

City Manager Report to
Personnel and Accountability Committee
2011 March 01

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PAC2011-06
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CITY MANAGER REPORT – COUNCIL INNOVATION FUND TERMS OF REFERENCE (POLICY INTERPRETATION)

SUMMARY/ISSUE

As part of the 2010 November deliberations on the 2011 budget, Council established the Council Innovation Fund (CIF). Subsequent Council direction gave rise to the need to create Terms of Reference identifying criteria to qualify for withdrawals from the Fund.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION/POLICY

On 2010 November 29 Council adopted a motion amending the 2011 Operating and Capital Budgets and Business Plans, authorizing up to \$5 Million from the Fiscal Stability Reserve to be used for innovation and pilot projects subject to the approval of Council. On 2011 February 14 Council adopted a motion directing Administration to consult with Members of Council in drafting a Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Innovation Fund, to return to the Personnel and Accountability Committee (PAC) no later than 2011 March 01 and ... that no applications to the Innovation Fund be approved until the TOR have been adopted by Council.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

That PAC recommends that Council adopt the Terms of Reference (see Attachment) for applications to the Council Innovation Fund.

INVESTIGATION

Council established the Council Innovation Fund through the 2010 November deliberations on the 2011 budget.

Candidate projects requesting withdrawals from the Council Innovation Fund have been brought forward to Council individually for approval. To date two projects have received funding: a facilitated review of The City's municipal purpose and core services (up to \$2.5 million) and the Mission Road Main Street Project (\$300,000).

Given the level of interest in the CIF to date it is anticipated that more funding requests will be forthcoming. Some criteria and a process for requesting and approving funds are needed.

The proposed Terms of Reference (Attachment 1) establish some guidelines for disbursements from the CIF, based on the following:

- The project will contribute to Council's goals and has potential City-wide application;
- The project is innovative or a pilot project or experiment that proposes a new or different way of doing The City's work.

Candidate projects will be expected to provide detailed supporting documentation.

An approved Terms of Reference will provide helpful guidelines to applicants wishing to requisition monies from the fund, which will make the application process easier to understand and comply with and therefore more efficient. Clear Terms of Reference will enhance the transparency and fairness of decision-making regarding use of the Council Innovation Fund, and will enable Council to demonstrate value for money to the taxpayers.

BUSINESS PLAN/BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Establishing the Terms of Reference will make decisions regarding expenditures from the Council Innovation Fund more transparent and easier to understand.

The Council Innovation Fund should be used for operating budget items.

Applications to the CIF will be entertained throughout the 2011 calendar year. To date \$2.8 million has been allocated, leaving

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\$2.2 million in the Fund. In order to ensure that some monies remain available for the latter part of the year, no more the \$1.1 million from the funds remaining in the CIF should be disbursed before 2011 July 01. This will ensure that \$1.1 million remains in the Fund for applications that may be submitted between 2011 July 01 and December 31.

RISKS

The proposed Terms of Reference for the Council Innovation Fund have been developed to be flexible enough to support a wide variety of candidate projects. The risk associated with adopting the proposed Terms of Reference is that the flexibility created results in ambiguity as to whether a project does or does not qualify for the fund. This risk is of low impact as Council retains discretion and final decision-making power over withdrawals from the fund.

ATTACHMENT

Terms of Reference for the Council Innovation Fund.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE COUNCIL INNOVATION FUND

Purpose of the Council Innovation Fund

The broad purpose of the Council Innovation Fund (CIF) is to encourage innovations or pilot projects that have the potential to support or contribute to the goals of Council and that have city-wide application.

Guidelines

1. Process for Applications

- a) Applications for the withdrawal of funds from the CIF shall be brought by members of Council to Council for approval through a report included in the agenda of the Personnel and Accountability Committee (PAC). PAC will recommend approval or rejection to Council.
- b) The Mayor's Office will be the point of contact for all applications and will forward all proposals to PAC. Applications should be submitted to the Mayor's office no later than the 15th of the month.
- c) The applicant will be expected to complete and submit a prescribed form to the Mayor's Office. It is the responsibility of the member of Council seeking to access the CIF to use the application form to make their case to Council in the context of these guidelines.
- d) Successful applicants must report back to Council through PAC indicating how the money was spent and the outcomes of the project within 12 months of the approval of funding.
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- e) Any unused portions of CIF awards must be returned to the CIF.

2. Criteria for Successful Applications

Applications should demonstrate that the proposal is consistent with the Purpose of the Council Innovation Fund as set out in these Terms of Reference.

Successful applications will address one of the following:

- a) One-time start up or "seed" funds for initiatives or programs which will support or contribute to Council's priorities.
- b) Pilot projects or experiments that have the potential to change city-wide policies and procedures.

Applications for funding must include detailed documentation..

The proposal for funding must demonstrate credibility, fiscal responsibility and good management which will be important considerations in the evaluation of applications.