address areas such as processing certain collections in the civic Archives, and to provide assistance in the areas of legislative governance and policy, and other smaller projects.

### **INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS**

#### **Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication**

City Clerk's has engaged a vendor, Adams' Technology, to provide advice and support for the provision of Audio-Visual technology for Council and Committee proceedings. The vendor has been engaged with the City for the provision of services and technology since 2010, and was awarded an RFP in 2013. City Clerk's has worked closely with the vendor to assess the current system and look into strategic investments that improve the A/V supports to Council and Committees. Going forward, City Clerk's will be working closely with a number of stakeholders to assess needs and develop a plan for future investments.

City Clerk's has also worked closely with Corporate Properties and Buildings to ensure close alignment on disaster resiliency. As work progresses on the Deerfoot Junction III facility, the SDAB Chair will be consulted to ensure the Board's needs are taken into account.

#### **Social, Environmental, Economic (External)**

By upgrading the audio/visual capacity of the Council and Committee broadcast and streaming system, as well as investing in a back-up Council facility, City Clerk's can continue to deliver high-quality access to the proceedings of Calgary's municipal government to both the public and internal staff.

#### **Financial Capacity**

##### **Current and Future Operating Budget:**

City Clerk's current operating budget has the capacity to fund these projects in their entirety. Future operating budgets will ensure regular upkeep and maintenance of the proposed technologies.

##### **Current and Future Capital Budget:**

No capital budget currently exists for technological support to Council and committees. For Action Plan 2015 – 2018, City Clerk's will seek dedicated capital funding to address other priorities and upgrades that will become desirable or necessary in the coming years.

#### **Risk Assessment**

City Clerk's has assessed the risks of these projects and determined that the greatest risk is not proceeding. There are risks that equipment could fail, disrupting broadcast of a Council or

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Committee meeting, or that a failure will lead to significant repair times if equipment is unavailable.

Work must commence in the Chamber to coincide with Council's summer recess, hence the request coming forward at this time.

**REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):**

City Clerk's recommends repurposing previously-approved operating funds this fiscal year because it represents a solid investment in technological improvements and demonstrates a commitment to make the best use of available funds.