CITY OF NANAIMO

BUSINESS CASE - Information Technology and Geographic Information Systems: Assistant Manager, IT Operations

CURRENT OVERVIEW

The Information Technology (IT) and Geographic Information System (GIS) department delivers the digital services that residents, businesses, and City staff rely on every day. The department's team of 29 professionals partner with all City departments to understand business challenges and implement technology solutions that advance the City's strategic objectives.

From registering for swim lessons to exploring city amenities on interactive web-maps, digital services are embedded into the everyday experiences of staff and the community. IT and GIS provide the digital foundation that allows every department to serve residents efficiently and effectively.

The department oversees a comprehensive portfolio that includes:

- The voice, video, and data networks providing reliable, secure access to information and City services
- Enterprise software applications that facilitate all municipal operations
- A web-based mapping service, that includes hundreds of geospatial layers such as zoning and City infrastructure and is relied upon for community planning and public information
- Technology infrastructure enables more than 1,100 staff to deliver services across 22 municipal facilities.

The pace of change with technology has been constant resulting in the ever-increasing demand for more advanced digital services. Unfortunately, the existing structure limits the department's ability to implement new innovative technologies, optimize existing systems, nor adequately secure the digital tools and data that are relied upon by staff, citizen and businesses.

BUSINESS ISSUE

The City's reliance on digital services, cyber security, business applications and network infrastructure has outgrown the department's management capacity. Without additional operational leadership, the City faces increasing risk to service continuity, project delivery, technology governance, IT staff development, and cyber security readiness.

Cyber Security Risk and Organizational Resilience

AI-enabled tools are helping criminals exploit vulnerabilities faster than organizations can detect and remediate. Governments at all levels are targeted by the increasingly sophisticated cyber criminals and the list of municipal peers who have incurred attacks, some with catastrophic consequences, continues to grow. To meet the challenge, the City requires dedicated leadership for cyber security governance, incidence readiness, and continuous network defense improvement.

Implications of Maintaining the Existing Structure

Without additional operational leadership, the City can expect:

- Increased exposure and vulnerability to cyber attacks
- Reduced capacity to advance Council priorities and major corporate initiatives
- Increased instances of service level disruption caused by aging systems and deferred upgrades
- Higher operating costs through reliance on consultants and reactive support
- Limited capacity to develop and lead upskilling investment for technical staff
- Reduced ability to deploy emerging technologies that improve organizational service delivery

EXPECTED OUTCOME

Creation of an Assistant Manager, IT Operations, would provide oversight of the department's day-to-day operational activities, supporting the IT and GIS team in meeting the growing demand for reliable and effective digital services across the organization and community. By assuming responsibility for key operational functions, including customer support service levels, technology asset lifecycle management, and vendor relationships, this role would enable the existing IT Managers to focus on higher-value strategic initiatives that strengthen the City's technology environment and organizational capabilities.

Specifically, the position would create capacity for IT leadership to:

- Improve Cyber Security and Organizational Resilience
  - Reduce City exposure to service disruptions, data loss and emerging threats

- Enhance Service Levels and Drive Operational Excellence
  - Improve the reliability, availability and performance of critical business systems and technology services

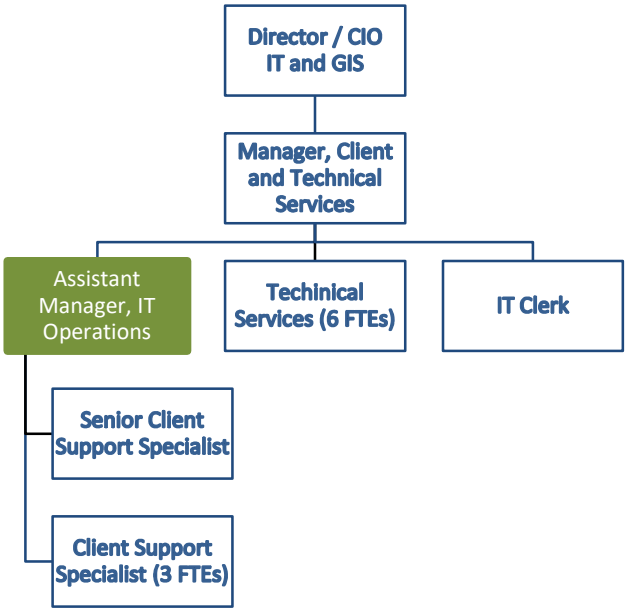
- Deliver Corporate Priorities
  - Increase department's capacity to support Council priorities, capital projects and corporate business initiatives

- Advance Technology Governance and Investment Management
  - Optimize technology investments while reducing technical debt and lifecycle risks

- Increase Organizational Readiness for Emerging Technologies
  - Assess, plan for and implement emergent technologies in a responsible and secure manner

- Focus on staff development and upskilling
  - Enhance in-house capabilities reducing reliance and cost for external contractors

The Assistant Manager, IT Operations role will strengthen the City's ability to govern, secure, optimize and continuously improve the technology services that support the delivery of municipal programs. In doing so, it would help ensure that residents, businesses, Council, and staff continue to benefit from a modern, reliable, and resilient technology environment.



OPTIONS

Option #1 – Add an Assistant Manager, IT Operations
Create a permanent full-time Assistant Manager, IT Operations position reporting to the Manager, IT Client and Technical Services. The position will be responsible for IT operational service levels, management and development of the IT Client Support team.

The inclusion of the role creates capacity for IT Management, enabling the following benefits:

- Reduced vulnerability to cyber security attacks
- Decreased organizational risk to service level disruption caused by aging, unsupported systems and non-compliance to legislative or fiduciary standards
- Improved municipal service levels because of increased utilization of existing technology services and faster adoption of emerging technologies
- Improved cost control and in-house self sufficiency through staff development, investing in technical upskilling and reducing reliance on contractors
- Improved organizational continuity through succession planning for IT management

Weakness
- Increase to the annual operating budget

Financial Analysis
- Position is anticipated to be at a management level 5, with an annual salary of approximately $129,900 plus benefits. 2027 budget impact including benefits is estimated at $123,000 based on an April 1st start, 2028 budget impact is estimated at $173,700.
- Additional annual costs are anticipated at $7,300 for professional development, and computer and cell phone charges.

- One-time costs upon the creation of the position are projected at $10,150. This includes the purchase of a computer, monitors, smart phone and office furniture.
- The estimated 2027 property tax impact is 0.08%.

Option #2 – Status Quo
Continue with current organizational structure

Benefits
- No Impact to the operating budget

Weaknesses:
- Increasing organizational risks related to:
    - Maintain existing constraints on management capacity for cybersecurity and operational oversight.
    - Increase exposure to service continuity and cybersecurity risks as technology requirements continue to evolve.
    - Degraded municipal service levels caused by aged technology systems
    - Reduced client and staff satisfaction with technical service as demand for emergent technologies outpaces department capacity to responsibly deploy
    - Increased cost to support technology services requires external contractors

RECOMMENDATION
Option #1 is recommended.