

Council Member Palmisano,

As you prepare to finalize and vote on the 2015 Minneapolis budget, we wanted to reach out to you regarding the direction of the city's IT department and its potential ramifications for the city's top priorities.

To help guide the 2015 budgeting process and, ultimately, the future of Minneapolis, city leaders established a number of thoughtful goals relating to important citywide issues such as safety and security, economic vitality, and inclusivity. These goals are helping support, among other things, the addition of 10 new police officers, a body-camera pilot program for the Minneapolis Police Department and additional funding for affordable housing in 2015.

However, you more than anyone know that nothing is immune from cuts. A plan to spend \$250,000 on two new positions to help advance racial equality has come under scrutiny, while \$150,000 has been shed from a disparity study and \$75,000 from an emissions-reduction program. And while the December 4 protest march on City Hall may represent only the views of some, the protestors' calls to shift funding away from the Police Department for other programs proves no funding is sacred to everyone.

You are tasked with very difficult budgetary decisions, and we respect that. Even small changes to a few line items can have a very real impact on determining the path Minneapolis takes to become the city its elected officials, residents and business leaders envision.

That is why we find the city's decision to spend millions on an unnecessary change to its IT department so troubling.

As outlined in the proposed city IT budget released in November, the Minneapolis IT department is planning to transition to a new IT outsourcing contract at a cost of at least \$2.7 million to city taxpayers. As a whole, the city's IT budget is expected to increase by more than \$4 million, or more than 14 percent, next year. This proposed transition would account for nearly two-thirds of that increase.

IT leaders have stated the department would increase staffing by 33 employees as part of the transition. This is a mystifying decision, because worker-related costs are typically the greatest for any organization and new technologies such as cloud computing allow IT departments to be leaner than ever.

As you and other city leaders labor to decide how you will pay for the important services that impact citizens' safety, economic well-being and general ability to live together as "One Minneapolis," this unwarranted, seven-figure spending hike is surprising.

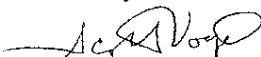
The current outsourcing arrangement has worked successfully for more than 10 years. Consider that lengthy time span, during which your city's first responders have depended on the city's IT network for everything from the 2007 bridge-collapse emergency to the MLB All-Star game earlier this year. Why abandon that decade of successful support for fire and police personnel?

We were honored that Minneapolis and Unisys received the Outsourcing Center "Best Partnership Award" in 2009, which recognized the more than \$18 million in savings the city achieved through our outsourcing partnership. The city IT department also lists among its accomplishments the "PCs for People" program, through which more than 2,700 used city computers have been donated to low-income Twin Cities residents. Important efforts like these improve people's lives, and they support the city's stated goals.

So ask yourself: Is spending at least \$2.7 million to fix something that is not broken truly in the best interests of Minneapolis?

Please consider these questions and the costs at stake, because you have a real opportunity to use taxpayers dollars for more pressing needs involving the safety, prosperity and well-being of Minneapolis residents and businesses.

Sincerely,



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