

Municipality of Port Hope

Capital Projects

Project	1012 Council Meeting Technology Improvements		
Department	Corporate Services		
Version	04 Approved by Council	Year	2025

Description

Project Description

Enhancing all audio/visual and electronic systems in Council Chambers and to allow for fully hybrid meetings and a better experience for those watching meetings from home.

Project Justification

Council has expressed interest in upgrading the audio visual software/hardware in Council Chambers to enhance the end user experience, and in pursuit of the possibility of fully hybrid meetings for the Municipality of Port Hope. The current technology in the Council Chambers allows for limited live-streaming and recording of meetings only through the Municipality's YouTube channel. Video recording of Council meetings began in 2017. Live-streaming of in-person meetings began in 2022 following nearly 2 years of meetings online only through the COVID-19 pandemic. The current setup provides a one-way communication channel and is heavily dependent on staff oversight and is subject to ongoing challenges not easily addressed through minor investments.

Implementation of true hybrid meeting technology would allow for meeting participants (Council, staff, and members of the community) to have options to attend in person or remotely (in accordance with the Procedural By-law). This would improve access to meetings for all and may increase meeting attendance for members of the public as it would likely reduce limitation issues around child care, time off work, etc. and provides more meeting options for more people. Further, there would be a cost benefit to the Municipality as travel costs for consultants could also be decreased, as they could provide their presentations to Council through hybrid meeting technology.

The current technology, coupled with the challenges associated with the age and heritage of the building and council chambers makes the retrofit of the space a difficult project. The current technology can not be improved easily by additional minor changes and upgrades to individual components. For instance, the current overhead speakers, microphones, camera, projector and screen, are all of different ages, brands and technological eras. To fully promote accessible meetings, a significant investment is required. The costs associated with the project include entirely new audio/visual equipment to be installed in the Council Chambers, as well as any other adjustments to the physical components in Council Chambers as needed.

The primary benefit of this project would include but not be limited to the following:

- additional cameras (to capture speakers at podium / presentations)
- new hardwired microphones and overhead speakers
- digital screens to present agenda information in person
- integration of speaker, microphones, video under one unit managed in real time
- incorporation of more accessible video within the current eScribe agenda software
- eliminates the need to edit / re-upload video the following day
- reduces the need for staff to constantly monitor the reliability of the video during the meeting, although there will be staffing implications related to ensuring that the upgraded software is functioning and providing the enhanced user experience to both staff, Council and members of the public.

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Budget							
	Total	Prior Years	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Expenditures	175,000		175,000				
Funding							
Tax Levy							
Contrib fr Oper	169,106		169,106				
	169,106		169,106				
Municipal Reserves							
Contrib fr Accessibility Res	5,894		5,894				
	5,894		5,894				
Funding Total	175,000		175,000				

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Attributes		
Attribute	Value	Comment
Attributes		
Department	Corporate Services	
Project Type	Betterment	
Replacement Type	Replacement - Similar	
Tax Levy Allocation		
Physical Boundary Location		
Identified in any Council Approved Plan?	No	
Identify Council Approved Plan(s)		
Project Status		
Asset Management Plan (AMP)		
Existing Asset ID #	6002	
Replacement Value Identified in AMP (\$)		
Replacement Year Identified in AMP		
Estimated Useful Life (in years)	10 years	
Future Annual Impact on AMP (Cost per year)		
Date		
Start Date	Jul 1, 2023	
Completion Date	Dec 7, 2023	
To be Completed by Finance		
Approval Status	Recommended by Finance Committee	
GL Account Number		