

For Information Only

City of Greater Sudbury Website Revision

Presented To:	Finance Committee
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Type:	Follow Up Reports to Parking Lot Items

Recommendation

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Background

At the Finance Committee meeting of March 7, 2011, a request was made for information pertaining to the potential redevelopment of the City of Greater Sudbury external website (www.greatersudbury.ca).

The City of Greater Sudbury website provides information to residents related to municipal programs and services, including but not limited to: recycling, landfills, by-laws, Council and Committee meetings, water/wastewater, zoning, child care, leisure and recreation, libraries, seniors' care, roads and transportation, and more.

The City of Greater Sudbury website is a primary source of information for residents. While other websites may reference municipal services and programs, the onus is on the municipality to be a credible source of accurate and timely information on the services it offers.

As we move towards more eGovernment applications and establish social media as a solid communications tool, it is essential to revisit the municipal website to ensure that we are meeting our legislative, security, and communications requirements.

Reviewing the Website

In order to ensure that we are providing accurate, accessible, and engaging information to residents, a thorough review of the City website's design, structure, navigability and content is underway. Since the last comprehensive review of the website in 2006, the City has launched a number of initiatives that aim to enhance services for residents (including e-Government applications and social media applications). With additional e-Government applications under development, as well as required compliance with new Accessibility Standards and with PCI protocols, this is an opportune time to review the municipal website so as to identify the services we do provide, don't provide, and could and should provide electronically.

Suggestions regarding improvements to the searchability and navigation of the City's website have also

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been received, both from external and internal sources.

Finally, in an effort to reduce advertising costs, the City is driving more users to the municipal website as a source of information. Ensuring that the information can be easily found is vital to ensuring that residents can participate in a meaningful way in their municipal government.

Process

The first phase of the project includes a survey to assist us with our website and eGovernment initiatives to ask citizens what information and services they look for online. This phase will seek to review the City website and the information we provide to citizens and how we can improve this service.

Some of the issues that must be taken into account while redeveloping the City's Web presence include:

- **Accessibility:** as a municipality, the City will be required to comply with the new Integrated Standard under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, which standard is expected to be passed as a regulation this year with phased implementation deadlines.
- **Authenticity of voice:** the municipality must speak with authority and credibility, to accurately represent itself to its citizen. The City should be the primary source of information relating to the City.
- **Applications:** Much of the CGS content is application based and applications need to function in any new environment.
- **Security:** CGS servers are highly protected and well secured, with high integrity of data and systems. This must be maintained, especially as it relates to online payments and any other e-commerce applications.
- **PCI (Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard) compliance:** PCI regulations came into effect July 1 2010 and since that time, the City has gone through a certification process which includes a review of the security of financial transactions completed through our website.
- **French Language Services Policy:** City content is provided in both French and English in accordance with the French Language Services Policy.
- **MFIPPA:** the City is subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) regarding the release of information and also regarding the protection of personal information, which also applies to website and other forms of electronic content.

Work to redevelop the City's website will be largely undertaken by staff from the Corporate Communications and Information Technology sections.

Next Steps

It is currently proposed that the work be done in two stages.

The first, a research phase, will be conducted in 2011 to identify challenges and opportunities and to establish a clear process for moving forward with the website's redevelopment, including identifying solutions for PCI compliance, security, and most effective communications vehicles.

The review will take into consideration the items below:

- identification of major issues,
- identification of best practices,
- decision regarding best solutions for City of Greater Sudbury,
- determination of how the work is best done,
- design and content restructuring, and

- relaunch of site.

Once the review has been completed a project scope will be developed and resources, including internal staff and any outsourced components of the project, will be identified and costed as appropriate. It is anticipated that phase might take up to 12 months.

Once our research has identified the best solutions for the City's website, a detailed plan will be worked out, including process, timelines, and associated budget.

The second phase is the implementation phase, and is currently projected to be conducted in 2012.

Conclusion

The City of Greater Sudbury website is currently under review to determine the most effective approach to its possible redevelopment. Councillors' input with regards to what they would find the most useful in addressing residents' queries and concerns will be sought. At this preliminary stage of the process, it is not possible to fully determine the scope, or the cost, of a potential redevelopment. Further information will be brought back to Council as required.

As we begin on the first phase of the research stage, we hope the survey will provide insight into the kinds of eGovernment services citizens feel have the highest priority and direct our project planning to those items. Examples of those initiatives include the new online mapping system, the provincial offenses payment system, the child care registry, and the blue box request system.