

RE: FEASIBILITY OF AUTOMATED ELECTION SYSTEM

MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

1. *THAT the recommendation of the Director Administrative & Community Services be adopted.*

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TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER
FROM: DIRECTOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
SUBJECT: FEASIBILITY OF AUTOMATED ELECTION SYSTEM

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT Council authorize staff to write to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to request that the Provincial Government give consideration to amending the Municipal Act so as to permit those municipalities who choose to do so, to initiate an automated voting and election tallying system for Municipal Elections.

B A C K G R O U N D

On 1983 October 03 Council received a report providing detailed information that had been assembled by staff through an examination carried out to determine the feasibility of the municipality establishing an automated election system. At that time Council authorized staff to contact a number of larger municipalities throughout the Lower Mainland requesting that each municipality give an indication of their support for the concept of an automated voting and election tally system. This report deals with the response received from those municipalities from which support was requested.

R E P O R T

At the regular Council Meeting held on 1983 October 03 Council adopted the following motion as amended:

"THAT the larger municipalities throughout the Lower Mainland be requested to give an indication of their support for the concept of an automated voting and election tallying system and further the Burnaby Council go on record as approving this system in principle."

Upon adoption of the aforementioned motion the Municipal Clerk wrote to Coquitlam, Delta, New Westminster, Port Coquitlam, Richmond, Surrey, Vancouver, West Vancouver and both the City and District of North Vancouver. Following is a summary of the responses received from each of these municipalities:

FEASIBILITY OF AUTOMATED ELECTION SYSTEM1. The District of Coquitlam

The following motion was adopted by Coquitlam Council:

"THAT the Council of the District of Coquitlam endorse the concept of automated voting and election tallying system and request the Provincial Government to amend the Municipal Act to permit its use;

and further, that the District of Burnaby and M.L.A.'s representing this municipality be advised of Council's decision."

2. The Corporation of Delta

The following recommendation was endorsed by Delta Council:

THAT the Municipal Council pass a resolution supporting the concept of automated voting and election tallying systems forwarding copy of same to the Honourable Bill Ritchie, Minister of Municipal Affairs, together with requests to initiate necessary legislative amendments permitting municipal jurisdiction to utilize such a system.

It is further recommended that copies of Council's action be submitted to the U.B.C.M., Lower Mainland Association of Municipalities, and Municipal Officers' Association seeking their support to the concept.

3. The Corporation of The City of New Westminster

The following was contained in a letter from the City Clerk:

"Council took no action at this time in view of three year terms of office coming into being."

4. The Corporation of The City of Port Coquitlam

The following resolution was adopted by Port Coquitlam Council"

"THAT the concept of an automated voting and election tallying system proposed by The Corporation of the District of Burnaby in its letter of October 6th, 1983 be approved in principle."

5. The Corporation of the Township of Richmond

The following was contained in a letter from the Municipal Clerk:

"The municipality of Richmond is not in a position to participate in the Automated Election System as proposed.

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It should be noted that although Richmond supports the concept of automated voting and tallying of results, our in-house computer does not have a card reader ability that will allow us to participate in this system."

6. The Corporation of the District of Surrey

We have received no response to our letter and subsequent telephone enquiries.

7. The City of Vancouver

Although the question of whether or not to initiate an automated election system in the City of Vancouver has yet to be considered by Vancouver City Council, the Vancouver Charter, from which the City of Vancouver derives its authority, makes provision for use of an automated voting and election tallying system.

8. The Corporation of the District of West Vancouver

The following resolution was adopted by West Vancouver Council:

"THAT the advice of the Municipal Clerk dated 1983 October 14, re Feasibility of Automated Election System, be received; AND THAT the Council of West Vancouver go on record as approving the automated voting and election tallying system in principle; AND FURTHER THAT the Minister of Municipal Affairs be petitioned to so amend the Municipal Act in order to allow municipalities the option of conducting an election manually or by the use of an automated system"

9. The Corporation of The City of North Vancouver

The following resolution was adopted by North Vancouver City Council:

"THAT the District of Burnaby be advised, in response to their letter of October 6, 1983, that the City of North Vancouver supports the concept of an automated voting and election tallying system where such is considered desirable by a municipality in British Columbia."

10. The Corporation of The District of North Vancouver

The following was contained in a letter from Mayor Marilyn Baker:

"There would appear to be no advantage to the District of North Vancouver in switching to an automated election system"

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S U M M A R Y

The responses received were encouraging with the exception of the City of New Westminster and the District of North Vancouver.

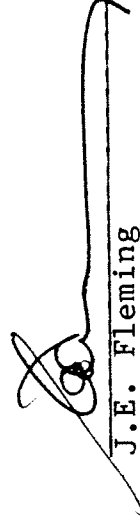
The City of New Westminster's response regarding the possibility of tri-annual elections was considered by staff with the extension of the period of cost recapture being the only significant change that would have to be adjusted for in the original proposal received by Burnaby Council.

The District of North Vancouver has approximately sixty percent (60%) fewer registered voters than Burnaby with significantly smaller ballots and both staff and Council feel that their present system adequately meets the municipality's needs but, with this District municipality going to biennial elections in 1984, and considering the community growth factor they feel a review of their procedures may be in order.

A number of complaints were received by the Burnaby Returning Officer on election day from the members of the news media and election candidates regarding the time it took to finalize the unofficial results. The unofficial results for the Aldermanic ballot were completed and posted at 00:30 h with the School Trustee ballot being completed and posted at 01:15 h. The ballots are increasing in length with each election and for all the reasons presented in the report received by Council on 1983 October 03 the most appropriate course of action would be to introduce automated voting within this municipality.

C O N C L U S I O N

The responses that were received have reinforced our position that we should proceed as quickly as possible with requesting the Province to amend the Municipal Act to permit this municipality to establish an automated voting and election tallying system.


J.E. Fleming
DIRECTOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND
COMMUNITY SERVICES