



*City of Arts & Innovation*

# Inclusiveness, Community Engagement, and Governmental Processes Committee

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**TO: INCLUSIVENESS, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, AND GOVERNMENTAL PROCESSES COMMITTEE** **DATE: SEPTEMBER 7, 2022**

**FROM: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE** **WARDS: ALL**

**SUBJECT: LANGUAGE ACCESS AND TRANSLATION SERVICES UPDATE - SPANISH TRANSLATION OF CITY COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETING BROADCASTS AND AGENDAS**

## **ISSUE:**

Provide an update on available options to expand language access for Limited English Proficiency persons through Spanish translation of City Council and Committee meeting broadcasts and agendas.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Inclusiveness, Community Engagement, and Governmental Processes Committee:

1. Provide input and guidance to expand language access for Limited English Proficiency persons through the Spanish translation of City Council and Committee meeting agendas;
2. Provide input and guidance to expand language access for Limited English Proficiency persons through automated Spanish captions of City Council and Committee meetings;
3. Provide further direction as the Committee deems appropriate on in-person interpretation options for City Council and Committee meetings; and
4. Request staff bring forth any language access and translation service recommendations selected to the full City Council for discussion.

## **BACKGROUND:**

On May 5, 2021, the Inclusiveness, Community Engagement, and Governmental Processes Committee (ICGC) received a report outlining the language preferences spoken in Riverside, current translation activities throughout the City, and potential options to continue to expand language access for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons. Following discussion, staff were requested to research costs and implications for translating the audio of Council and Committee

meetings, agendas, materials, and Riverside Police Department business and application materials.

On July 7, 2021, ICGC received an update on the translation options previously identified, including estimated costs. Following the discussion, the Committee requested staff reassess other less expensive meeting audio translation service for video feed and report back to the Committee for further discussion and look at other translation options as needed.

On October 6, 2021, ICGC received and ordered filed an update regarding options for the implementation of translation of City Council and Committee meeting audio translation of video feed and translation of meeting agendas and materials. Following discussion, the Committee requested staff complete a trial period and financial analysis of agenda translation services and requested a presentation on the application process.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **Agenda Translation**

As directed by the Committee, the City Clerk's Office facilitated a service trial period that translated the City Council meeting agendas into Spanish using a 3<sup>rd</sup> party translation service vendor. Translation services of Committee agendas were not included as part of the trial period. The average cost for translating the agenda was \$220 per meeting, for an estimated annual cost of approximately \$10,600 at 48 City Council meetings. The cost identified from the trial period did not include translation services for revised agendas, which would result in an increase of both translation service levels and costs.

In addition, the vendor has an average 2-business-day turnaround which delays the posting of Spanish translated agendas until Tuesdays which does not comply with the Sunshine Ordinance nor provides equal access. Moreover, when agendas are revised, there is not sufficient time to re-submit the revised agenda for translation to ensure timely posting prior to the meeting.

Staff recommends another option for translation of agendas through our existing Granicus agenda management system. Granicus has a feature that enables posting of an American with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible agenda. This option provides the end-user the ability to select the desired language through their browser and promotes ADA accessibility. The ADA accessible agenda would be posted at the same time of publication of all meeting agendas including revised agendas.

If it is the pleasure of the Committee to pursue ADA accessible agendas in conjunction with the Spanish captioned video, staff will research the capability of the Granicus system to support the posting of both on the same calendar page where all current agendas and meetings are posted for centralized access.

### **Automated Spanish Captions**

The previously recommended system to provide caption automation, Link Electronics recently released a software update. The update would allow for the automated captioning system (ACE) to translate English captions into Spanish captions without the need for additional ongoing web streaming services and costs. The purchase of Links Electronics hardware would include a one-time cost of roughly \$45,300 and could be funded through existing Public, Educational, and Government Access funds (PEG funds).

Additional factors to be considered in implementing Spanish captions include the requirement for a second, entirely separate live stream. An independent link for members of the public wishing

to view the live feed with Spanish captions would be provided. Implementation of Spanish captions would require one of the following formats:

1. Provide the Spanish stream with English audio and Spanish captions.
2. Provide no audio with Spanish captions.

### *In-Person Interpretation Services*

To host live in-person Spanish translation at meetings, a minimum of two in-person interpreters must be in attendance during each meeting. Multiple local vendors provided estimates ranging from \$80 to \$150 per hour, per interpreter. Based on estimates previously calculated, interpretation costs for an average City Council meeting would be \$1,278 each and Committee meetings are estimated at \$420 each. Two options exist for implementing in-person Spanish interpretation.

1. Add notice to all Agendas allowing for in-person interpreters upon request with 3 business day advanced notice.
2. Provide interpreters at all City Council and Committee meetings.

Throughout the past year, several City Council and Committee meetings were held that included live Spanish interpretation. Public comments during these meetings were facilitated by two public comment phone lines, one in Spanish, one in English. Each had a live interpreter on the line to translate from one language to the other. Several callers experienced issues with the call-in system which caused some delay and access issues during these meetings.

### *Next Steps*

Based on the options explored and the feedback previously given by the Committee, staff recommend a combination of translated Spanish agendas, automated Spanish captioning, and in-person interpretation of meetings to adequately provide Spanish language access to City Council and Committee meetings. Providing both live interpretation and Spanish captions would meet the needs of both in-person and remote meeting attendees. Staff suggests one of the following two options for future implementation to expand language access.

#### *Option One: Live Spanish Interpretation Upon Request / Automated Captions*

With this option, all agendas would be translated into Spanish and would have a notice added stating that live in-person interpretation is available upon request with advanced notice no later than three business days (72 hours) prior to the scheduled meeting. Providing interpretation by request only is the more cost-effective option. This option would also include automated Spanish captions for online viewers for all meetings. All one-time fees for implementation could be funded through PEG account funds, while any ongoing costs would not.

<b><i>Option One Service Costs</i></b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Years 2+</b>
Translated City Council Agendas	\$10,600	\$10,600
Translated Committee Agendas	\$3,500	\$3,500
Automated Captioning System (ACE)	\$45,300*	-
Granicus Encoder	\$4,500*	-
Annual Granicus Service Fee	\$1,500	\$1,500
Estimated Annual Live City Council Interpretation Costs (Available upon request. \$1,278/six-hour meeting)	TBD**	TBD**

Estimated Annual Live Committee Interpretation Costs (Available upon request. \$420/meeting)	TBD**	TBD**
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST</b>	<b>\$65,400+</b>	<b>\$15,600+</b>

\*Funded through PEG Account Funds

\*\*Available upon request

### *Option Two: Live Spanish Interpretation at ALL Council & Committee Meetings / Automated Captions*

This option would provide two Spanish language interpreters present at all Council and Committee meetings. Automated Spanish captions would be available for online viewers. Although this option was previously deemed cost prohibitive at prior committee meetings, this is the only option that provides both Spanish captions and Spanish audio for all meeting broadcasts. All one-time fees for implementation could be covered by PEG funds, while any ongoing costs would not.

<b>Option Two Service Level</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Years 2+</b>
Translated City Council Agendas	\$10,600	\$10,600
Translated Committee Agendas	\$3,500	\$3,500
Automated Captioning System (ACE)	\$45,300*	-
Granicus Encoder	\$4,500*	-
Annual Granicus Service Fee	\$1,500	\$1,500
Estimated Annual Live City Council Interpretation Costs (\$200/hour at a projected rate of 48 six-hour meetings)	\$61,344	\$61,344
Estimated Annual Live Committee Interpretation Costs (\$420/meeting at a projected rate of 84 two-hour meetings)	\$35,280	\$35,280
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST</b>	<b>\$162,024</b>	<b>\$112,224</b>

\*Funded through PEG Account Funds

\*\*Estimated cost subject to RFP

### **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

Implementing Spanish translation contributes to **Strategic Priority No. 5 – High Performing Government** and **Goal No. 5.2** - Utilize technology, data, and process improvement strategies to increase efficiencies, guide decision making, and ensure services are accessible and distributed equitably throughout all geographic areas of the city.

- 1. Community Trust** – The ability to broadcast City Council and Committee video feeds with Spanish captions allows the City to be transparent by giving the large Spanish speaking community in Riverside the opportunity to view and participate in public meetings.
- 2. Equity** – Providing Spanish translation of meetings and meeting materials ensures agenda access to the Riverside residents who only speak Spanish and would otherwise not be able to participate in the discussions taking place during meetings.
- 3. Fiscal Responsibility** – These practices demonstrate fiscal responsibility by thoroughly exploring costs for all available options to provide Spanish translation and

by exercising alternative project funding opportunities through the PEG fund.

4. **Innovation** – Exploration of technology options to ensure live broadcasting of meetings with Spanish captions throughout the City demonstrates innovative approaches to communicating with a wider audience.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – Reaching Spanish speaking audiences through an array of translation services will help to better serve, engage and prepare the community to be more resilient and sustainable.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact related to the receipt of this report; however, if one of the options are selected, then those costs would be included in the fiscal impact presented to the City Council.

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Attachment: Presentation