

Date: 2021-03-09

Subject: Request for Budget Amendment – Lobbyist Registry Upgrade
Solution

Contact: Peter Fay, City Clerk

Report Number: Legislative Services-2021-329

Recommendations:

1. That the report titled **Request for Budget Amendment – Lobbyist Registry Upgrade Solution**, to the Committee of Council Meeting of March 31, 2021, be received; and
2. That a budget amendment be approved for Project # 191480-058 in the amount of \$90,000, to be sourced from Reserve #4.

Overview:

- **An online Lobbyist Registry was implemented in 2016, as per Council direction.**
- **A capital request was made in the 2019-2021 Budget process (Project #191480-058 Lobbyist Registry Upgrade) for \$150,000 for much needed improvements to the lobbyist registry. This amount was an estimate only and there was no benchmark available for comparison.**
- **Two solutions were originally considered:**
 - **Improve the existing lobbyist registry, or**
 - **Develop an in-house solution.**
- **Digital Innovation & IT (DI & IT) has stated it would not be cost effective to support and maintain the existing solution, and could not support an in-house solution due to unavailability of internal developers.**
- **A public Request for Proposal was initiated in Fall 2020 in accordance with the Purchasing By-law – all short-listed and evaluated bids,**

including the successful bidder, well exceeded the original budget amount of \$150,000.

Background:

An online Lobbyist Registry was implemented in 2016, as per Council direction. The Registry was developed in-house based on the City's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solution, which over time, no longer meets the needs of the City (legacy CRM platform no longer supported) and clients (lobbyists are experiencing significant issues with the existing solution). Lobbyist registrations and subject-matter registrations are confusing for people to understand, follow and finalize. An extraordinary amount of staff time is required to guide lobbyists through the registration process and correct registration errors.

In the 2019-2021 Operating & Capital Budget process, a capital budget was established and approved for a Lobbyist Registry Upgrade, at an estimated cost of \$150,000.

Staff from DI & IT and the City Clerk's Office discussed options including improving upon the existing lobbyist registry or developing a new in-house solution. The lobbyist registry, developed in-house over 5 years ago has reached its end of life and resides in a now unsupported CRM portal technology environment. The cost to maintain the registry in this environment is approximately \$80,000 per year (including but not limited to additional storage, maintenance and licensing), which is not a cost effective solution. Given the timeline, and the unavailability of internal developers, DI & IT Enterprise Architecture suggested rather than an in-house solution, acquiring an existing and proven solution used by another municipality and customizing for the City of Brampton Lobbyist Registry is a more effective and efficient solution. The estimated cost at the time of the business case (developed in 2018) was well within the budget and this option posed the least risk.

An open, public Request for Proposal process was followed in the Fall of 2020, in accordance with the City's Purchasing By-law and procurement process. This report recommends a budget amendment to complete the procurement process to complete the Lobbyist Registry Upgrade project.

Current Situation:

As a result of the competitive procurement process, seven (7) bidders responded to the Request for Proposal and three (3) bidders were short-listed after evaluation. The evaluation process resulted in one (1) bid that best fit the City's business and technology environment requirements and was also the lowest bid. All three (3) shortlisted bids well exceeded the original budget amount of \$150,000.

The City of Brampton will be entering into contract negotiations with the selected bidder following approval of a budget amendment of \$90,000 to enable completion of the procurement process.

Corporate Implications:

Financial Implications:

A budget amendment is required to increase capital project 191480-058 – Lobbyist Registry Upgrade by \$90,000. Sufficient funding is available within Reserve #4 for the requested top up.

Project	Original Approved Budget	Top-Up Requested	New Approved Budget
191480-058	\$150,000	\$90,000	\$240,000

Other Implications:

Term of Council Priorities:

This report furthers the Term of Council Priorities of a Well-Run City by enabling public access to information about lobbying activity occurring at the City to enhance transparency and accountability in City operations and Council decision-making.

Conclusion:

The approved capital project to upgrade the City’s Lobbyist Registry tool is underway through a procurement process to have a third party develop an improved registry based on similar registries in place in other municipalities. The original capital budget, approved in 2019, has insufficient funds to complete the project based on the proposal received and evaluated as the best proposal to complete the work. A budget amendment of \$90,000 is recommended to proceed with the capital project.

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Attachments: *nil*