

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE October 13, 2023

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT Council Chamber Audio Upgrades

This memorandum is to provide an update on the technology enhancements for the City Council Chambers. Information and Technology Services (ITS) transition to Cisco's Webex Legislate is anticipated in early 2024. During FY23, Communications, Outreach, and Marketing (COM), spent approximately \$36,000 to make initial enhancements to the City Council Chambers technology platform, this has included:

- Buying and installing new displays to replace obsolete projectors.
- Implementing the AgendaLink system for the City Secretary Office management of voting and the speaker queue.

However, additional enhancements are still required to mitigate reverberation in the City Council Chambers. Potential solutions to improve audio in the City Council Chambers are estimated to cost approximately \$75,000 which include:

- Sound-dampening acoustical paneling along areas of concrete walls lining the upper portion of the Council Chamber (\$10,000).
- Auxiliary speakers along the upper portions of the audience seating area which will be directed towards public seating areas (\$5,000).
- New microphones at each seat around the dais to integrate the AgendaLink voting and speaker queue system, eliminating a need for dedicated iPads at each seat and improving system reliability (\$60,000).

The above enhancements were not included in the adopted FY24 budget. However, COM, ITS, and the Building Services Department are working with the Budget and Management Services to identify possible resources to implement these upgrades in the upcoming year. This will include exploring the option to utilize existing Texas Interlocal Purchasing System agreements to expedite contracts for construction to implement requested improvements. We are exploring if these enhancements may qualify as capital expenditures eligible to be paid from the restricted Public, Educational and Government fund supported by cable subscribers' fees.

If construction were to commence during FY24, it would be ideal to simultaneously complete all technological upgrades and structural modifications needed for acoustic improvements, network reliability, ADA accessibility, electrical capacity, and broadcast quality to increase efficiency and manage costs. Completion of construction in City Council Chambers is recommended before City Hall's 50th anniversary in 2028, when a possible landmark designation may limit certain design and construction options.

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As we go through this process, we will continue to update the City Council, while simultaneously mitigating challenges in the City Council Chambers. Should you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact Bill Zielinski, Chief Information Officer at william.zielinski@dallascityhall.com or Catherine Cuellar, Director of Communications, Outreach & Marketing at catherine.cuellar@dallas.gov.

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Majed A. Al-Ghafry, Assistant City Manager
M. Elizabeth (Liz) Cedillo-Pereira, Assistant City Manager
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Carl Simpson, Assistant City Manager
Jack Ireland, Chief Financial Officer
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