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November 9, 2005

REF: OPA-779-05

Honorable Members of the City Council
City of Los Angeles
Room 395, City Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Attention: Education and Neighborhoods Committee

Subject: **WEBCASTING NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL MEETINGS**
COUNCIL FILE NO. 05-1922

The Information Technology Agency (ITA) hereby submits this report, pursuant to the Motion - Hahn/Garcetti (Council File # 05-1922) regarding technologies that will allow Neighborhood Councils to purchase equipment for the purpose of recording and "webcasting" their meetings. City Council instructed ITA, with assistance from the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE), to report back with specific recommendations to enable web-based access to Neighborhood Council meetings, in an effort to support e-democracy and the City's goal of involving the greatest number of residents in the development of City policies and budgetary priorities.

This report includes a summary of recommended equipment, services and related cost estimates to implement an archived video-on-demand system which would allow each Neighborhood Council to record its meetings and the public to view archived videos of their Neighborhood Council via the Internet.

Executive Summary

The Information Technology Agency (ITA) currently manages live web-based streaming video of City Council Meetings, and audio only streaming of Council Committee meetings. This service supports a limited number of live "streams," or feeds, to the public, and is available to anyone with access to the Internet (<http://www.lacity.org/cdvideo.htm>). Content delivered through this system, which consists of video of City Council Meetings and audio of Council Committee meetings, is only available live. The system does not have archiving capabilities to support "on-demand" access to this content. ITA and City Clerk are currently investigating options for implementing archived "on-demand" access to City Council meetings at the request of Councilman Parks.

With regard to webcasting the Neighborhood Council meetings using the current system, ITA's review of the City Council webcasting system has revealed that this system does not have the capability to webcast and/or archive video recordings of the Neighborhood Council meetings.

Currently, about 80 Neighborhood Councils meet once a month, for approximately 2 hours, in variable locations throughout the City. Due to the way the Neighborhood Councils are organized today, it is ITA's recommendation that each Neighborhood Council purchase and maintain the audio/video recording equipment needed to tape each meeting. Additionally, ITA recommends that a service contract be established for outsourcing Internet broadcasting and archiving. This approach would provide each Neighborhood Council with a cost effective video-on-demand and web-based archiving solution, as well as sufficient bandwidth for content distribution via the Internet. Moreover, this solution would reduce the City's need to invest in additional Internet bandwidth and servers, which are necessary to support streaming video.

A summary of recommended equipment and services to provide webcasting of Neighborhood Council meetings is provided below:

Cost Breakdown for One (1) Neighborhood Council

<u>One Time Costs</u>	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>
Audio and Video Recording Equipment.....	\$2,500	\$15,000*
Web Hosting Set-Up.....	\$6,000	\$7,000

*Cost depends on number of cameras and may include encoder equipment.

Recurring Costs

Video Encoding Service (per meeting).....	\$200	\$300
Bandwidth Support and Storage (Annual).....	\$8,000	\$10,000

Recommendations

ITA supports the City's effort in improving communications between Neighborhood Councils and residents. A review of the City Council webcasting system has revealed that this current system does not have the capability or capacity for webcasting and/or archiving video recordings of the Neighborhood Council meetings. Therefore, it is recommended that:

1. ITA continues to work with the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment to conduct a survey of Neighborhood Councils and determine the level of interest from these groups to participate in recording and webcasting their meetings given the estimated cost;
2. ITA refine the specifications and cost estimates based on the survey findings;
3. ITA and Department of Neighborhood Empowerment report back to Council in 90 days.

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We trust the information provided herein addresses the Council's request pursuant to Council Motion - Hahn/Garcetti (Council File #05-1922). Please contact Maryam Abbassi at (213) 473-4979 if you have any questions or require additional information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thera G. Bradshaw". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Thera" being the most prominent.

Thera G. Bradshaw
General Manager

cc: Karen Sisson, Deputy Mayor
Marcus Allen, Deputy Chief of Staff
Frank T. Martinez, City Clerk
Greg Nelson, DONE
ITA Executive Team