

Modernized Branch WAN and Internet Communications Services – Award of Contract

Date:	January 24, 2022
To:	Toronto Public Library Board
From:	City Librarian

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Toronto Public Library Board approval to award a contract to Beanfield Technologies Inc. for the supply of WAN (Wide Area Network) and Internet communications services to all Toronto Public Library (TPL) Branches.

The term of the contract is five (5) years and the estimated value of the commitment is \$4,170,000 excluding Harmonized Sales Tax (HST).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. enters into a contract with Beanfield Technologies Inc. for the continued supply and expansion of Branch WAN and Internet communications services for a five-year term at a cost of approximately \$4,170,000 excluding HST.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The commitment value of the award to Beanfield Technologies Inc. over a five-year period is approximately \$4,170,000 excluding HST. In addition, the existing contract with Bell for WAN services some branches will continue for the next 2 years as those remaining branches are transitioned over to Beanfield, for a total cost of approximately \$289,350. The 2022 costs are included in the City staff recommended 2022 operating budget for TPL which is addressed in a separate Board report. The approximate annual costs are listed in the following table, with 2021 actuals shown for reference.

**Branch Communications Update
- Beanfield Technologies Inc.**

	<u>Year</u>	<u>Service</u>	<u>Beanfield</u>		<u>Total Award</u>	<u>Bell</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Reference</u>			<u>One-Time</u>	<u>True-Up</u>		<u>Service</u>	
	2021	499,840			499,840	344,598	844,438
	2022	580,650	37,500		618,150	215,550	833,700
	2023	772,050	33,000		805,050	73,800	878,850
	2024	819,900		287,100	1,107,000		1,107,000
	2025	819,900			819,900		819,900
	2026	819,900			819,900		819,900
		3,812,400	70,500	287,100	4,170,000	289,350	\$ 4,459,350

By 2024, all branches will have been migrated to the upgraded Beanfield infrastructure. In order for all branches to have the same five (5) year service term (some would be starting their term in 2024, others in 2023, others in 2022), a one-time true-up charge is factored in. Forecasted annual costs will be included in future budget submissions .

The Director, Finance & Treasurer has reviewed this financial impact statement and agrees with it.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLAN

TPL's Strategic Plan (2020-2024) *Vital to Toronto–Building Success, Resilience and Well Being for our City* includes *broadening Toronto's digital access and inclusion* as one of five priorities. The provision of an IT modern, stable, high capacity communications infrastructure that enables access to technology for the public is a key initiative in advancing this priority. Moreover, TPL has an overarching duty to provide communications technology to enable a mobile workforce, whether in branches, in the community or at home. To meet the challenge, TPL ITS is undertaking a Communication Stabilization initiative through 2022 to standardize and modernize the WAN communications for each branch.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

TPL's strategic plan has the City's equity lens embedded. This lens supports the understanding and addressing of barriers to TPL services by equity-deserving groups and vulnerable populations in the City of Toronto to advance equitable outcomes for all. Access to telecommunications is a requirement for daily life. A 2019 study, [*Technology Access in Public Libraries: Outcomes and Impacts for Ontario Communities*](#), highlights the importance of library technology in addressing a fundamental barrier to access and advancing digital inclusion and digital literacy for all.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on January 25, 2021, the Board considered the [Digital Strategy 2020-2024](#) and approved TPL's digital strategy. The goal for Priority 5 of the digital strategy, Adaptive Technology Environment, is to review and redesign telecommunications in order to stabilize and optimize the existing IT environment so that it can enable TPL's current and future priorities.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Utilizing the City's Cogeco Contract entered into in 2009, TPL placed orders with Cogeco (now Beanfield) to provide WAN communication services to 58 Branches and 3 other communication lines to the Martin Ross datacentre. TPL will utilize this Agreement, together with an Amending Agreement to extend the service to the remaining TPL Branches.

TPL branches, outside of a select few large branches, gain access to the internet through WAN connections with the TPL's Martin Ross datacenter. These connections are dedicated services provided today by both Bell Canada and Beanfield. This is the communications infrastructure on which UCaaS (Unified Communications as a Service) will operate. The UCaaS project was added to the Digital Strategy 2021 Action Plan, launched in July 2021, and is currently underway.

COMMENTS

Currently TPL Branches WAN service is provided through a combination of Beanfield and Bell communication circuits. The Bell circuits operate at a speed of 100 Mbps and TPL branches connected through Bell Services have between 1 to 3 lines installed, depending on the size and requirements of the branch. Beanfield has committed to invest up to \$5.5M to extend their fiber network and provide service to TPL branches currently serviced by Bell. Beanfield will upgrade existing connections so that every branch has 1 Gbps service. Beanfield is carrying out the work with the expectation of five-year service commitments by TPL for each branch. As such, Bell services will be terminated as Beanfield completes delivery of the new circuits, resulting in lower operating costs in 2025 and 2026.

The existing contract with Beanfield will be amended to include the schedule (by quarter) of when Beanfield will provide the new branch WAN service.

CONCLUSION

The proposed contract amendment is key to ensuring ongoing staff productivity, digital literacy and the implementation of service modernization initiatives and delivery of public service programs through modern communication technology. The resulting communication network will also help reduce communications costs once the implementation is completed.

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SIGNATURE

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