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August 8, 2017

DECISION MEMORANDUM

TO: Council members

FROM: Jennifer Light,
Regional Technical Forum Manager

SUBJECT: Allocation of additional budget to RTF website enhancements

PROPOSED ACTION: Allocation of \$14,025 of Power Division funds to support further enhancements to the RTF website

SIGNIFICANCE: The redevelopment of the RTF website has allowed improved the accessibility and transparency of RTF work. Through an operations contract with OMBU, staff have been working on additional website enhancements to improve the website's functionality. Staff is seeking an additional allocation of \$14,025 to this contract for added improvements to be completed by the end of FY 2017.

BUDGETARY/ECONOMIC IMPACTS

This will amend the existing RTF website contract which was for \$24,750. Of the \$24,750, the RTF budget covered \$10,000. The amended contract will be for \$38,750 with the incremental \$14,025 being added to the Power Division budget.

BACKGROUND

The Council hired OMBU to redevelop the RTF website in 2016. The official website was launched at the end of 2016. This redevelopment brought the RTF website into current internet standards and added significant functionality. Core to the redevelopment was to increase the prominence and improve the functionality of the

most critical RTF items, such as the measure database and calendar of meetings. The new design provided space for more context setting around our work (allowing increased transparency for the broader public) and also reduced the redundancy of information ensuring that the pages stay fresh and up to date.

Throughout 2017, staff have been working with OMBU on several website enhancements to improve the functionality of the website. Staff have prioritized enhancements to the core functionality of the site to improve the user experience. This includes:

- Enhancements to the measure and standard protocol databases that improve the searchability of measures and provide a better mechanism for archiving deactivating measures
- Improvements to the new calendar functionality to enable users to find any RTF or subcommittee meeting calendar and the materials related to that meeting
- Development of a new discussion tool to allow for subcommittee engagement outside of specified meeting times, which enables broader participation
- Improvements to the decision database that enables users to locate past RTF decisions and link them to the specific material that informed that decision

While these enhancements have improved the core functionality of the site, staff is seeking additional funds to support other improvements. Primarily, these are improvements identified by staff after using some of the new features that OMBU created during redevelopment:

- **Propose a Measure Form:** With the redevelopment, OMBU created an updated form for stakeholders to submit new measure proposals. This feeds directly into the measure database, which streamlines staff's work in adding new measures and provides a more transparent way of tracking new measure proposals. After using this feature, staff have identified several enhancements that will build on this new tool and further streamline the maintenance requirements of the site.
- **Calendar Subscription Functionality:** With the new calendar tool, OMBU created subscription functionality that allows users, such as RTF members, to directly link to the RTF calendar. This enables them to get updates automatically in their Outlook or other calendar application. Overtime, staff sees this as a great resource to keep members and subcommittees up to date with meeting announcements. Staff is seeking several small tweaks to this functionality to make it more useful in the future.
- **Editing Enhancements:** One of the key features of OMBU's websites is their use of "tiles." These tiles provide significant benefits for organizing information and ensuring a consistently styled look. The one downside is limitations with editing the tiles (while tiles can be edited, the current functionality does not allow for review of these edits by another user prior to publishing the changes). Staff is interested in working with OMBU to improve this feature, which will provide benefits to the RTF site, as well as any other Council site. This will allow one user to make edits for review by another user before publishing, which will streamline work and allow for better quality control.

These enhancements, along with a few other minor improvements, will help to ensure that the RTF website continues to be a useful tool for engaging stakeholders and ensuring that the work of the RTF is accessible to the public.