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2015 OPERATING BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

Accessibility of Council, Committee and Other City Meetings

Issue/Background:

Budget Committee at its meeting of February 4, 2015 requested a briefing note on:

- the level of accessibility of Council, Committee and other City-related meetings (e.g., consultations),
- protocols in place to make these meetings accessible and to advertise the accessibility of these meetings, and
- options to enhance the accessibility of Council, Committee, and City-related meetings and the level of resources needed to enhance their accessibility.

Key Points:

For Council and Committee meetings:

- All meetings are held in accessible facilities.
- When meetings are held outside City Hall or the civic centres, only accessible locations are considered.
- City Hall and Scarborough meeting facilities are equipped with an assistive listening system and a portable system is available for other locations.
- All agendas, documents and minutes prepared by the City Clerk meet accessibility standards and comply with the AODA.
- New report templates will be launched in Q1 2015 to further improve the accessibility of divisional reports.
- Further accommodation for persons with disabilities is provided on request. This is advertised on every agenda and notice produced by the City Clerk.
- All meeting staff have been trained in the AODA Customer Service Standards and have received CAMH training in working with persons with mental illness.
- The City Clerk's Office is able to provide these services with its existing resources. If there was a substantial increase in accommodation requests or a change in standards, additional resources may be required and City Council would be so advised.

For City-run public consultations:

- Each consultation plan considers the scale, scope, objectives, timing, resources and related projects (e.g. where the consultation is part of a series or phased approach) as well

as an analysis of the interests and needs of stakeholders to identify barriers and methodologies that support purposeful, effective participation.

- Outreach, inclusion and accessibility considerations which support participations may include:
 - Multiple formats for input – face-to-face, phone, email, online, mail, social-media etc.
 - Multiple formats for participant materials – multilingual, large-type, graphic, text, video, whiteboard, etc.
 - Supports to involvement: reimbursement of childcare, TTC, attendant care for those persons who require physical assistance to participate as a result of a disability, provision of translation and interpretation including ASL (American Sign Language), facilitation, animation, mediation etc.
 - Locations that are physically accessible, safe, well-lit, and welcoming, with staff able to provide information about parking, TTC, bike racks etc.
- Training for City engagement practitioners includes information on planning accessible meetings, securing multilingual services and AODA requirements for staff and 3rd Party contractors.
- Staff assess the best possible solutions to provide accessible public consultations within current resource levels. If there was a substantial increase in accommodation requests or a change in standards, additional resources may be required and City Council would be so advised.

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