CITY OF KELOWNA

MEMORANDUM

Date: November 1, 2006
File No.: 1040-20

To: City Manager

From: Civic Properties Manager

Subject: Council Chamber Audio Visual System Upgrades

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report dated November 1, 2006 from the Civic Properties Division regarding the status of the Council Chamber Audio Visual/Visual Equipment Upgrade be received for information.

SUMMARY

The original scope of this project was to replace audio and visual (A/V) equipment in the Council Chamber that had reached the end of its service life. In 2006, Council recognized that the equipment was also technologically obsolete and increased the capital budget (221-C100) from $75,000 to $150,000 to make the system more comparable with other BC municipalities.

Civic Properties hired MC^2 System Design Group in North Vancouver to review the existing system and provide a conceptual solution. This firm has been involved in similar municipal Council chamber projects recently in Prince George, Burnaby, Coquitlam, Richmond, the Township of Langley, and Salmon Arm.

Detailed design is in progress for tendering late in the year and on-site construction for 3-weeks in March 2007. Contractor prequalification will be publicly solicited in early November to ensure that contractors have local service and support, as well as certified control system and audio processor programmers on staff. Arrangements are being made to relocate Council meetings to a suitable off-site venue during construction.

The major deficiencies in the Chamber are:
- **Audio**: The Councilors microphones are not intended for this purpose and are failing; the mixing system has limited controls resulting in poor voice amplification; the speakers are inadequate in number and layout resulting in either inadequate volume or electronic feedback; there is no microphone switching or volume control for the Mayor or Clerk resulting in too many open mics or presenters not being able to turn their mics on, both of which compromise speaker audibility.
- **Video**: The screen size and placement is inadequate for over 50% of the public gallery, all of the media and the staff bench; even the Council itself is only marginally served by

the existing screens. The <u>overhead projector</u> (Elmo) is outdated; there is no central <u>control</u> over the switching of the projection equipment, and there is no dedicated <u>computer</u> available for presenters resulted in considerable wasted time as sequential procedures hook-up their own lap-tops.

- **Room Layout**: Although outside the scope of this project, the general arrangement of the room compromises its functionality. <u>Presentation positions</u> are poor: staff present from behind Council and the public present from a podium within the Council horseshoe that is intimidating to the presenter because the presenter is unable to face all of Council simultaneously. One quarter of the public gallery is sitting behind the south group of councilors because the centre axis of the Council horseshoe is oriented diagonally to the NW corner of the room.

The following will be done with the existing budget, subject to tender results:

- Audio:
    - Replace individually controlled lavalier clip-on microphones with shotgun gooseneck microphones for the Mayor, each Councilor, the City Manager, Clerk and two presentation podiums including on-off (mute) controls and a "mic-live" indicator light at each mic
    - Replace the desk mounted cardioid microphones at the staff desk as above
    - Replace the primitive IRP Voice-Matic auto-mixer with a programmable Digital Signal audio processor (DSP)
    - Replace the 4" Atlas Soundolier ceiling loudspeakers with 24 contemporary loudspeakers and a multi-channel amplifier
- Video:
    - Install new presentation screens to improve visibility for both Council and the public, relocating the digital projectors appropriately.
    - Replace the composite video document camera (Elmo) with the latest full motion XGA (1024x768 pixel) model
- Controls:
    - Install touch screen control panels for the Mayor (10" ancillary) and Clerk (12" main) and a control processor
    - Install software providing both on-off switching and volume control over all microphones and on-off control over all video equipment
- Room Layout:
    - Relocate the staff and public presentation table/podiums within view of all Councilors;
        - provide network access and a permanent computer terminal, monitor and multiple scalable/switchable inputs and network access ports for staff,
        - provide laptop computer input and DVD player input ports for public presentations,
    - Relocate the media bench to the rear of the gallery with multiple Clerk-controlled audio outputs, broadcast A/V feeds, internet access and video monitors to view presentations

A capital budget will be submitted in 2007 to replace the existing indirect lighting to 1) reducing utility and maintenance costs and 2) to improve the light quality and reduce the glare in the Chamber. Once public capacity regularly exceeds the seating within the existing view angle of

Council, a proposal will be made to improve the general arrangement of the room to increase the effective occupancy of the gallery.   Future technological upgrades would include:

- LCD monitors and millwork mounted speakers for each Councilor, with the ability to switch the monitor between presentations, the agenda screen, and personal laptops
- Install an agenda monitor for the Mayor and Clerk
- Increase the touch-screen control software to recognize Councilor queuing requests and house lighting control
- Install a ceiling mounted digital camera to present full size architectural drawings with zoom-in capacity and a Digital Cable Box/Tuner so that the chamber is a more rentable venue for non-Council users
- Audio-Video conference Capability integrated with the control system
- Hearing assist system
- Computer based meeting A/V recording storage and retrieval systems

The operation and maintenance of the existing system has been problematic. A new system would not be trouble-free. A service contract would need to be established with a local company to trouble-shoot both hardware and software problems very quickly.

Randy Cleveland
Civic Properties Manager

Attachment: "City of Kelowna Council Chamber Audio Visual Systems Review and Concept Design Report" by M^{C}Squared System Design Group, Inc.

c.c.   David Graham, Director, Recreation Parks and Cultural Services
        Doug Rasmussen, Information Services Manager
        Dave Dray, Properties Supervisor