

Date: 2021-05-06

Subject: **Standing Item on Meeting Agendas – Use of Consultants**
(RM29/2021)

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Report Number: Legislative Services-2021-637

Recommendations:

1. That the report titled: Standing Item on Meeting Agendas – Use of Consultants (RM29/2021), to the Committee of Council meeting of June 9, 2021, be received.

Overview:

- At its April 14 meeting, Committee of Council requested staff report on the possibility of including a standing item on Committee of Council meeting agendas to report details on the use of consultants, including the consulting service name, work description, timelines and costs incurred.
- This report addresses this request, identifying information that is readily available from existing purchasing systems to partially respond to Council's request, including consulting service vendor names, brief purpose statements and contract value. Supplementary information regarding engagement timelines and costs incurred will require additional work by individual contract administrators to provide this information for regular reporting.

Background:

At the April 14 Committee of Council meeting, the following Recommendation was adopted:

CW198-2021

That staff be requested to report on the possibility of a standing item be added to future Committee of Council agendas for reporting details on the use of consultants.

Committee discussion included the possibility to place, on future meeting agendas, regular information regarding consulting services engaged by the City, and include details such as the consulting agency name, reason for the service, and associated timelines and costs for the service.

This report addresses this request.

Current Situation:

The City engages a variety of consulting services for different strategic activities requiring expertise to inform decision-making.

As part of the 2021 budget deliberations, some historical [aggregate baseline information was provided to Budget Committee](#) regarding the value of consulting services contracts with the City.

Depending on the value of the consulting engagement, information is currently reported as part of regular purchasing activities.

Consulting Services valued at \$100,000 or greater:

From a procurement perspective, consulting services or consultants engaged by the City, with a contract value greater than \$100,000 are publicly reported quarterly through the Purchasing Activity Quarterly Report regularly presented to City Council. This report shows new or amended consulting service contracts with values \$100,000 and over only, with the last published report being for [Q4 2020, as considered at the February 24, 2021 Committee of Council meeting](#), and the Q1 2021 report scheduled for presentation to the June 9 Committee of Council meeting. These procurements (greater than \$100,000) are centrally managed by the Purchasing Division. As a result of recent requests from Committee, the next quarterly report will include supplementary information including a brief description of service/scope of work, as provided manually by contract administrators. However, for those procurements involving consulting services, it does not include information regarding the timelines and actual costs incurred to-date.

Consulting Services valued at less than \$100,000:

Currently, no regular reporting exists in regard to new consulting services less than \$100,000 in contract value. However, such consulting services still require an approved budget, a Purchase Order and business need for the work to be undertaken. Procurements for these contracts are managed separately by the respective Departments, with guidance provided by the Purchasing Division, in accordance with the Purchasing By-law.

Information can be extracted from the City's business systems to report on active consulting services with a City Purchase Order valued between \$25,000 - \$100,000,

coupled with consulting services greater than \$100,000 that would normally be included within the purchasing quarterly report.

This list would not include consulting services that are confidential in nature, as defined in the Purchasing By-law, and those directly negotiated by the business unit with a value less than \$25,000 that do not use a Purchase Order, but instead may use a P-card or other small value procurement method. Information for consulting engagements less than \$25,000 is not available, as these transactions are not categorized to allow for reporting on consulting services.

If directed by Council, staff can start to report quarterly or semi-annually to Committee with consulting services contract reports identifying the following basic information:

Consulting Service Information Attribute	Information Availability and Source
• City Purchase Order Number	Available from Purchasing System
• Process for Procurement (e.g., Competitive, Limited Tendering, etc.)	Available from Purchasing System
• Purchase Order Description (e.g., brief statement of work/purpose/reason)	Available from Purchasing System and Responsible Department
• Consulting Service Vendor Name	Available from Purchasing System
• Responsible Department/Division	Available from Purchasing System and Responsible Department
• Purchase Order Original Value	Available from Purchasing System
• Total Change Orders from Original Value (e.g., Contract Extensions or Renewals)	Available from Purchasing System
• Total Contract Value	Available from Purchasing System
• Expenses/Commitments Incurred To-date	Manual update from Finance System and Responsible Department
• Consulting Service Status	Manual update from Responsible Department
• Timeline for Consulting Services Completion	Manual update from Responsible Department

At the moment, readily-available information does not include requested information regarding the consulting services timelines and costs incurred to-date. Such supplementary information will need to be obtained from Department contract administrators and finance systems. If Council directs regular reporting of consulting services information, staff will need to coordinate and manually assemble this information in a reporting table to Committee of Council on a regular reporting basis.

Including a standing agenda item on consulting services engaged on each Committee of Council agenda may not achieve Council's intent to monitor and track consulting service engagements as the number and change to consulting activity may not be as frequent as every 2 weeks. Instead, it may be better to consider quarterly or semi-annual reporting on consulting services.

Corporate Implications:

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications from reporting basic information about consulting services on a semi-annual or quarterly basis.

Other Implications:

nil

Term of Council Priorities:

This report has been prepared in full consideration of the Term of Council Priority of “Brampton is a Well-Run City”, demonstrating value for money of City Programs and services transparent reporting for consulting services engaged to inform City decision-making.

Conclusion:

This report responds to Committee of Council’s request for possible regular reporting on consulting services engaged by the City. Basic purchasing information is available from the City’s procurement systems to identify the consulting service, purpose of the engagement and contract value, but will need to be supplemented with additional information from individual contract administrator departments and finance system to identify consulting service timelines and actual costs incurred. If directed by Council, regular reporting on consulting services on a semi-annual or quarterly basis can be provided for public access and transparency.

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