

February 20, 1989

TO: MEMBERS OF MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

FROM: MAYOR WILLIAM J. COPELAND,
CHAIRMAN,
ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS REVIEW COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: FURTHER COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION SYSTEMS REVIEW ACTIVITIES

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Brian Mullen be contracted to undertake a review of the alternatives open to Burnaby to correct problems and shortcomings identified in his earlier report on Burnaby's Human Resources Management System, such contract not to exceed a cost of \$40,000 and to be completed by September 1, 1989.
2. THAT Mr. Mullen be asked to rank all of the alternatives he identifies based on a cost/benefit analysis of each alternative.
3. THAT a consultant or consultants be hired to undertake a review of all of Burnaby's computerized information systems on the basis of the terms of reference set out below.

R E P O R T

SUMMARY:

In late 1984, Burnaby adopted a Strategic Plan for Information Management. This plan covered hardware acquisition, software development, organization and staffing, budget and so on. It has been updated a number of times since then but has not to date been subject to a critical review. In late 1988, in response to growing concerns about one particular system, the Human Resources Management System (HRMS), Council hired a consultant, Brian Mullen, to review that system. His review identified a number of problems and shortcomings with the HRMS which must be addressed reasonably soon. In addition, in late 1988 at Management's request, PlanGraphics, Inc. completed a review of Burnaby's spatial (mapping) computer systems. Neither report was intended, however, as an overall review of Information Management in Burnaby and that task remains outstanding.

A. HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Brian Mullen of Information Systems Planning Corp. (I.S.P.) submitted his report "Audit of the Corporation of the District of Burnaby HRMS (Human Resources Management Systems) with a plan to Evaluate and Recommend Alternative Courses of Action" dated January 27, 1989 to Burnaby Council. He concluded the system is unreliable, is difficult to enhance and maintain and is straining the resources of the MIS department and the user areas. He proposed that the Corporation should fully evaluate alternative courses of action to overhaul or replace the HRMS system.

Council has accepted his report and agreed with his conclusions. The current HRMS system must be overhauled or replaced. Independent consulting assistance is required to delineate a complete and credible set of alternatives or options and to assess each of those. Each option will have costs (acquisition and/or development, possible hardware changes, staff time, outside expertise, ongoing maintenance and so on) and benefits (time to put in place, ease of operation and maintenance, functionality, integration with other systems, adaptability to change, etc.) and these must be valued so that a cost benefit ratio can be calculated for each option.

Mr. Mullen has the ability to carry out the necessary work and has agreed to do so. He believes he can complete this phase by September 1, 1989 at a cost of not more than \$40,000. He will deliver to Council a report that sets out all of the options open to Burnaby and ranks them on the basis of cost benefit analysis. His report on this phase will be reviewed by Management and such other expertise as Council may choose to employ after which it will be presented to Council to select the option that provides the greatest benefit for the least cost. An implementation plan will need to then be developed for the selected option.

B. COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Since the first Strategic Plan for Information Management was adopted in late 1984, it was intended that an audit or review be carried out to ensure that the direction being followed by Burnaby is appropriate to changed circumstances and conditions. It is important that this review be undertaken without further delay.

The purpose of this review (and thus its terms of reference) would be to answer questions as follows:

- is the overall direction being pursued in managing information appropriate in today's environment?
- has the Corporation received "good value" from its investment in hardware and software? Do the benefits exceed the costs?
- is Burnaby trying to do "too much, too quickly"?
- has the goal of integration of systems and data been lost sight of and should it be revived?
- are spatial (mapping/graphic) systems receiving the prominence they deserve?
- are priorities driven by maximizing net benefits?
- is the MIS department appropriately organized and adequately staffed?
- Are committees and task forces used effectively and efficiently?

- how does Burnaby compare to other municipalities in its use of computers to manage information?
- what should constitute the key elements of a Strategic Plan for the next three to five years? What level of expenditures on MIS (hardware, software development, ongoing operations) would be appropriate for Burnaby?
- what measures of effectiveness and efficiency might be used in the future and how and when should these be reported to management and council?

Since Council has already had the Human Resources Management System audited by Brian Mullen, that need not be repeated as part of the overall review and Mr. Mullen's report will be provided as part of the background material. Similarly, PlanGraphics, Inc. have reviewed Burnaby's spatial systems and their report will also form part of the background for the overall review. Their report has concluded that following certain adjustments, Digital hardware and Synercom software are adequate to enable Burnaby to manage spatial applications. However they recommend certain organizational changes to more clearly focus and emphasize spatial systems and further they recommend greater attention to applications that will allow more departments and staff to use Burnaby's spatial capabilities.

By March 15, 1989 a list of consultants who possess both the theoretical expertise and practical experience to carry out this assignment will have been created by Council and staff. The potential consultants will be provided with a copy of this report and other necessary background material and will be given an opportunity to meet with Council and staff as necessary to enable them to submit a proposal to carry out this assignment. Proposals will be evaluated by Council and staff and a consultant (or consultants) will be selected to complete the review.

When the review is concluded a copy of the draft report will be submitted to the Municipal Manager for review by the Computer Advisory Committee, the Management Committee and MIS staff. A copy will also be provided to the Mayor so that he might invite further independent expert review as he deems appropriate. The draft report with all comments from staff and experts will then be considered by the Computer Committee of Council who will finally report to Council with the review report and such recommendations as they feel appropriate to propose.

It is expected that this review could be concluded by July 31, 1989 at a cost not exceeding \$50,000.



W. J. COPELAND
MAYOR