



LOBBYIST REGISTRAR'S REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Office of Lobbyist Registrar – 2015 -2024 Capital Budget and Plan

Date:	January 8, 2015
To:	Budget Committee
From:	Lobbyist Registrar
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report seeks Budget Committee's recommendation for City Council to approve the Office of Lobbyist Registrar's 2015-2024 Capital Budget and Plan. This 10-Year Capital Budget and Plan enables the Office of the Lobbyist Registrar (OLR) to continue to provide and maintain an accessible, publicly available online lobbyist registry as required by the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*, s. 165. The Capital Budget and Plan totals \$0.660 million over the period from 2015 to 2024 for a capital project for State of Good Repair and development of critical features of the Lobbyist Registry system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Lobbyist Registrar recommends that:

1. Budget Committee recommend to Executive Committee that City Council approve the 2015-2024 Capital Budget and Plan for the Office of the Lobbyist Registrar of \$0.660 million.

Financial Impact

The financial impact of adopting the recommendation in this report will be the inclusion of \$0.660 million in the City of Toronto's 2015-2024 10-year Capital Budget and Plan, fully funded from debt.

DECISION HISTORY

This report is submitted by the Lobbyist Registrar to Budget Committee in accordance with Executive Committee Item 31.1 “A Policy Framework for Toronto’s Accountability Officers”, adopted as amended by the City of Toronto Council on April 29 and 30, 2009; and Chapter 3, Accountability Officers, Toronto Municipal Code, enacted by City Council on October 27, 2009.

City Council deferred the Office of the Lobbyist Registrar’s 2013-2022 Capital Budget and Plan of \$2.355 million for consideration in the 2014 Budget process ([January 15 and 16, 2013, EX27.1, Recommendation 109, Accountability Offices](#)):
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewPublishedReport.do?function=getCouncilMinutesReport&meetingId=5669>.

City Council deferred the Office of the Lobbyist Registrar’s Capital Budget and Plan of \$2.375 million over the period from 2014 to 2023 for Legislated and State of Good Repair Projects ([January 29 and 30, 2014, EX37.1, Recommendation 97](#)):
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewPublishedReport.do?function=getCouncilDecisionDocumentReport&meetingId=7848>).

COMMENTS

The Lobbyist Registrar is responsible under the *City of Toronto Act, 2006* (“COTA”) and the Lobbying By-law (Chapter 140, Toronto Municipal Code) for promoting and enhancing the transparency, accountability and integrity of City government decision making through public disclosure of lobbying activities and regulation of lobbyists’ conduct.

The COTA, s. 165 requires the City of Toronto to maintain a lobbyist registry, which is available to the public. The Lobbying By-law requires lobbyists to register before lobbying and to report their lobbying activities within three business days after they occur. The Office of the Lobbyist Registrar maintains an online, publicly available lobbyist registry, which meets the statutory requirement and enables lobbyists to meet their obligations under the by-law to register and report their lobbying activities.

The Lobbyist Registry system has three major purposes:

- Lobbyists use the system to document their interactions with City officials.
- The information is available publicly through the OLR’s website and is searchable.
- The information is contained in an internal operating system (IOS), which is managed by OLR staff.

The Lobbyist Registry system was designed specifically for the information that must be collected under Chapter 140 of the Toronto Municipal Code (“the Lobbying By-Law”) and reflects the requirements of the COTA.

The Lobbyist Registry system was developed in 2006 and 2007 and launched in February 2008. Significant business and technological changes have not been made to the Lobbyist Registry system since its initial launch. The current Lobbyist Registry was developed using a technology that will become obsolete and was designed only for desktop personal computer-based interaction with lobbyists. As well, the public search capacity on the Disclosure Website is limited and lacks critical features demanded by the public. The system also has significant performance issues. The volume of information collected since the launch of the registry has exceeded the original capacity design, resulting in significant delays when the registry is being searched.

State of Good Repair of the Lobbyist Registry is required to enable the registry to continue to function, comply with statutory obligations, meet requirements of users and conform to City and industry technological standards. An updated search capacity will ensure that the public can access the information in the registry. To reflect the current technology prevalence of mobile device usage replacing office computers, a mobile interface is critical to ensure that the transparency and accuracy of the registry is maintained and prevent delays in registration and reporting.

In addition, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* requires that all applications meet the WCAG 2.0 AA accessibility standard by 2021. This project will ensure that the Lobbyist Registry application meets this requirement.

Staff have undertaken research on the potential to use an existing application, whether from another lobbyist registry jurisdiction or a similar registration type of application. Jurisdictions researched include the Province of Ontario, City of Ottawa and Canada. All these systems would require significant adaptation and development in order to meet the requirements of the Municipal Code Chapter 140 and the *COTA*. A State of Good Repair of the existing lobbyist registry is the most cost-effective and efficient way.

The costs for the project have been reviewed in detail to look for options of cost-sharing and utilizing existing in-house resources. In-house resources have supported the registry in the past five years and are familiar with the functionalities and the requirements of the system. Outsourcing the development will require a steep learning curve. As well, any knowledge accumulated during the development process will be lost with external resources at the end of the project, impacting on future ongoing maintenance support of the registry.

The project will start in 2015 and is targeted for conclusion in 2016. The first stage of the project, in 2015, focuses primarily on gathering of business requirements and starting in-house development. In 2016, development will be completed and the product will be launched. The cost of the project will be \$0.172 million in 2015 and \$0.488 million in 2016, for a total cost of \$0.660 million.

The operating impact of the development requirements of the Lobbyist Registry capital project is reflected in the City Clerk's Office operating budget.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

2015-2024 Capital Plan – Accountability Officers Budget Request Overview