INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Planning Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	January 17, 2017
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Digitization of Microfiche Records (PED17013) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Jorge M. Caetano (905) 546-2424 Ext. 3931
SUBMITTED BY: **SIGNATURE:**	Jason Thorne General Manager Planning and Economic Development Department

Council Direction:

Not applicable.

Information:

The purpose of this Information Report is to inform the Planning Committee of the plan to convert the existing microfiche records of the Building Division into a digital format as part of the City's Open for Business initiative. This would improve access to building records and improve the turnaround time for information requests.

As background information, currently the Building Division has approximately 692,000 microfiche jackets which hold, on average, 40 documents per jacket. Based on this average our division has approximately 25 million documents / drawings stored on microfiche. This has resulted in delays in obtaining building permit information on properties since staff has to manually search the microfiche by address and then search the individual microfiche (which can hold up to 80 documents) for the required documents / information and print out copies if required. This has proven to be time consuming especially for those properties that may contain multiple microfiche jackets. The other issue is that microfiche can be misfiled or lost, which then results in the information not being available causing delays and incomplete historical building records for a property.

Digitizing our microfiche records would provide staff with improved access to property information and reduce the time it takes for information requests.

In order to determine the best way to digitize microfiche records, staff carried out two site visits to the City of Toronto which is currently in the process of digitizing their records. Based on these site visits, and on research carried out by staff, the Building Division is proposing that the scanning and conversion of the microfiche to a digital format be outsourced to an outside vendor based on a competitive bid process. Staff reviewed both in-house digitization of the microfiche records and outsourcing it to an outside vendor. This review indicated that the cost to provide this service in-house would require the purchase of a high volume microfilm scanner, support and scanning software, together with the cost of training and hiring at least two additional staff to operate the scanner and provide quality control. Based on the capacity of this one scanner and the additional two staff, it would take approximately 13 to 14 years to complete this project to scan and digitize 692,000 microfiche at a cost of over $3.2 M. This is based on being able to scan and digitize 200 microfiche jackets per day once staff is fully trained.

If this work is outsourced, staff estimates that it would only take approximately three to four years to complete this project. This is based on the fact that most scanning companies that carry out this type of work have at least two high volume microfiche scanners and have staff that works in shifts which means they can digitize a higher volume of microfiche per day (approximately 1,000 microfiche per day) at a cost of approximately $2.8 M which is lower than carrying out this work in-house. However, the main advantage to outsourcing the digitization process would be that this work would be completed in a much shorter time frame (three to four years versus 13 to 14 years).

It should be noted that the outsourcing would be only for the scanning and digitizing of the microfiche; the Building Division would still have to work together with the City's Information Technology Department to develop and implement the Document Management System in order to be able to store and retrieve the digital files. This would include the cost of software, servers, storage, consultation fees for integration with existing systems, etc.

The cost of this initiative, based on the in-house development of the Document Management System and the outsourcing the scanning and digitization of the Building Division's microfiche records, would be approximately $4.11 M plus applicable taxes (see Table 1). This cost would be spread over the duration of the project which is estimated to be four to five years.

The total cost of this project would be funded from the Building Stabilization Reserve in accordance with its terms of use since it would enhance and improve the level of service provided by the Building Division in the enforcement and administration of the *Building Code Act, 1992*. There would be no impact on the general levy.

TABLE 1

Estimated Cost of the Digitization of Microfiche Records	
Software, Servers, Storage (in-house)	
EDRMS eDOCS Software	$ 101,000
Database Software	$ 7,000
Servers	$ 112,000
Storage	$ 160,500
Implementation Services	$ 250,000
AMANDA Integration Services	$ 50,000
Contingency	$ 100,000
Sustainability Costs	$ 112,400
In-House Total Cost	**$ 892,900**
Scanning and Digitization of Microfiche (outsourced)	
Scanning , Indexing and Quality Control	$ 2,800,000
Contingency (15%)	$ 420,000
Outsourced Total Cost	**$ 3,220,000**
TOTAL COST	**$ 4,112,900**

Work on the Document Management System is scheduled to begin during the first quarter of 2017. Once staff has determined the specifications required for the Document Management System, including the document scanning specifications, a competitive bid process will be undertaken in accordance with the City's Procurement Policy and under the direction of the Procurement Section.

This project is part of a series of technology enhancements within the Building Division which will enhance service delivery. Additionally, the conversion of microfiche records to digital is noted in the AMANDA Improvement Initiatives Information Report PED16156 which was approved by Council on July 8, 2016.

JMC/jmc