

Video Streaming of Council, Standing Committee & Statutory Public Meetings

Presentation to General Committee

**October 17, 2016
Martha Pettit, Deputy Clerk**

Purpose

- As part of the 2016 Budget process, the Budget Committee requested that staff report back to General Committee on the implementation of a video streaming solution for the City at minimal cost.
- Staff are present today to report back on a cost effective video streaming solution for Markham, which can be implemented in a timely manner.

Background

- Broadcasting of meetings allows residents to be aware of issues under consideration without having to be physically present at the meeting.
- Video streaming is consistent with the City's adopted principles of accountability & transparency.
- Federal & Provincial governments have their own dedicated public television channels for streaming purposes.
- Many Ontario municipalities have implemented video streaming in various forms – York Region is currently investigating video streaming options.

Background

- Markham began audio streaming City Council meetings in 2002 & expanded this service to include the video display of presentation materials at City Council & Standing Committee meetings in 2015.
- To-date, the City has received few complaints with respect to the delivery of, or accessing, the current streaming service.
- The City has received very few requests from the public for an enhanced video streaming system.

2015 Listeners/Viewers of Meetings

	Budget	Council	Development Services Committee	Development Services Public	General Committee
Total # of meetings	14	22	20	16	24
Total # of connections	90	581	221	149	298
Most # of connections	12	272	30	23	50
Least # of connections	2	1	1	2	4
Average # of connections	6	26	11	9	12

Current Streaming Solution

- **Current Streaming Solution**
 - Audio streaming component
 - Limited video streaming of presentation material only
 - Active speaker is not visible to the public

Pros

- ✓ No additional costs
- ✓ Provides relatively stable service, while promoting transparency & remote access to the meetings

Cons

- ❖ Demand for video streaming by small number of citizens is not met

Proposed Video Streaming Solution

- The proposed video streaming solution requires a fixed seating & microphone arrangement - as such, it can only be implemented in the Council Chamber.
- It will use the existing 2 cameras & the microphone system that are already in place in the Council Chamber.
- The view of all Members of Council will be video streamed during discussions & presentation material will be video streamed during presentations.

Static Camera Shot – All Members of Council



Cost

- Staff researched a number of options that cost between \$15,000 to \$125,000.
- The proposed option is the most fiscally prudent option.
 - There are no one-time costs, or ongoing operating costs, associated with the implementation of the proposed video streaming solution.

Note: The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act requires all municipalities using video streaming & posting the videos online to include a closed captioning component by 2021. This will require the City to upgrade the proposed system – likely at an additional cost.

Recommendations

1. That the presentation on the video streaming of Markham City Council, Standing Committee & statutory public meetings be received; & further,
2. That Council approve the proposed video streaming solution for implementation to begin in January 2017.

Questions?