



2025 Budget Request

Request: eScribe Closed Captioning

From: Carly Craig, Manager of Legislative Services/Clerk

Department: Corporate Services, Legislative Services

Total Financial Ask: \$20,000

Type of Budget Request: New Capital

This document and its attachments are public and available in an accessible format upon request.

Background and Strategic Priority

In December of 2023, Council approved their [2024-2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#) (Multi-Year Plan) as required by O. Reg 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). As included in the plan under the information and communications standard, Council committed to improving the accessibility of Council and Committee meetings through improvements to Council Chambers technology.

In 2024, Council approved upgrades to Council Chambers technology. These technology upgrades included the installation of new virtual meeting equipment, projectors, and televisions. Also included in the scope of this project was the onboarding of the eScribe webcasting module. This module supports the integration of closed captioning services for increased accessibility of Council meetings.

Staff are recommending that we subscribe to this service to support the ongoing work to make Council meetings more accessible to the public.

Analysis

The Multi-Year Plan includes a goal to ensure all communications and information published by the Township are created and available in a manner that is accessible to people of all abilities. More specifically, Section 4.0 - Strategies and Actions: 2024-2028



includes an action to improve the accessibility of meetings and make improvements on an ongoing basis including improving the visual aids in Council Chambers with higher-resolution devices and exploring eScribe's livestreaming suite of software. This action has been partially achieved with the recently completed Council Chambers Technology upgrades, an approved 2024 budget capital project.

In conjunction with the upgrades, the eScribe webcasting solution was purchased and is in the late stages of implementation. This tool is required for the closed captioning service. To continue progress on Council's accessible meeting commitment, staff are recommending that the closed captioning service be subscribed to enhance the accessibility of meeting recordings.

The total \$20,000 financial ask includes a one-time set-up fee and a \$15,000 annual subscription fee for closed captioning services.

Financial Impact

The total financial impact for 2025 is anticipated to be \$20,000. A \$15,000 subscription fee would be carried forward annually to the operating budget to maintain the service.