

Report to Council Regarding Updating and  
Modernizing the West Lafayette City Code  
(Per Resolution No. 06-16)

From: City Clerk Sana Booker  
Corporation Counsel Eric Burns

Date: April 21, 2016

Several deliverable information items were requested in Resolution No. 06-16. Following are the items and the answer following each item.

**Section 1**

*1. A plan to update the city code to eliminate references to third party private documents.*

The current provider of hosting services for the West Lafayette City Code is MuniCode. MuniCode is a nationwide provider to 4,000 cities and other units of government. MuniCode provides a wide range of code services from minimal hosting, like West Lafayette currently uses, to comprehensive and tailor-made web based municipal code services. It serves 47 Indiana units of government including Lafayette, Bloomington, and Indianapolis. Their reputation is excellent.

Within the next few weeks, MuniCode will be sending a recodification memorandum outlining what MuniCode can provide to upgrade, modernize and improve West Lafayette's city code. Upon receipt, this memorandum will be made available to all Councilors who are interested. Based on preliminary discussions with MuniCode, it appears their suite of services can solve many, if not all, of the weaknesses in the current code content, format and accessibility.

*2. A plan to replace third party references with substantially similar language into the West Lafayette Code.*

Third party references can be accessible via hyperlink in the online text of the code.

*3. A plan to renumber the provisions of the City Code in sequential or otherwise more consistent order.*

MuniCode has been asked to recommend changes to the numbering system. This may include using a system similar to Indiana Code citations.

*4. A report detailing whether any sections of the West Lafayette City Code is antiquated or no longer valid under Indiana Code.*

MuniCode will confirm validity of all code cites in conjunction with the Corporation Counsel's office.

*5. A report on whether altering sections of the City Code may violate grandfather clauses established by the Indiana General Assembly, particularly regarding our Housing and Maintenance Code.*

MuniCode will include any such issues of grandfathering in its memorandum for review and action in the recodification.

## **Section 2**

Section 2 requested other information concerning budget resources needed and additional legal assistance needed. The estimated budget for the recodification will be ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) payable one-half (1/2) in 2016 and one-half (1/2) in 2017. Such funds are available in 2016 and will be budgeted for 2017. An additional annual fee of approximately one thousand three hundred dollars (\$1,300.00) starting in 2017 and thereafter may be recommended by the Clerk, Mayor and Controller after considering the available options. This annual fee, following recodification, would provide a Code which is highly accessible, searchable and responsive to citizen and city staff needs going forward. [We currently pay five hundred (\$500) per year for posting of new ordinances only.]

## **Security Discussion:**

The question of security and authorization regarding changing Codes or other modifications were addressed and explained in the following manner. Only MuniCode can change the Codes as authorized and directed by the Clerk's Office. There is a process of authorization that includes a designated email and response for authorization, and sending signed Ordinances with the signature of record.

MuniCode has a very impressive staff of lawyers who do nothing else but governmental code work. No further legal staff needs are anticipated.

It is estimated the recodification will be fully completed within the next ten (10) to fourteen (14) months, barring unforeseen delays.

To access MuniCode's website, please see <https://www.municode.com/#codification>.