CITY OF KINGSTON
REPORT TO COUNCIL

REPORT No.: 04-359

TO: Bert Meunier, Chief Administrative Officer
FROM: Denis Leger, Commissioner of Corporate Services
PREPARED BY: Pat Carrol, Manager of Taxation & Revenue
DATE OF MEETING: 2004-09-21
SUBJECT: Assessment Review Contract

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:

1. That council authorize the appointment of Greenall Ventures Inc. to undertake a review of the property tax classifications returned on the 2004 assessment roll and that staff negotiate a satisfactory compensation rate stated as a percentage of resulting incremental municipal taxation revenues.

- and further -

2. That the City Clerk and Mayor be authorized to sign an agreement with Greenall Ventures Inc. on behalf of the corporation, satisfactory to the Director of Legal Services.

ORIGIN/PURPOSE:
The purpose of this report is to seek council authorization to retain Greenall Ventures Inc. to perform a review of the City of Kingston’s 2003 assessment roll returned for 2004 taxation, supplementary and omitted assessment lists produced in 2004, and pending assessment appeals to ensure that properties are assessed in the appropriate tax class.

OPTIONS/DISCUSSION:
In 2003, council approved a Review of Services strategy which, in part, was to find sustainable solutions for future budgets. In May 2004, the Corporate Services Department identified a number of issues which, if implemented, would reduce expenditures or increase revenues. One such initiative is to enhance assessment review functions and/or find ways to accomplish the review without creating new staff positions. The purpose of the assessment review is to ensure that the assessment roll reflects new assessment as quickly as possible, (i.e., supplementary and omitted assessments, as well as development changes, such as zoning amendments).
The notion of undertaking such a review was identified in CAO Report no. 04-302 entitled 2005 Internal Efficiencies and was presented to council on August 17, 2004. Pursuant to council's directive that no new positions be created, alternate solutions to achieving some of the assessment review benefits were researched, resulting in this recommendation for a classification review by Greenall Ventures Inc.

Greenall Ventures Inc. is a new consulting company primarily focused on minimizing assessment losses for municipalities. Since the 1998 assessment reforms, which included the elimination of business occupancy tax, assessors are no longer required to visit properties and assess businesses. Without this monitoring of business tenants, errors in updating the property class can occur as tenants and/or owners change. Some property class changes may be from commercial to industrial. There may also be changes for previously exempt properties, which may not have been updated subsequent to a sale. We have favourable reviews of this company's service provided to us by other municipalities, including the City of Burlington, Town of Oakville and Halton Region.

Under the proposed agreement, Greenall Ventures Inc. would undertake a review of the 2003 assessment roll for 2004 taxation, the 2004 supplementary/omitted assessment lists and current Assessment Review Board appeals and would verify that properties are assessed according to use. Where the property is inappropriately classed Greenall Ventures Inc. will provide documentation acceptable to the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation in order that the assessment roll is updated to reflect the correct assessment class for the 2005 taxation year.

In order to determine whether or not such a review would result in a more properly stated or comprehensive assessment base, it is critical that the appointment for this review be undertaken now. Greenall Ventures Inc. would expect to complete the 2004 review before December 1, 2004 in time to complete amended assessment notices for the 2005 taxation year.

EXISTING POLICY/BY-LAW:
Purchasing By-Law 2000-134, as amended.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN:
Fiscal Health

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:
There are no funds required for this agreement. As a result of negotiations, Greenall Ventures Inc. will be compensated on a percentage basis of the actual CVA incremental revenue in the first year only. The City of Kingston will retain the full revenue in subsequent years. The City will not be charged any fee if no savings are found as a result of the review. At this time, the projected net increase in taxation cannot be determined.
The award of this engagement is provided in accordance with section 6.13 (direct appointment) of the City of Kingston's purchasing by-law 2000-134, as amended. This service is new as a municipal assessment validation approach. The experience from this engagement will determine whether or not future opportunities will be considered and whether a competitive proposal process will be undertaken in ensuing years.

CONTACTS:

Pat Carrol  
Manager of Taxation & Revenue  
546-4291  2468

Gerard Hunt  
Manager of Finance  
546-4291  2205

DEPARTMENTS/OTHERS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Janis Morrison, Purchasing Agent

NOTICE PROVISIONS:

N/A

APPENDICES:

N/A

Denis Leger  
Commissioner of Corporate Services

Bert Meunier  
Chief Administrative Officer
TO: Bert Meunier, Chief Administrative Officer
FROM: Terry Willing, Acting Commissioner, Planning and Development Services
PREPARED BY: Joseph E. Davis, Senior Project Manager
DATE OF MEETING: September 21, 2004
SUBJECT: EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS / 9-1-1 PERS

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:

WHEREAS Council has endorsed the implementation of the 9-1-1 PERS system for the City and all of its residents; and

WHEREAS staff has been working with Bell Canada to accomplish the work necessary for the enhancement to our 9-1-1 system; and

WHEREAS it has come to the attention of staff that additional equipment is required at the Fire and Rescue Services building to accommodate a backup system and that the current capital budget allocation would be insufficient to allow to proceed with the purchase.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Council authorize an additional capital expenditure of $70,000 to purchase, program and install the necessary equipment, with financing to be from the Municipal Capital Reserve Fund; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Mitel system and related implementation costs be purchased from and provided by Southeastern Telecommunications, the City’s current provider of telecommunications equipment and support, as a single source provider under the terms of the City’s Purchasing Bylaw.

ORIGIN/PURPOSE:

Staff is seeking Council authority for additional budget funds and for authorization to proceed with the purchase and installation of a necessary backup system for the 9-1-1 PERS.
OPTIONS/DISCUSSION:

It is necessary for the Police Services who act as our Primary Service Answer Point (PSAP) to have a backup system that is at a different location and on a different power grid. In previous reports staff has identified that the backup service for the Police Services will be the Fire Services Division at 500 O’Connor Drive. In reviewing the required equipment, it has come to our attention that there is an additional piece of hardware required that will allow the Bell system to communicate with the communications centre on O’Connor Drive.

There are two options that could be considered. One would be a stand alone switch that integrates with the Bell system into the dispatch system at Fire Services at an approximate cost of $40,000. The second option is a switch that is purchased through our current voice communications provider (Mitel Corp.) that becomes part of the integrated system for the City at an approximate cost of $110,000.

Staff recommend that we move forward with the integrated solution inasmuch as it allows for optimization of equipment, resilience, and the transfer of calls in a seamless fashion; if calls were to come in error into the dispatch system, they could be transferred anywhere within the current City system. The integrated solution provides for less phone sets on desk tops and would allow it to be integrated into the current Voice Telecommunications work plan for maintenance and upgrades as necessary.

The stand alone system sits on its own, needs to have a separate maintenance agreement with the supplier of this equipment, cannot be supported through the Voice Telecommunications Services Division, is unable to transfer non 9-1-1 calls, and would put two phone sets on each desk in the dispatch system. Additional costs for maintenance and upgrade on an annual basis would be incurred. This system also necessitates reliance on a third party to maintain and upgrade as necessary, whereas the integrated system can be upgraded and maintained by current staff familiar with the communication needs of the City.

The 9-1-1 Enhanced program was originally budgeted with a $100,000 expenditure limit. This project has carried this cost for the last three years, and it is estimated that at the end of this year it will have an unspent balance of approximately $24,000. The cost of the upgrade for the integrated system is approximately $110,000. The cost of the stand alone system is approximately $40,000. With the payback that is offered by having a system that is integrated and equipment that can be used as backup systems elsewhere, staff recommends the purchase of the Mitel switch which is integrated into the City system at an approximate cost of $110,000.

EXISTING POLICY/BY-LAW:

On March 9, 2004, Council passed a resolution to enter into an agreement with Bell Canada for the implementation of the 9-1-1 PERS.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

This activity is linked to the access to information and services priority area of the strategic plan, specifically improving the telephone and access result area. This strategy will close the gap by implementing 9-1-1 PERS and providing performance based responses, time honouring systems to continue to improve emergency services.
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The cost of this equipment is estimated to be $110,000. It is suggested that partial financing will come from unexpended funds from the Enhanced 9-1-1 capital project ($24,000) and that the Fire & Rescue Division would allocate a further $16,000 from unexpended budgeted funds to the cost of this unit and associated programming and installation costs. There is approximately $70,000 of associated costs which needs to be financed and it is recommended that this money come from the Municipal Capital Reserve Fund which has sufficient funds for this purchase.

CONTACTS:

Joseph E. Davis, Senior Project Manager, Planning & Development Services (384-1770 ext. 3125)

DEPARTMENTS/OTHERS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Royce Connors, Manager, Voice Telecommunications Services (546-4291 ext. 2381)
Harold Tulk, Chief, Kingston Fire and Rescue (548-4001 ext. 5204)
Denis Leger, Commissioner, Corporate Services (546-4291 ext. 1328)
Gerard Hunt, Manager, Finance Division (546-4291 ext. 2205)

NOTICE PROVISIONS:

Not applicable

APPENDICES:

None

Signed:

Terry Willing
Acting Commissioner, Planning and Development Services

Bert Meunier
Chief Administrative Officer