

Council Technology Application Committee Meeting

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Hayward City Hall

777 B St. Hayward

Conference Room 4A

Hayward, CA 94541

AGENDA

Public Comments: (Note: For matters not otherwise listed on the agenda. The Committee welcomes your comments under this section but is prohibited by State Law from discussing items not listed on the agenda. Your item will be taken under consideration and referred to staff.)

1. Minutes of April 16, 2008 (Attached)
2. City Website Update
3. LightsTogether Update
4. Member Comments

Distribution:

Mayor and City Council
City Manager
Assistant City Manager
Assistant to the City Manager
Community & Economic Development Director
City Attorney
City Clerk
Finance Director

Fire Chief
Human Resources Director
Library Director
Police Chief
Public Works Director
Technology Services Manager
Daily Review
Post

Assistance will be provided to those requiring accommodations for disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Interested persons must request accommodation at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting by contacting the Assistant City Manager at (510) 583-4302 or TDD (510) 247-3340



**Council Technology Application Committee (CTAC)
Meeting Minutes of April 16, 2008**

Members Present: Bill Ward, Olden Henson and Bill Quirk

Staff: Fran David and Clancy Priest

Public Comment: None

1. Approval of Minutes: Minutes approved with revisions

2. Lights Together Presentation:

Presentation was given by Ken Keim, CEO and his staff, Shawn Carroll and Kevin McGary regarding Multi-level Social Networking, connecting our City resources with citizens and businesses through Multi-level Social Networking. This system also has the capability to broadcast messages to the citizens or to whomever necessary in emergency situations through the Social Networking. There are benefits for the City of Hayward to soar using different levels of sharing, it can generate new revenues, greater sense of community and increases their efficiency. The City of Hayward could be the first City in the Nation to implement this City wide Social Network. The City controls the content and pays a monthly fee so that there is a separation between the service provided, Lights Together will host it. The monthly fee for the service is \$1 per seat (Employee), when businesses participate, the fee collected by the City from the businesses can pay the per seat fee that the City pays, therefore the networking can pay for itself if you have a sufficient amount of business participating. If you have more businesses participating than the cost of the service to the City, the City will then generate revenue. The cost is \$150,000 to build it out, the City gets 70% of the revenues collected and 30% goes to Lights Together. When revenue for the City reaches \$150,000, then revenue is split 50% to the City and 50% to Lights Together and it becomes a partnership.

Council member Henson requested that if the next two agenda items are not time sensitive, then he would like them carried over to the next CTAC meeting and the committee agreed.

3. City Website Update: To be carried over to the next CTAC meeting

4. Discussion of Technology Strategic Planning: To be carried over to the next CTAC meeting

5. Member Comments: None.

Next Meeting: June 18th @ 4:00pm



DATE: June 18, 2008

TO: Council Technology Application Committee

FROM: Clancy Priest, Technology Services Director

SUBJECT: Demonstration of the City Website Update

RECOMMENDATION

That the committee discusses and comments on this report.

BACKGROUND

The City has had a web presence since the mid 1990's. The City Manager's Office polled numerous Cities' to establish a content format that would be similar to what was, at that time, an industry standard. The website was hosted and maintained by an outside vendor until 2002 when it was brought in-house and the City established a Web Specialist position to maintain both our inter and intranet sites.

In 2003, the City redesigned the website to modernize the content and to give it a more user-friendly interface. The City implemented content management through eVison from Tele-works to assist the deployment of e-services and allow content to be standardized throughout the website.

DISCUSSION

The City's website was again in need of updating and modernization, as well as realignment with the City Council Priorities and Initiatives, particularly being more oriented toward the user, and less structured along internal lines of organization. The new site addresses all the goals concerning Hayward City Council Priorities. The goal is to make the website reflect functions and services sought by end-users rather than departments. The content and design revisions to the website were implemented by the City Manager's Office in conjunction with Technology Services. The Assistant to the City Manager, Millie Saad, and Joseph Ochinerro, the City's Web Specialist, did extensive research and implemented a new design using website best practices.

The goal of the new website design was to make the contents user friendly and allow for greater ease of navigation. By placing Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) driven navigation, the site is able to insert all primary and secondary links to the website. This virtually gives the user a "one-stop-shopping" access to the site and it's most used features.

The new design also lends itself to a more legible and easier to follow design for the new user, as well as frequent visitors. This is achieved by using a minimalist approach, notably placing the content with a "box" and eliminating almost all of the graphical cues. Also site descriptions are kept to concise, familiar words, reducing user scan time and quickening the click response to relevant links.

By the nature of the design, our website easily adheres to the W3C and the Americans with Disabilities Act compliancy as well as opening the design to Web 2.0/3.0 and AJAX (Asynchronous JavaScript and XML) standards. The upgrades site also allows "legacy" users to access the website with older and less graphical computer system which helps to bridge the digital divide.

FISCAL IMPACT

Continual staff time to ensure content and design remains up-to-date. The City Manager's office reviews and implements content along with Technology Services maintenance of the hardware and software. The design is maintained by the City's web specialist.

NEXT STEPS

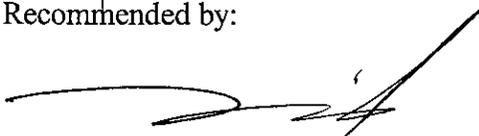
Continue updates as required, maintain design revisions and ensure website best practices in the future.

Prepared by:



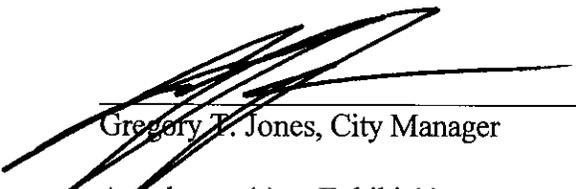
Clancy Priest, Technology Services Director

Recommended by:



Fran David, Assistant City Manager

Approved by:



Gregory T. Jones, City Manager

Attachment(s) or Exhibit(s)
Printed material supplied by vendor



DATE: June 18, 2008

TO: Council Technology Application Committee

FROM: Clancy Priest, Technology Services Director

SUBJECT: LightsTogether Social Network Site Review

RECOMMENDATION

That the committee discuss and comment on this report.

BACKGROUND

As stated in the previous staff report, LightsTogether is a Social Network System (SNS). A SNS is a web-based network that enables individuals and groups to share information, communicate, and network through a single platform¹. This particular SNS is a private network supported by advertising revenue that is shared with the enterprises with which it is affiliated.

A SNS uses software to build online social networks for communities of people who share interests and activities or who are interested in exploring the interests and activities of others. A virtual community, e-community, or online community is a group of people that primarily interact via communication media such as letters, telephone, email, or Usenet rather than face to face, for social, professional, educational, or other purposes. Virtual and online communities have also become a supplemental form of communication between people who know each other primarily in real life. Many means are used in social software separately or in combination, including text-based chatrooms, blogs, and forums that use voice, video text, or avatars².

DISCUSSION

There is an ongoing debate as to the “value” of a SNS such as LightsTogether. These issues concern all SNS’s such as MySpace, Facebook, etc., and are not unique to LightsTogether. Some of the perceived basic advantages of an online SNS include a virtual town square with exposure of issues, feedback from the constituents, participation on the issues, ease of use, and the ability to reach out and expand the discussion of City initiatives. Some of the contrary concerns would be privacy and security issues, legal issues (liability), access (digital divide), cyberbullying, monitoring of the site content, and users. It should be brought forward that even with these issues, SNS’s have,

¹ Platform is the medium used to convey diverse information silos.

² Avatars are an animation to simulate a person’s identity.

in many ways, changed the way we communicate and share information with one another in today's society by creating online or virtual communities.

In general, social networking services allow users to create a profile for themselves, and can be broken down into two broad categories: internal social networking (ISN) and external social networking (ESN) sites, such as MySpace, Facebook, etc.. The proposed LightsTogether site would be a combination of these two types of web based social networks. Both types can increase the feeling of community among people. An ISN is a closed/private community that consists of a group of people within an organization or even an "invite only" group created by a user in an ESN. An ESN is open/public and available to all web users to communicate and is designed to attract advertisers. ESN's can be smaller specialized communities (i.e. linked by a single common interest), or they can be large generic social networking sites.

However, whether specialized or generic, there is commonality across the general approach of social networking sites. Users can upload a picture of themselves, create their "profile", and can often be "friends" with other users. In most social networking services, both users must confirm that they are friends before they are linked. For example, if user "A" lists user "B" as a friend, then user "B" would have to approve user "A's" friend request before they are listed as friends. Some social networking sites have a "favorites" feature that does not need approval from the other user. Social networks usually have privacy controls that allow the user to choose who can view their profile or contact them, etc. Some social networks have additional features, such as the ability to create groups that share common interests or affiliations, upload videos, and hold discussions in forums.

Social networks operate under an autonomous business model in which a social network's members serve dual roles as both the suppliers and the consumers of content. This is in contrast to a traditional business model, where the suppliers and consumers are distinct entities. As is the model with the proposed LightsTogether site, revenue is gained in the autonomous business model via advertisements.

On large social networking services, there have been growing concerns about users giving out too much personal information and the threat of sexual predators. In addition, there is a perceived privacy threat in relation to placing too much personal information in the hands of large corporations or governmental bodies, allowing a profile to be produced on an individual's behavior on which decisions, detrimental to an individual, may be made.

The management of LightsTogether has proposed a site that would be hosted and maintained by their company remotely. The site can be "branded" to Hayward and have some of the look and feel of our existing City website. As mentioned before, the proposed site would be a combination of internal and external social networks that would be a convenient communication tool for the conveyance of information and the receipt of community feedback and discussion.

The creation of the site would be at no cost to the City, the development costs will be paid by LightsTogether through capitol funding they have received from an outside source. There is a license fee that will be charged monthly to the City because the system is for internal as well as external use. This fee is an on-going system cost of \$1 per seat (employee) per month to support the

internal activity. The proposed venture would allow advertising by businesses to create a revenue stream that would be used to cover the yearly fee for the external activity; with revenue exceeding the yearly fee divided 50% to the City and 50% to Lights Together. The LightsTogether website states "LightsTogether has been developed to connect believers and Christ-centered organizations worldwide". LightsTogether has stated that they are not a "faith-based" organization, but the statement on their website may raise concerns among some.

It is difficult for staff to confirm the viability of the projected revenue that would support this system. The proposed system for Hayward would be, as far as can be confirmed, the first municipal-based SNS to be established. For this reason, all possible revenue projections are unconfirmed and could leave the City with recurring yearly maintenance fees. It is also unclear how much City staff resources would be required to assist in the operation and oversight of the proposed system.

In the course of researching this report, staff has determined that although there are not any municipal-based SNS sites known to exist, some government agencies are researching the feasibility of using commercial SNS sites such as MySpace or Facebook to create informational social network sites as a tool for information delivery and feedback from constituents. It is yet to be determined how and at what staff costs these sites would be developed and maintained.

The City's involvement with an SNS at this time appears to be justified by the potentially high value it could have in support of the Council Neighborhood Services Initiative, particularly the Neighborhood Partnership program and strengthening the ability of neighborhoods to communicate within their community and among organized neighborhood groups. City staff responsible for supporting the development of neighborhoods report that they are consistently asked by residents and neighborhood group leaders how the City can assist them in communications with each other and with the City: hosting WEB sites, blogs, listservs, etc. A SNS will enable neighborhood groups such as Fairway Park, Eden Gardens, Schafer Park, and Mount Eden/Palma Ceia-West to communicate within each group and between groups in ways that are most meaningful and productive to them as a group and as subgroups. For instance, leaders of Fairway Park can have a section of the SNS for "formal" association news and events; Neighborhood Alert Block Captains could have a subgroup just for those issues and meetings; another group could be discussing and updating themselves and the City regarding the door-hanger program; the Fire Department could communicate actively with those neighborhood leaders and others in other neighborhood groups taking responsibility for disaster response and maintenance; and the City could have a section keeping folks up-to-date on speed hump installation and communicating with area leaders who are circulating new petitions, etc.

All this could occur without the need for City resources to maintain, manage, or post items as we currently do related to our WEB site. It also appears to remove the City from the direct legal liability for what's posted or discussed while still allowing the City to block inappropriate use if we chose.

There remain many unanswered questions about this product and about municipal use of SNS's, including legal issues, on-going costs, desirability of associating with a vehicle that solicits advertising for revenue, advantages and disadvantages of a hosted application, and many other issues. In the case of LightsTogether, there remain questions of reliability, applicability, and the

potential difficulty of associating with an organization with self-defined religious ties. However, the potential value of the SNS platform in support of a major organizational initiative appears to warrant the allocation of resources necessary to complete this analysis.

There are some governmental organizations that have instituted "Portal Systems"³ and blogging sites to address the information delivery and feedback benefits that a SNS would provide. These sites are similar to the existing portal systems such as iGoogle and MyYahoo. The Cities of Santa Rosa and Santa Barbara have instituted portal systems for both internal and external use with success. These systems use a Microsoft SharePoint⁴ server to deliver their portal to the public. The City of Hayward has implemented SharePoint within our network, but it has not been programmed for portal services due to budgetary constraints.

A web portal is a site that provides a single function via a web page or site. Web portals often function as a point of access to information. Portals present information from diverse sources in a unified way. Aside from the search engine standard, web portals offer other services such as e-mail, news, reports, general/specific information, and various other features. Portals provide a way for an organization to provide a consistent look and feel with access control and procedures for multiple resources.

It is necessary to have a centralized application that has access to various information silos within the same enterprise to share the information with constituents. Also the various users with different information needs accessing the different sources prefer to have a single access point to all of them over the Internet. The SharePoint system is the server software system that delivers these services.

Government web portals have been in existence for some time. The State of California has a portal website at www.ca.gov where users can use web tools for specific information. Many governmental organizations have created portal-based websites to deliver information to constituents

FISCAL IMPACT

Proposed start up and development cost will be paid by LightsTogether.

\$1,000 per month system fee, \$12,000 per year.

Undetermined cost of City staff time to program and monitor site, possibly as much as 1,000 work/hours per year.

If an alternative portal system is developed, cost would range between \$50,000 to \$150,000 depending upon the complexity of the system.

The amount of revenue to be generated is unknown at this point.

³ Portal Systems are an interactive network software system that allows users to customize information delivery.

⁴ SharePoint is a server based workflow software system that is highly programmable.

PUBLIC CONTACT

April 16, 2008 CTAC meeting

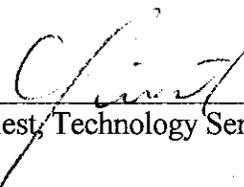
June 6, 2008 Community Meeting at Hayward Adult School.

NEXT STEPS

Staff recommends that LightsTogether submit a written proposal to the City for detailed review by Technology Services and the City Manager. Once a review has been performed, staff can develop a recommendation for consideration by the Committee and/or the Council.

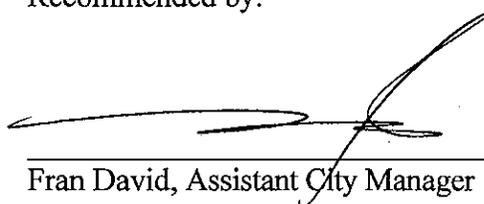
Staff will also research the possibility of implementing a portal system on our existing website that would include using our existing SharePoint system that is not yet fully implemented. This system would require an outside programmer to develop and staff training to implement and maintain. The above identified report will include an analysis of both alternatives, including fiscal impacts, City liability exposure, and other concerns.

Prepared by:



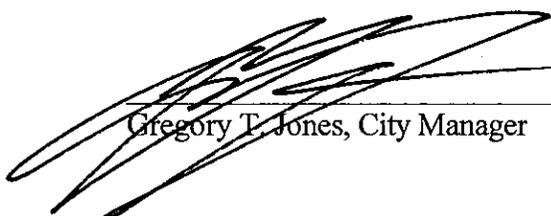
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