



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To:	Finance Select Committee	Date:	July 12, 2002
From:	Andrew Nazareth Manager - Budgets & Accounting	File:	0970-01
Re:	Budgets & Accounting, Purchasing & Risk, Stores and Accounts Payable		

Staff Recommendation

That the report (dated July 12, 2002 from the Manager, Budgets & Accounting) on service levels for the Budgets & Accounting, Purchasing & Risk, Stores and Accounts Payable departments be received for information.

Andrew Nazareth
Manager - Budgets & Accounting

Attach.

FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY

CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER

Staff Report

Origin

At the February 25, 2002 Council Meeting, it was resolved:

"That each General Manager review with the appropriate Committee of Council, departmental programs and service levels prior to the start of the 2003 budget review process"

This report is in response to that resolution and pertains to the Budgets & Accounting, Purchasing & Risk, Stores and Accounts Payable departments.

Analysis

The services provided by the above mentioned departments are driven by the requirements of the organization and regulatory bodies. The departments are constantly striving to look for improvements and opportunities and we firmly believe that we have an effective and efficient team that is not only customer service driven but also very cost conscious.

Attached for information are the following documents:

ATTACHMENT 1 – Organization Chart

ATTACHMENT 2 – Comparative between Municipalities for similar services

ATTACHMENT 3 – Service level summary including costs

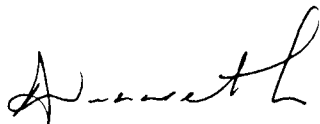
ATTACHMENT 4 – Staff, Statistics, Services & Initiatives by department

Financial Impact

No financial impact

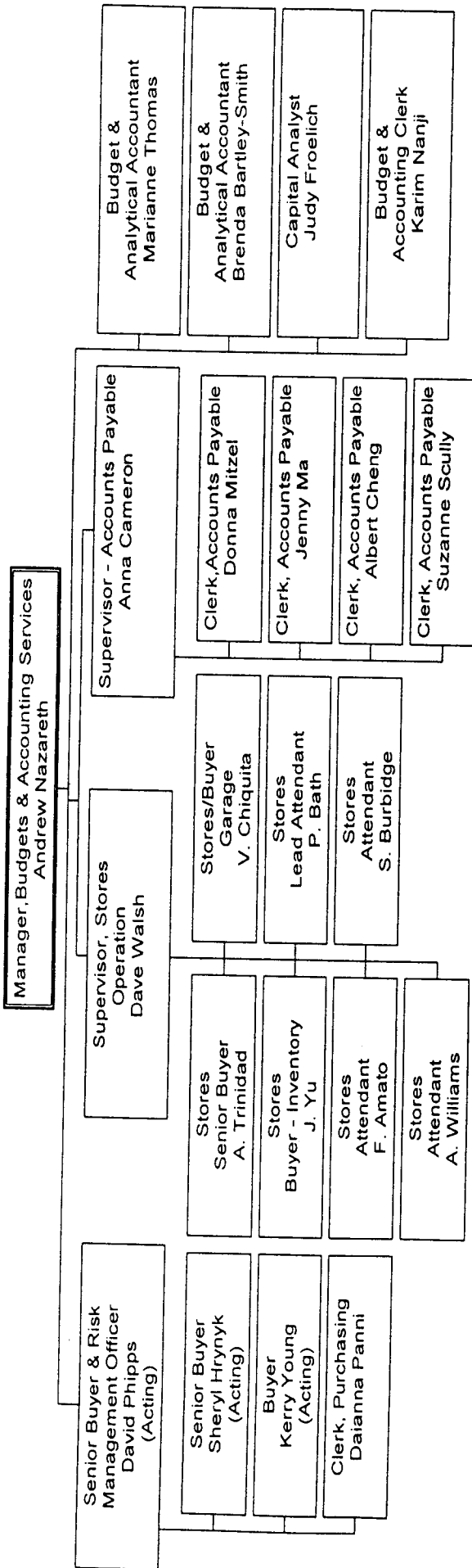
Conclusion

The Budgets & Accounting, Purchasing & Risk, Stores and Accounts Payable departments provide an adequate level of service in order to meet the requirements of the organization and regulatory bodies.



Andrew Nazareth
Manager - Budgets & Accounting

Finance - Budgets & Accounting Services



ATTACHMENT 1

07/03/2002 1:53 PM

ATTACHMENT 2

City of Richmond
 Budgets & Accounting, Purchasing/Risk, Stores & Accounts Payable Service Level Review
 Comparative between Municipalities

	RICHMOND	BURNABY	COQUITLAM	DELTA	SURREY
GENERAL STATISTICS					
City's Population	165,000	200,000	112,000	N/a	347,800
2002 Total City Operating Budget	\$ 205,916,800	\$ 226,412,980	\$ 168,000,000	N/a	\$ 261,916,000
2002 Total City Capital Budget	\$ 32,072,818	\$ 64,000,000	N/a	N/a	\$ 117,840,000
Annual Vendor Payments	\$ 39,125,670	\$ 15,750,000	\$ 122,000,000*	N/a	N/a
# of Annual Vendor Payments	33,806	N/a	N/a	N/a	49,380
# of Purchase Cards in circulation	276	165	204	N/a	197
# of Annual Purchase Orders	2,118	2,065	N/a	N/a	2,800
# of Annual Publicly Tendered Contracts	59	85	80	N/a	32
Value of Inventory held	\$ 2,600,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 400,000	N/a	\$ 847,000
# of Warehouses	3	2	N/a	N/a	1

FTEs & DEPARTMENT BUDGETS					
Budgets & Accounting - FTEs	5.5	4.0	3.0	11.0**	9.0
- Budget	\$ 401,800	\$ 306,993	\$ 224,000	N/a	\$ 470,000
Purchasing & Risk - FTEs	4.0	11.0+	5.0	5.0	8.0
- Purchasing Budget	\$ 242,800	\$ 784,415	\$ 323,000	N/a	\$ 697,000
- Risk Budget	\$ 1,156,100	N/a	N/a	N/a	\$ 1,055,000
Stores - FTEs	8.0	10.0	3.0	2.5	2.0
- Budget	\$ 625,400	\$ 652,310	\$ 223,000	N/a	\$ 122,000
Accounts Payable - FTEs	5.0	See Purchasing	9.5 ^e	10.0^	7.0
- Budget	\$ 401,800	See Purchasing	\$ 357,000	N/a	\$ 275,000
Total FTEs	\$ 22.5	25.0	\$ 20.5	\$ 28.5	\$ 26.0

Note: The above FTE analysis excludes Exempt employees with the exception of the City of Richmond which includes the one Manager under Budgets & Accounting

* includes all City payments as do not track vendor payments separately

** includes Taxation

+ includes Accounts Payable

^e includes Accounts Receivable

[^] includes Accounting

ATTACHMENT 3

CITY OF RICHMOND
Budgets, Purchasing/Risk, Stores & Payables
Levels of Service

Service	Level of Service	FTE	Cost of Service
<u>Budgets & Accounting department</u>			
Preparation of Annual Budget & 5 Year Plan	Within 4 months	1.3	93,056
Accounting functions, journal entries, customer service	Daily	1.4	100,215
Year-end audit & workpapers	Within 2 months	0.6	42,949
Systems testing / report writing / General Ledger Mtce.	Monthly	0.2	14,316
Manuals/Policies/Procedures updates	Monthly	0.1	7,158
Nvision and Peoplesoft training	Quarterly	0.1	7,158
Overhead costs			8,100
Capital & Reserves tracking and analysis	Daily	1.0	71,582
Financial Reporting & establishing internal controls	Annually and as required	0.6	42,949
External Reports	As required	0.1	7,158
Quarterly Reviews	Quarterly	0.1	7,158
Budgets & Accounting department		5.5	\$ 401,800
<u>Stores department</u>			
Stocking of inventory, receiving and customer service	Daily	1.8	125,955
Shipping services for parts & machinery	Daily	0.2	13,995
Maintain Workplace Hazardous Information System	Bi-Annually	0.4	27,990
Lost & Found service / lost bikes & surplus storage	Once a week	0.3	20,993
Organize public auctions	Quarterly	0.2	13,995
Procurement of inventory for Public Works	Daily	1.5	104,963
Procurement of auto parts	Daily	0.8	55,980
Negotiate and prepare contracts & RFQs	Daily	0.5	34,988
Review, test and select materials	As required	0.5	34,988
Deliver supplies to City facilities	Daily	0.8	55,980
Input into inventory system	Daily	1.0	69,975
Vehicles, forklifts and equipment			50,800
Overhead costs			14,800
Stores department		8.0	\$ 625,400
<u>Purchasing and Risk departments</u>			
Purchase all supplies & svcs - RFPs, RFQs, Tenders	Daily	2.0	120,700
Overhead costs			1,400
Assist and advise depts on product lines, specifications	As required	0.5	30,175
Input data into system	Daily	0.6	36,210
Maintain POs & current market information	Daily	0.2	12,070
Provide guidance on risk management	As required	0.2	12,070
Administer claims, stmnt of values, liase with brokers	Annually and as required	0.5	30,175
Insurance property & liability			1,156,100
Purchasing and Risk departments		4.0	\$ 1,398,900
<u>Accounts Payable department</u>			
Process payments for the City	Daily	2.5	112,300
Employee reimbursements	Weekly	0.2	8,984
Refunds	Weekly	0.2	8,984
Vendor queries and customer service	Daily	0.5	22,460
Monitor and maintain records on holdbacks, prepaids, etc.	Monthly	0.1	4,492
Scan all documents for record keeping	Daily	0.5	22,460
Administer petty cash	Daily	0.1	4,492
System testing	Annually	0.2	8,984
Prepare financial information & reports	Annually and as required	0.2	8,984
Administer Purchase card program	Daily	0.5	22,460
Accounts Payable department		5.0	\$ 224,600
TOTAL	14	22.5	\$ 2,650,700

Budgets and Accounting Department

DESCRIPTION OF PRIMARY SERVICE OR RESPONSIBILITY

Establish budget policy including the preparation, implementation and monitoring of the City's Annual Operating Budget, Capital Projects Program and 5 Year Financial Plan.

STAFF

Judy Froelich	Capital Budget Analyst
Karim Nanji	Budget & Accounting Clerk
Brenda Bartley-Smith	Budget & Analytical Accountant
Marianne Thomas	Budget & Analytical Accountant (Acting Supervisor)

STATISTICS FOR 2002

- \$161 Million Operating Budget
- \$32 Million Capital budget
- \$44 Million Utility Budget
- Capital assets – valued at \$774 million
- City's work in progress – valued at \$114 million

- 15,000+ online journals processed
- 735 General Ledger accounts were maintained
- 204 capital projects were tracked.
- 375 city budgets maintained and reviewed (organizational and program budgets)
- 950 Revenue and Expenditure reports generated bi-weekly

SERVICES

Preparation of the Annual Budget and 5 year Financial Plan

- Ongoing analysis, development and control of the City's operating, capital and utility budget and 5 year financial plan.
- Ongoing communication with City Managers and Budget Liaisons co-ordinating budget development, monitoring, budget adjustments and recommendations for 375 budgets.
- Final reconciliation and uploading into the general ledger system of the budget to agree to bylaw and the current fiscal years tax draw approved by Council.
- Review, maintenance, monitoring and analysis of the city's budget via quarterly budget departmental reviews.
- Daily analysis, reconciliation, discussion and problem solving of all budget failures within the General Ledger and subsystems (accounts payable, inventory, Hansen, payroll, purchasing and the new project cost system)
- Design and development of the Annual Operating Manual in conjunction with the Fall Budget rollout.

- Annual upgrade, reorganizational modification and development of current years Access budget programs (rollout, manual preparation and associated system and budget theory training provided to all organizations for budget input)
- Detailed analysis and review relating to cost saving and revenue generating potential for the City

Financial Accounting and Analysis Functions

- Financials Statement and the Annual report preparation for the City and the Public Library in accordance with GAAP, PSAB, Federal and Provincial reporting standards.
- Development, analysis and evaluation of financial information as required by senior management, Council, Federal and Provincial regulatory authorities and the general public.
- Review and concur on reports for Council Committees and City Council for financial implications and impact.
- Facilitate, co-ordinate and implement effective city wide accounting practices and policies.
- Establish and implement internal controls to safeguard the City's assets.
- Prepare and develop year end closing procedures, audit working papers and cumulative reporting requirements for the annual audit.
- Professional level accounting and financial analysis functions – journal entries, account reconciliations, trial balance reconciliations and ad hoc reporting.
- Ongoing customer service for internal and external customers relating to financial, accounting, tax issues, etc
- Active participation in City strategic programs providing analysis and review with respect to financial viability and potential revenue generating programs.
- Coordinate the annual year end audit and preparation of the year end working papers for the City's External Auditor.

Capital & Reserve Tracking

- Manage the City's Statutory Reserves
- Provide capital financial planning support, capital project review, analysis and project reviews relating to the City work in progress asset accounts, the capital assets and the statutory reserves.
- Provide in depth analysis and support in the process and completion of the Capital Budget.
- Ongoing analysis, review, projections and reporting of the Capital projects for current fiscal year and the 5 year financial plan.
- Review and concur on Capital reports to Council Committees and City Council for financial implications.
- Implement new processes for increased efficiencies and controls for tracking Capital Projects.
- Monitoring, tracking and facilitating all Capital Project Grants.
- Capital Bylaw creation for Statutory Reserves.
- Provide leadership and resource for the management of policies and procedures relating to capital issues for Land and Capital Meetings and Land Acquisition meetings.

Business System Analysis

- Report Design, programming and implementation for the City, Fund, Divisional and Organizational information requirements.
- Development of ad hoc, specialized reporting, monthly revenue and expenditure statements, quarterly reviews, annual and year end reports.
- Database development and maintenance for the reporting requirement of the City's organizations and program reports.
- Report generation for the City's Managers, Directors, TAG and Council.
- Development, Design and Maintenance of the City's Budget (Access Module) System
- Design and Development of the Report Books Database for the automated and ad hoc reporting requirements.
- Update and maintenance of the Peoplesoft General Ledger Security – developing and maintaining user profiles.
- Ongoing Team participation with the Information technology upgrade team in the General ledger upgrades, testing and implementation
- Ongoing Team participation with the Information technology implementation team in the testing and implementation of new modules.
- Design, Development and Maintenance of the System Reporting Tree structures and Budget Control Tree functions.
- Annual Peoplesoft year end functions, maintenance of the System calendars and budget translation rules, maintenance of the System ledgers, year end closing rules and carryforward procedures.

Training Manual Preparation and Updates

- Budget Access Module
- General Ledger Peoplesoft
- N'vision Report Analysis
- Annual Budget Manual
- Capital Project User Manual

Training provided to City Wide Users

- on the General Ledger System – understanding the City's accounting policies
- on the Access Budget Module- understanding the City's budget controls and Budget Bylaws
- on the Peoplesoft N'Vision reporting system – understanding the reporting and inquiry capabilities
- Peoplesoft journal entry preparation training

Initiatives

- Improved Budget presentations and review format including a template design to track discretionary /growth changes vs non-discretionary/growth changes including year over year comparatives.
- Introduction of a City wide consistent Budget format for consistent presentation and review of departmental budgets.

- Ongoing identification of 'Soft Costs' for budget reduction and minimizing of property tax impact.
- Improved financial statement presentation package to TAG allowing for methodical budget draft interpretations.
- Improved additional level tracking and reporting for TAG and Council review
- Development of an improved reporting initiative to provide real time reporting and easy access using Web based technology.
- Continue to eliminate non-value added business processes through redesign and creation of centralized databases for quicker and easier retrieval.
- Provide ongoing analytical support for city customers, TAG and Council relating to special projects, cost saving initiatives and revenue generating projects.
- Detailed analysis relating to the Statutory Reserves to ensure future financial viability for the City of Richmond is protected.
- Improved efficiency and process development of the 5 Year Financial Plan process and reporting methods.
- Improved hands on training for Peoplesoft basic skill requirements and N'vision reporting skills and interpretation
- Ongoing development for Peoplesoft upgrades without outside consultation resulting in greater development of staff resources and generating significant cost savings to the organization.

PURCHASING AND RISK MANAGEMENT

DESCRIPTION OF PRIMARY SERVICE OR RESPONSIBILITY

Purchase and secure materials, supplies, equipment and services for the City Program Delivery as well as oversee the City's insurance and risk management requirements

STAFF

David Phipps	Senior Buyer/Supervisor
Sheryl Hrynyk	Senior Buyer
Kerry Young	Buyer
Daianna Panni	Purchasing Assistant

STATISTICS FOR 2001

- \$39,125,670 in vendor payments were processed
- 2,118 purchase orders were processed
- 276 Visa Purchase Cards were in circulation
- Requests for Quotations – Invitational – 36, Advertised – 19
- Requests for Proposals – Invitational – 8, Advertised – 33
- Requests for Tender – Advertised - 7
- Open Purchase Orders (Letters) - 73

SERVICES

Purchasing of Goods and Services

- Purchase all supplies, materials, equipment and services required by the City's various departments and program areas.
- Interview suppliers/vendors, obtain bids and evaluate prices, quantity, quality, availability, warranties, past performance before recommending purchases to special City client committees for approval.
- Obtain bids and negotiate price discounts for purchases not requiring formal Request for Proposals ("RFP's"), Quotations ("RFQ's") or Tenders ("RFT's").
- Assist and advise departments regarding availability of existing products, new product lines, terms, dates associated with project purchases and delivery options.
- Prepare and/or assist departments in developing RFP's, specifications, terms, conditions and standards for complex purchases. Assist Client Departments with evaluation of bids, vendor interviews and recommendations for award.
- Prepare and develop internally, City wide formal requests for Corporate initiatives such as Customs Brokers, Pay Telephones, and Travel Services.
- Forecast commodity usage and prices for items such as gas/oil, stationary (paper products), photocopiers.

- Negotiate with suppliers, manufacturers concerning contract delivery, specifications, and Terms and Conditions. Negotiate with client over best methods for purchasing goods and services for program delivery.
- Draft and assist clients with preparation of Legal Agreements/Contracts for large dollar value contracts, and consulting services. Ensure contracts are signed and monitor agreements for corporate initiatives such as towing, pay telephones, oil and gas.
- Issue bi-annual requests for pricing, overseeing and monitoring HEQ (Hired Equipment – trucks/equipment) and Unit Pricing (sand/gravel, concrete, and asphalt). Create and update pricing information spreadsheet in PeopleSoft to ensure vendors are paid on time.
- Provide information on alternative methods of purchasing (lease versus buy). Finalise leasing arrangements with input from client on items for departments such as information technology and engineering.
- Maintain the City's Office Equipment Inventory of 44 photocopiers and 22 fax machines, including ensuring the equipment meets end user's requirements, environmental standards. Upgrading Office Equipment Inventory on an "as and when" required basis.

Administrative Work Related to Purchasing

- Maintain purchase order records and current information on market conditions and new products.
- Maintain the Purchasing Vendor Database, accessible by all City Staff.
- Maintain PO, Quotation, Proposal and Tender Files in the Department. Maintain records on all archival purchasing related information located in Stores.
- Issue Purchase Orders (PO) in the PeopleSoft system on a daily basis.
- Ensure that "goods received" information is entered into the system promptly to ensure that Accounts Payable are able to process invoices.
- Update all Purchasing records with regards to PO's, RFP's, RFQ's, RFT's, Open and Ongoing PO's.
- Run PeopleSoft reports to ensure that Vendors are being paid promptly and that goods/services are being received accurately.
- On an annual basis calculate the value of multi-year PO's and distribute information to Clients for issuing of new fiscal year PO.
- On an ongoing basis ensure that On-Call and Open PO listing is up-to-date and advise Client, Buyer and Vendor as to status of contract, eg. renewal dates and dollar value information.
- Assist client and vendor community with general questions relating to purchasing procedures and activities (telephone and e-mail).
- Post all invitational formal request for Tenders, Quotations and Proposals on BCBid to ensure compliance with City Policies and Procedures and the Agreement on Internal Trade.
- Administer Local Purchase Order Program and Corporate Mastercard Program (for purchases under \$1,000).

- Work with Law Department and City Clerks to ensure Request for Tenders are handled in accordance with the City's Purchasing Policies.
- Monitor e-procurement initiatives (Business Cards and Stationery Supplies) to ensure accuracy, and purchases in accordance with City's Purchasing Policy and Minor Capital Funding.
- Assist Clients and liaise with Budgets and Accounts Payable with regards to invoicing processes and budgetary concerns/problems.

Memberships/Miscellaneous

- Membership on the Vancouver Regional Co-operative Purchasing Group (VRCPG). Represent the City on all Purchasing related issues that affect entities within the lowermainland. Discuss trends, standardization of documentation and the purchase of goods and services. Decreased administrative, and good/services costs through group buying practise.
- Membership in the Greater Vancouver Municipal Purchasing Group (GVMPG), sharing of information and collaboration on contracts where possible.
- Lead entity (VRCPG) for the purchase of services such as Armoured Car Contract.
- Membership on the Pacific Northwest Public Purchasing Group (PNPPA). Represent the City on all Purchasing related issues that effect entities within the western portions of Canada and the US. Information sharing, documentation sharing, decreased administrative costs due to not having to re-invent the wheel.

Insurance and Risk Management

- Identify and evaluate the risk exposure the City faces as well as secure and renew insurance requirements
- Administer claims, maintain an inventory of the City's assets, prepare statements of values and liaise with insurance brokers/ the Municipal Insurance Association of BC.
- Provide guidance to departments on risk management alternatives.
- Liase with Municipal Insurance Association on miscellaneous insurance requirements. Calculate volunteers and liability premiums/bills for all Community Associations. Produce spreadsheets, collects monies owing for volunteer and liability premiums, and handling of all general insurance inquiries.
- Review all the City's insurance needs, requirements and coverage based on existing plans with the goal of achieving wider and better coverage at a lower cost.

INITIATIVES

Purchasing

- 10% reduction in 2001 prices achieved on the Armoured Car Services Agreement through joint purchasing with other Lower Mainland municipalities (GVMPG members)

- Achieved lower costs on the Stationary Replacement System as a result of economies of scale, joint purchasing and volume discounts, with other Lower Mainland municipalities
- Reduction in the purchase price of photocopy paper and pool chemical contracts as a result of combining purchases with other municipalities and receiving volume discounts
- Further participation in the co-operative purchasing group of Lower Mainland municipalities in order to benefit from more effective pricing due to volume discounts, streamlined processes and less contract administration as a result of the potential sharing of workload. Development of new standardised documentation, eg., RFPs, RFQs, RFTs.
- Review of Purchasing Policy and Purchasing Card Policy and recommend increasing of current limit to \$1,000 per transaction. Reduction in paperwork, processing times.
- Reduce the number of purchase orders and associated administrative work by using contracts where applicable. Creation of 5 new On-Call RFQ Contracts in conjunction with Facilities. Contracts valid for a maximum of 3 years, reducing costs associated with processing PO's for each project.
- Development and use of a generic "Purchasing" e-mail address to ensure that all Vendor concerns are addressed promptly. This e-mail address is accessible by all Purchasing Staff. Potential Bidders on low dollar value projects have the ability to send bids to this e-mail address. Purchasing has the ability to send RFQs, RFPs, and RFTs to potential bidders via this address.
- Handled the implementation of the new Mastercard Purchasing Card Program. New program means improved use of technology and cost savings.
- Analysis of the City's production/re-production requirements to determine upgrade of current analog copiers to digital technology, including multifunctional components.
- 2001 procurement of high capacity digital networking copier for City's Production Centre, which has lead to increased efficiency and capabilities offered to end users.

Customer Service

- Prepare a Purchasing reference manual which will summarize services offered, and roles and responsibilities of both Purchasing and City Staff, with regards to procurement. The manual will also provide examples of properly completed forms that are required by Purchasing to initiate the various processes. The manual will reference and/or include copies of other City initiatives/policies including Environmental Procurement and Mastercard.
- Development of Planned Procurement Sessions in 2002/2003 as well as further development of a "Purchasing Calendar" to ensure that major/minor projects can be scheduled throughout the year (Client/Purchasing) to ensure program delivery.
- Further development of the Purchasing vendor database to be used when acquiring goods and services. The database is now available to all City Staff under the Public Folders sections.
- Improve communication within the Finance Department as well as with our internal customers and suppliers to achieve better customer service delivery.

Information Technology

- Cost savings realised through increased posting of formal requests (RFPs, RFQs & RFTs) on BC Bid website. This internet site is operated by the BC Government Purchasing Commission as a service to public sector organizations and allows fair, open, and equitable access to all Vendors. Posting on this site also allows the City to purchase in accordance with the Agreement on Internal Trade. Vendor access to this site is world wide.
- Increased use of existing technology in the workplace through posting of all advertised RFPs, RFQs, RFTs on the City Web Site. Potential Bidders will be allowed to directly download the document from the City or from BCBid. Leads to decreased turn-around times, and improved Customer Service.
- Use of an internal "fax solution" product in conjunction with PeopleSoft. Allows Purchasing/Stores the ability to directly fax PO's to Vendors. Decreases the use of paper/photocopiers and better utilisation of time.

Environmental Procurement

- Use the City's Award winning Environmental Purchasing Guide to stimulate market development opportunities for environmentally preferred products
- Develop/Adopt an Environmental check-list/Terms and Conditions for including in RFPs, RFQs, RFTs to ensure that Purchasing is being handled in accordance with the City of Richmond's Environmental Purchasing Guide.

Accounts Payable Department**Description of Primary Services or Responsibility**

Manage all cash and cheque disbursements on behalf of the City. This would include invoice payments for goods and services received, tender and damage deposits on account, employee expense reimbursements, petty cash, lease payments, refund payments and US fund transfers.

Staff

Anna Cameron	Supervisor, Accounts Payable
Donna Mitzel	Clerk, Accounts Payable
Jenny Ma	Clerk, Accounts Payable
Albert Cheng	Clerk, Accounts Payable
Suzanne Scully	Clerk, Accounts Payable

Statistics for 2001

- Entered 7,085 vouchers to the HEQ business unit (hired equipment rental and unit pricing payments)
- Entered 1,923 vouchers to reimburse employees
- Entered 1,258 vouchers for refunds (i.e. swim, damage deposits, security deposits, tax redemptions and utility taxes)
- Entered 23,540 vouchers for all other vendor payments
- Total number of vouchers entered in 2001 – 33,806
- Paid \$227,092,249 in General cheques (ie. \$2,057,764 for refunds)
- Paid \$2,217,299 in HEQ cheques
- Paid \$11,164 in Petty Cash cheques
- Paid \$508,465 in US cheques
- Total payments made in 2001 - \$229,829,178
- These numbers will increase in 2002 when all the Bookit refunds are processed through the Accounts Payable Section. In 2000 the community centres generated approximately 2,960 refund cheques.
- There were 276 purchase cards. In 2001 we had 10,150 transactions put through the purchase card system - totally \$1,532,717.
- The City has recently transferred to the Bank of Montreal Master Card system – 297 MasterCard cards have been issued.

Services

- Review all incoming paperwork for approval signatures, accuracy, supporting documents and account coding
- Responsible for processing vendor payments, refunds, travel advances, travel claims, employee reimbursements, hired equipment, contracts and hold back payments
- When required the Accounts Payable staff issue stop payments for lost cheques
- Scan the voucher documents into REDMS for record keeping; these can be retrieved electronically either through PeopleSoft or REDMS
- Administer the Purchasing Credit Card system (ie. handle all queries, issue new cards, lost or stolen cards, rejections, transaction and credit limits, “blockage” changes and dispute charges)
- As requested by City staff the Accounts Payable section create journals to transfer expenditure costs
- Maintain the signing authority listing
- Administer the petty cash fund program (there are 28 petty cash boxes used by the various departments)
- Reconcile 21 General Ledger accounts and the Accounts Payable subsystem; these accounts are reconciled monthly plus year-end working papers are created for the annual audit
- Prepare financial and statistical reports as required by senior management, regulatory authorities and governmental agencies
- Work in conjunction with Treasury Services section to monitor cash flow to ensure adequate funds are available in the current account to cover weekly cheque runs and other City financial obligations
- Handle internal and external customer queries regarding payment status of outstanding supplier invoices, the use of Purchase Orders for proper authorisation of payment of goods and services and employee expense reimbursements
- Monitor and maintain records of holdbacks
- Process the automatic monthly payments for lease agreements (ie. Watermania, Ice Centre, Ironwood Library)

Initiatives

- Preparing a basic reference sheet which will summarize Accounts Payable paperwork and provide examples of properly completed forms to be distributed to new staff
- Creating a Corporate document for staff to access
- Continue to improve communication with City vendors
- Implemented better business processes to ensure timely payment of invoices and to take advantage of vendors’ discounts
- Improved education of internal customers through the use of the City’s Applause newsletter as a communication medium for commonly asked questions such as cheque processing procedures and cheque payment request deadlines
- Implemented stronger and improved processes to ensure that all GST input tax credits are claimed properly, where applicable

- Upgraded Accounts Payable module from PeopleSoft version 6.0 to PeopleSoft version 7.5 without the use of Consultants
- All the Accounts Payable paperwork has been split by alphabet thus giving the staff experience in processing all aspects of our paperwork (thus increasing the level of customer service when staff take vacation or compressed days off)
- Established tighter controls to avoid duplicate payments for the same invoice/billing of goods and services
- Improved operating efficiencies through technological advancements (i.e. installed faster computer processors and a new scanner that automatically adjusts contrast for difference coloured documents plus it adjusts easier for duplexing and scans documents twice as fast as our previous scanner)
- This year the Accounts Payable staff were able to process all the 2001 year end payments without working overtime
- A new purchase card vendor (Bank of Montreal) was selected to increase cost savings, improve customer service and receive superior user friendly technology
- Looking into implementing EFT (electronic fund transfers) through the PeopleSoft Accounts Payable system thus cutting costs by reducing the volume of printed cheques
- Working with I.T. and Telus SRI on how to automatically transfer Bookit refund information into PeopleSoft Accounts Payable system
- Two Accounts Payable staff are used extensively for Cantonese and Mandarin interpretation

STORES

Description of Primary Service or Responsibility

Purchase and maintain the City's Inventory and Public Works Yard's non-inventory requirements, including traffic lights, automotive parts, sewer and water related equipment.

Staff

Dave Walsh – Supervisor Stores Operations
Art Trinidad – Senior Buyer
Joe Yu – Buyer-Inventory
Val Chiquita – Buyer-Autoparts
Paul Bath – Lead Storesman
Art Williams - Storesman
Frank Amato – Storesman
Scott Burbidge – Storesman

Statistics for 2001

\$2,667,943.00 – Value of current inventory held at Stores.
2,800 - Purchase orders prepared at Stores
3,292 – inventory items
540,068 – items issued
3 Warehouses maintained

Services

- Procurement of all inventory requirements for the City as well as direct charge (non-inventoried) requirements for the Public Works Yard.
- Maintain and replenish inventory at 3 locations – Central Stores at 5599 Lynas Lane and Automotive Parts at the Public Works Garage. The third location at Shell Road is utilized for City surplus storage and stolen, lost or recovered bicycles.
- Interview suppliers/vendors and evaluate prices, quantity, quality, availability, and warranties.
- Obtain bids and negotiate price discounts for purchases not requiring formal Requests for Proposals or Tenders.
- Assist and advise departments regarding availability of existing products, new products, terms, and dates associated with project purchases and delivery options.
- Ensure the security and safeguarding of all Stores buildings and outside storage areas.
- Deliver supplies to all City facilities, Fire Halls and Community Centers.
- Provide a lost and found service once a week for residents of Richmond for bicycles found on City property or turned over by RCMP.
- Maintain the Workplace Hazardous Information System for the City.

- Provide shipping services for Public Works' crews for parts and machinery requiring servicing or repairs.
- Organize public auctions of all City surplus material and property received from RCMP including stolen bicycles.
- Participate in the Material Approval Committee with a mandate to review, test and select materials for use within the City.

Initiatives

- Provide the Fire Rescue Department with a uniforms storage site and eventually bring all gear into inventory. This will avoid the exorbitant cost of custom fitting as in the present situation.
- Install and utilize a bar coding system for inventory items.
- Install exterior racking along west wall of warehouse.
- Implement more cross training and job shadowing for the staff to achieve stronger internal controls and improve operating efficiencies.
- Conduct a complete physical inventory count.
- Assist Archives with their removal of old racking and installation of new racking.
- Assist Tall Ships committee with storage of and delivery of materials required.
- Assist Community Bylaws with the storage and safekeeping of parking meters.
- Produce an accurate listing of inventory items on the City network that can be accessed for ordering purposes.
- Produce an Inventory Order Form on the City network.
- Held a number of successful auctions to dispose of excess furniture, obsolete computer equipment, and RCMP confiscated goods.
- Maintain one of the cleanest and most organized warehouses in the Lower Mainland according to comments from external parties.