

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Information Technology Sub-Committee
Sous-comité de la technologie de l'information
21 September 2020 / 21 septembre 2020**

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Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE File Number: ACS2020-ICS-ITS-0001

**SUBJECT: Information Technology Services Update: COVID-19 Response &
Recovery Supports and 2020 Workplan Highlights**

**OBJET: Mise à jour relative aux Services de technologie de l'information :
intervention face à la COVID-19, appui à la reprise et faits saillants du
plan de travail**

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

**That the Information Technology Sub-Committee receive this report for
information.**

RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT

**Que le Sous-comité de la technologie de l'information prenne connaissance du
présent rapport.**

BACKGROUND

Information Technology Services (ITS) is a key partner to all service areas across the City of Ottawa; enabling technology solutions that support optimized, efficient and innovative service delivery. In consultation with internal clients, ITS develops an annual client-centric, business-first workplan that aligns with the City's and respective departments' strategic priorities and responds to emerging needs. ITS' workplan goals include ensuring business priorities are achieved and return on investment (ROI) is maximized via reliable and secure IT infrastructure and innovative technology solutions.

The global COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated substantive adjustments across the corporation as lines of business re-calibrate to deliver services safely and reliably. Currently, and in the early days of the pandemic, ITS has been instrumental in supporting the multiple Task Teams and operations as thousands of City employees were suddenly required to work from home to help curb the spread of the virus. Many of those employees were new to a home-office environment and in the early stages of adopting some of the newer tools.

The implementation of Microsoft Office 365 had been completed for networked employees in 2019, in time to realize a significant ROI as the corporation adapted to new ways of delivering and supporting services; further validating the innovative decision to migrate to the cloud. Employees were immediately and seamlessly able to securely leverage the cloud-based Office suite, facilitating sharing of important internal communications from Ottawa Public Health, the City Manager, Human Resources and departmental leaders.

Aligning with the City's Strategic Priority to deliver Service Excellence through Innovation, ITS continues to support transformation of the City's workforce from a dependency on physical tools and workplaces, to an adaptable and collaborative digital workforce. This summer, ITS accelerated plans to provide network access, email accounts and online Microsoft Office 365 to almost 5,000 employees within five departments who were previously non-networked.

Among a host of other benefits, this enablement will provide employees with the ability to access up-to-date departmental and corporate information and online services, communicate via the new tools, and set the foundation to implement future employee-focused technology services. Recognizing this will be an evolution, ITS will continue to be available to support technology adoption.

DISCUSSION

ITS leveraged existing tools and new technology to quickly respond to the flood of requests from internal clients whose lines of business required immediate implementation of new processes due to COVID-19. Requests were triaged to prioritize those that were needed to directly support COVID response, and subsequently to support a variety of recovery initiatives. Some key initiatives include:

Ottawa Public Health (OPH) – COVID-19 Ottawa Database (COD)

OPH had an urgent need for a digital COVID-19 case and contact management solution to replace existing paper-based processes, and to allow for a safer, more efficient way of managing the increasing volume of cases and contacts. To expedite a solution, ITS staff leveraged an application previously built by the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information and adapted to meet the specific needs of OPH. This included integration into the City's enterprise Active Directory, security enhancements and data validation checks to ensure security, privacy, quality of case data and user administration, as well as the creation of reports and data extracts to support OPH business needs and meet daily provincial reporting requirements. Additionally, ITS worked in collaboration with OPH to provide interactive dashboards for both internal and external use.

The application's name references the foundational system upon which it was based. The COD has now been upgraded and developed by ITS to Dynamics 365, which is one of the City's supported enterprise platforms, and will form one of the critical functions of OPH's overall Electronic Public Health Records (EPHR) solution.

Long Term Care (LTC)

As a 24/7 essential service, the City's LTC residences required urgent technology support to maintain operations while sustaining a high calibre of service for residents. A series of immediate communications-related needs emerged as residents became disconnected from loved ones who were unable to enter LTC facilities:

- Dozens of tablets, a number of cell phones and Wi-Fi pucks provided residents with the ability to Skype, FaceTime and call families and friends.
- A Zoom license was provided to facilitate LTC's Virtual Town Halls that kept residents' families and friends informed.

- A self-serve online booking tool was developed at three of the residences (a fourth site is in development) to improve the scheduling of phone, video, window and garden visits. Over 1,188 bookings were created between June 26 and mid-August.
- LTC's Wi-Fi infrastructure is in the process of being expanded.

FrontDesk Booking Solution

FrontDesk is an online appointment booking solution that ITS CityTech Centres successfully began piloting in late 2019. FrontDesk was an available option to support service recovery when the Province moved to Phase II of re-opening. By mid-August, the FrontDesk solution had been deployed to Client Service Centres, Building Code Services, Recreation, Cultural Services and Facilities' pools, gyms and select municipal museums, as well as OPH's Information Technology Support Services Unit. Work is underway to implement this solution for OPH's regular immunization and flu clinics.

To date, the results of this solution across a variety of service areas has seen in excess of 43,000 bookings for pools and gyms, and 3,000 appointments for Client Service Centres and Building Code Services counters which are located at City Hall and Ben Franklin Place.

Virtual Council & Committee Meetings and COVID-19 Town Halls

In the early days of the pandemic, it soon became evident that Council, Committees and other City public meetings would need to move online to adhere to physical distancing directives while maintaining transparent operations and ensuring accountability.

ITS worked closely with the City Clerk's Office and OPH to secure Zoom and Bell conferencing licenses, assess technology security and accessibility requirements, and provide technical support to hold Council, Committee and COVID-19 Town Halls virtually while simultaneously broadcasting on YouTube. One such meeting was the multi-day Planning Committee Zoom meeting which included 110 speakers.

Though most networked employees leveraged their existing Microsoft Teams licenses for day-to-day meetings, the ITS Conferencing Team provided additional conferencing options that best fit respective needs.

Ward 19 By-Election

On July 15, 2020, the City Clerk tabled a report entitled *Ward 19 (Cumberland) – Vacancy Options* ([ACS2020-OCC-GEN-0021](#)). Council adopted the recommendation that a By-election be held on October 5, 2020 (with Advanced Vote Days on September

28 and 29, 2020), in accordance with timelines prescribed in applicable legislation and with current public health guidelines and recommendations for such requirements as physical distancing and wearing a mask in accordance with the City's Temporary Mandatory Mask By-Law.

As a close partner of the Elections Office, ITS was engaged early to support this option. From a technology perspective, this By-election cycle differs from previous ones in three material ways:

1. The digital enablement of previously in-person services, notably those related to candidates and nominations.
2. The adaptation of systems and technical processes/procedures to accommodate the Special Mail-In Ballot pilot.
3. The provision of additional hardware and connectivity solutions to support a live voters list to support "Anywhere Voting".

ITS Audits Update

A detailed update will be provided to Audit Committee for four Audits: IT Security, IT Governance, Incident Response, and Remote Access. The remaining Audit recommendations have been a continued focus in the 2020 ITS workplan. Of note, is the action taken to address the Auditor General's recommendation from the IT Security and IT Governance Audits that a Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) position be created.

Reporting to the General Manager of Innovative Client Services (ICS), the CISO/Digital Risk Officer (DRO) is responsible for establishing and maintaining the enterprise's security vision, strategy, and program to ensure information assets and technologies are adequately protected. The CISO/DRO directs staff in identifying, developing, implementing and maintaining processes and controls across the enterprise to ensure the City's risk posture is at an acceptable level, and to reduce information, technology and digital risks that exceed tolerance.

ITS 2020 Workplan Highlights

ITS continues to lead initiatives and projects to advance the City's Strategic Priority to deliver Service Excellence through Innovation; enhancing our information technology and digital capabilities and promoting and supporting innovation across all lines of business.

Despite competing pressures for ITS resources to support critical COVID-19 response and recovery efforts, ITS has made significant progress on many exciting in-flight projects and initiatives this year, including:

CLASS Replacement Project

The CLASS Replacement Project had an important milestone achievement in July of 2020. The contract was signed with the Active Networks vendor for the CLASS replacement software called ACTIVENet.

ACTIVENet will provide Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services with a modern solution using Software as a Service (SaaS) technology that continuously adapts to changes in the industry and:

- Delivers a common registration, booking and payment experience for City programs and services that allows for scaling up during peak registration periods
- Provides a read-only application programming interface (API) that generates opportunities to integrate with other enterprise systems (i.e. My ServiceOttawa, GIS, SAP)
- Offers multilingual capabilities to conform with the City's Bilingualism policy.

In the coming months, the project team will be developing, testing and preparing for the transition to the ACTIVENet software.

Land Management System (LMS)

As part of the initiative to replace the MAP application (Municipal Application Partnership), which supports over 1,600 City staff as well as online services, and is at its technological end-of life phase, a procurement process was undertaken for the acquisition of an enterprise Land Management Solution (LMS). ITS and the Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department (PIED) combined efforts to prepare detailed business requirements, as well as post and evaluate both an RFQ and an RFP to find a suitable product and vendor. In August of 2020, a contract was awarded to the selected proponent.

This contract covers the first of three phased-in releases for LMS. Release 1, which will kick off in September 2020, has a projected go-live date of Q2, 2022. Release 1 will target Building Code Services, followed by Release 2 for Planning/Development Review and portions of Right of Way Permits. Release 3 will target the remainder of Right of Way Permits and Committee of Adjustment.

LMS will enhance the current level of service with a bilingual and accessible public-facing online portal for Permitting and Licensing, Development, and Committee of Adjustment applications. Streamlined and transformed business processes aligned with LMS and the online portal will benefit residents and the business community with a more efficient intake process: self-serve status monitoring and tracking; concurrent digital review and circulation of electronic documents; electronic notifications, approvals, agreements and permit issuance; secure online payment options; and improved performance measures and reporting capabilities. Mobile inspections will allow for remote access to real time information and tools for field inspectors to better perform as truly mobile workers with a more efficient process for entering inspection results.

SAP Ariba

Ariba is a procure-to-pay solution that delivers a new requisitioning, purchase order and invoicing solution, replacing the current solution. Ariba allows for the automation, streamlining and standardization of processes from requisitioning to invoice handling for the entire organization.

The Ariba implementation is anticipated to improve invoice processing timelines, increase spend visibility and contract compliance, as well as improve both the user and vendor experience. The first pilot was successfully implemented in early July 2020. The full go-live is scheduled for October 2020.

Social Eligibility Reporting Vendor Information System (SERVIS)

SERVIS (Social Eligibility Reporting Vendor Information System) is an application used by various areas within the corporation: Employment and Social Services, Finance Services, Ottawa Public Health, Housing Services, 3-1-1 and Dental Services. The program is being used to deliver various City-funded programs like the Residential Care, Home Support, Essential Health and Social Supports and dental care for clients who are not in receipt of social assistance. It is also supporting the issuance of benefits for clients in receipt of provincial social assistance programs including Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program.

In collaboration with stakeholder departments, a new Microsoft Dynamics 365 SERVIS application replacement is underway, expected to be complete in November 2020. Benefits of this new SERVIS application on the Dynamics platform include alignment with the Platform Rationalization policy, improved operational performance, automation of some tasks, enhanced reporting capabilities and improved search functionality.

geoOttawa

geoOttawa continues to be the primary interactive map for the City of Ottawa, providing authoritative map layers of information such as parks, schools, City facilities, roads, zoning, and aerial photos dating as far back as 1928.

In April 2020, ITS launched the public-facing beta geoOttawa and in June 2020 the internal geoOttawa for City employees was successfully replaced, with positive feedback from users. The replacement of the public-facing version of geoOttawa is approaching completion with its final rollout in November 2020.

The new versions of geoOttawa now work on any device and provide web accessible features which significantly improve the overall user experience. geoOttawa's maps and tools provide critical functionality for City business lines that use geoOttawa as part of their daily operations or service delivery. Residents, businesses, and visitors to Ottawa can use the public-facing application to learn about the city, be it in the past or present.

Public Wi-Fi Update

At the October 2019 meeting of the Information Technology Sub-Committee (ITSC), staff from the Innovative Client Services Department (ICSD) were asked to examine the possibility of expanding the City's free Wi-Fi offering beyond the existing 25 locations, as well as into public gathering places, such as City parks. Staff were asked to identify possible future locations for this service, and options for funding.

Over the fall of 2019 and the winter of 2020, City staff worked to develop a comprehensive inventory of potential locations for a Phase 2 Public Wi-Fi Program, with a focus on Recreation and Cultural Facilities and Major City Parks. A preliminary evaluation of these sites across different criteria (i.e., requests for service, facility size, proximity to other free Wi-Fi services, social need) was also conducted, with the intent of establishing the relative benefit of Wi-Fi service at each potential location.

Before this work could be completed, the COVID-19 pandemic emerged and the City was forced into an emergency response that involved closing City facilities to the public and sending more than 4,000 staff to work from home to curb the spread of the virus.

The City was not alone in taking these preventative measures. Many organizations in Ottawa, including the federal government, which is a top employer in the region, also chose to send employees home to work where feasible. Likewise, the closure of all local school boards meant that thousands of students were suddenly expected to participate in an online learning curriculum.

Many of the rapid changes stemming from the pandemic – including work from home and remote learning – are expected to persist for an extended period, making access to affordable, quality internet in the home a top priority. As a result, the City has taken the opportunity to shift the focus of its Public Wi-Fi Strategy to better respond to the current needs of the residents of Ottawa by pursuing the following activities.

- *Participation in the Big City Executive Partnership (BiCEP).* Ottawa is one of six major Canadian cities – the others being Montreal, Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver – that have joined together to advocate for the federal government to invest in the infrastructure required to improve access to affordable internet in urban neighbourhoods and rural Canada. This partnership will ensure a coordinated strategy that is focused on providing equity in digital access across the country.
- *Leveraging partnerships and funding opportunities.* Staff are currently investigating ways to support Internet Service Providers (ISPs) who are applying for provincial funding through programs such as Improving Connectivity for Ontarians (ICON) and the soon to be launched federal Universal Broadband Fund which was announced in June by the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development. These projects would be focused on addressing the connectivity needs in Ottawa’s most underserved communities (many of which are in the rural areas of the city).

Moving forward, the City will continue to look for opportunities to address the current needs of the community. As the pandemic situation evolves, Staff will assess the external environment and adjust the Strategy accordingly, including revisiting the Phase 2 Public Wi-Fi Program at an appropriate future date.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications as a result of this report.

CONSULTATION

This section is not applicable since it is an information report.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

As a City-wide report, this section is not applicable.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S) COMMENTS

This section is not applicable.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to approving the information in this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

If a risk has been identified, the details should be well communicated in the report. The ITS workplan in 2020, and the onboarding of the Chief of Information Security and Digital Risk Officer will continue to strengthen the City's key systems, practices, procedures and governance to identify and mitigate risks.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no asset management implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

All ITS projects and initiatives include an assessment of accessibility requirements. Accessible criteria, features and functionality are included in all public-facing technologies to ensure compliance with AODA requirements.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

This report speaks to associated technology implications.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

ITS continues to align with the Strategic Priority to deliver Service Excellence Through Innovation, leading and supporting initiatives and projects to enhance and innovate our information technology and digital capabilities across the corporation.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

There is no supporting documentation to accompany this report.