



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Supporting Digital Communications at the City of Toronto

Date:	May 9, 2012
To:	Government Management Committee
From:	City Manager
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

At its meeting on March 28, 2012, Government Management Committee requested the City Manager to report to the May 24, 2012 meeting on the viability and need to hire a Chief Digital Officer to co-ordinate how the City of Toronto engages with its residents by utilizing its digital capacity; and further, to address a suitable salary range and the feasibility of the position being filled within the current complement.

This report provides information about Strategic Communications' intent to create a position with responsibility for digital communications.

As technology and the communications landscape continue to evolve, greater emphasis is being placed on digital, mobile and social platforms and interactions. The City must ensure it is leveraging these opportunities strategically and effectively to communicate and engage with residents, businesses and visitors about City programs, services, events and initiatives.

The creation of a digital communications position within the Strategic Communications Division will ensure the City's digital activities are coordinated and aligned with other strategic communications planning initiatives, and that social media tools are used appropriately and effectively. This position will focus on managing, overseeing and developing digital communications and social media strategies, and providing communications leadership for the City's website and online presence. The Human Resources Division will establish the wage grade for the position following a review of the job profile. No additional costs will be associated with creating this position as funding will be found within the division's existing budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Manager recommends that:

The Government Management Committee receive this report for information.

Financial Impact

Funding for the digital communications position will be accommodated within the 2012 Approved Operating Budget for the City Manager's Office. This will be accomplished by holding other funded positions vacant.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of March 28, 2012, the Government Management Committee adopted a request that the City Manager explore the viability and need to hire a Chief Digital Officer to co-ordinate how the City of Toronto engages with its residents by utilizing its digital capacity.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.GM12.19>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Governments are increasingly using digital and social platforms to communicate and engage with residents and stakeholders. To ensure these activities are coordinated and aligned with other communications planning initiatives, and to take advantage of the opportunities these platforms present, other governments have created positions within their communications function to manage, oversee and develop digital communications and social media strategies.

COMMENTS

Over the past few years, the City has implemented several digital communications approaches and social media strategies to provide information and engage with residents, businesses and visitors. Some of these approaches and strategies include the use of e-updates and RSS feeds to enable the public to subscribe to receive City information, as well as social media tools.

Currently, there are:

- 53 e-update lists
- 23 RSS feeds
- 31 Twitter accounts
- 26 Facebook pages
- 2 Flickr photo streams
- 3 City blogs
- 1 official YouTube channel

More recently, and at the direction of the Government Management Committee, the City is currently producing podcasts of existing communications products as part of a year-long pilot project.

There is a growing need to ensure the City's digital activities are coordinated and aligned with other communications planning initiatives, and that the City is using social media appropriately and effectively. Currently, responsibility and leadership for this function does not formally reside with any existing position. Strategic Communications has already started to explore the option of creating a digital communications position to oversee and develop digital communications and social media strategies and guidelines, and to provide communications leadership for the City's website and online presence. The creation of this position will allow the City to better respond to the needs of residents, businesses and visitors and enhance communications and engagement, service delivery and customer service.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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