 Committee Report

# Report ITR-CW-03-17

**To**: Warden Barfoot and Members of Grey County Council

**From**: Kim Wingrove, CAO and Jody MacEachern, Acting Director, Information Services

**Meeting Date:** September 28th, 2017

**Subject: Request proposals to replace routers on Grey County network**

**Status**: Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution CW211-17; Endorsed by County Council October 12, 2017 per Resolution CC55-17;

## Recommendation

1. **That Report ITR-CW-03-17 regarding the purchase of replacement network routers to be paid for from reserves be received and that staff be directed to proceed with a Request for Proposal to procure Routers, and**
2. **That staff provide a report with the results of the RFP and a recommendation for Council approval prior to award.**

## Background

The purpose of this report is to request Council approval to initiate the procurement process for new network routers. This is an urgent request that was not foreseen in the 2017 budget. At this time, we have had some routers fail and expect this will continue based on the age of the equipment. The outages are cumbersome to repair and in the case of the long term care homes require an onsite visit to switch the operation over to the secondary internet connection.

In July 2017 Council adopted a new five-year strategy plan for the delivery of information technology services and supported a request by staff to research costs and options for refreshing the county’s IT infrastructure.

This is a complex project with significant implications to the ability of the County to deliver programs and services to residents. In an effort to manage costs and align project work with available resources, staff have divided the infrastructure refresh into five separate categories:

1. **Routers** (pertaining to this report),
2. Switches,
3. Core infrastructure (storage and compute),
4. Disaster recovery, and
5. Wireless access points.

Routers/firewalls are used on a network to control internet activity between components in the network and the broader internet. They are used both to block malicious activity on a network, and to block unauthorized devices (phones, PCs, etc) from accessing the networking.

As recommended in the IT Security Assessment (Reis Information Systems), replacing Grey County’s routers is necessary both to ensure information security and improve the ability of staff to manage the infrastructure efficiently. The existing equipment is beyond its five year lifecycle. Most of the routers protecting Grey County’s network are custom built computers with open source software that are difficult and time consuming to maintain. Unlike standard routers, they cannot be managed through a single administrative console.

Staff expect that the new equipment will improve network performance by addressing routing deficiencies and simplify network management by implementing a single manufacturer for some or all of wireless, security, switching and routing.

**Cost estimates**

IT staff have researched several vendors and requested estimates to purchase new routers with industry standard equipment. Prices quoted range from $150,000- $350,000 for a network the size of Grey County’s which supports thousands of connections in 30 different locations. Based on previous experience and the source of higher estimates (i.e. manufactured suggested retail prices), staff expect to receive proposals competitive with the low end of that range.

# Financial / Staffing / Legal / Information Technology Considerations

There are no staff or legal considerations with this report. Staff recommend that the funds for the new routers be drawn from the IT General and One Time funding reserves.

## Link to Strategic Goals/Priorities

Goal 2: Improve the physical, operational and virtual connections between Grey County’s municipalities and areas beyond to strengthen communities and improve the quality of life for residents.

## Attachments and Background Information

[2017 Information Technology Strategic Plan, Prior and Associates](https://docs.grey.ca/share/s/f_bvo9_7QaWPYdkOb7zC_w)

Respectfully submitted by,

Kim Wingrove and Jody MacEachern