

PROPOSED BY: Executive
INTRODUCTION DATE: November 6, 2024

ORDINANCE NO. _____

**ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A PROJECT BASED BUDGET FOR THE
COURTROOM AUDIO VISUAL SYSTEMS UPGRADE**

WHEREAS, Whatcom County needs to redesign and replace courtroom audio visual systems to fully support hybrid court proceedings; and,

WHEREAS the majority of courtroom audio visual systems 6 or more years old and will no longer be eligible for vendor maintenance contracts; and,

WHEREAS, the courtroom audio visual systems upgrades will be funded by a \$462,000 transfer from the General Fund; and,

WHEREAS, Section 6.80 of the Whatcom County Home Rule Charter allows for project-based capital budget appropriation ordinances that lapse when the project has been completed or abandoned or when no expenditure or encumbrance has been made for three (3) years.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Whatcom County Council that a new fund is hereby established effective January 1, 2025, titled Courtroom Audio Visual Upgrade Fund. This fund shall be used to account for the revenues and expenditures of the project to upgrade courtroom audio visual systems.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED by the Whatcom County Council that the Courtroom Audio Visual Upgrade Fund is approved with an initial project budget of \$462,000 as described in Exhibit A.

ADOPTED this ____ day of _____ 2024.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Cathy Halka, Clerk of the Council

Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

WHATCOM COUNTY EXECUTIVE
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Approved by email/B Waldron/10/28/24

Civil Deputy Prosecutor

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive

() Approved () Denied

Date Signed: _____

2025-2026 Budget Preparation - Regular Additional Service Request

Administrative Services

Information Technology

ASR # 2025- 7173	Fund	Cost Cente	Originator: P. Rice (1)
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Expenditure Type: One-Time **Add'l FTE** **Add'l Space** **Priority** 1

Name of Request: Upgrade Court Audio Visual Systems (One-Time)

Costs:	Object	Object Description	2025 Amount	2026 Amount
	7420	Computer-Capital Outlays	\$462,000	\$0
	8301.001	Op Tnsfr In - General Fund	(\$462,000)	\$0
	Request Total		\$0	\$0

1. Description of Request:

a) Describe the proposed activity or service, and indicate whether it is a higher or lower priority than existing services in your department budget.

Upgrade Superior and District Court end of life court audio visual recording systems and associated sound systems across all current and planned new court rooms.

The planned improvements are as follows:

- Courtroom SC#1: sound improvments (\$50k), wifi connectivity upgrades (\$15k)
- Courtroom SC#2: sound improvments (\$50k), wifi connectivity upgrades (\$15k)
- Courtroom SC#3: sound improvments (\$50k)
- New 3rd Floor SC Courtroom: JAVS (\$175k), wifi connectivity upgrades (\$15k)
- Jail Courtroom: JAVS upgrades (\$15k)
- 20% contingency (\$77k)

b) Who are the primary customers for this service?

- Superior Court
- District Court
- Citizens

2. Describe the problem this request addresses and why Whatcom County needs to address it.

The majority of the existing Justice Audio Visual Systems (JAVS) in Superior, District and Sheriff Corrections Courtrooms were purchased and installed in 2019 or earlier. These devices will be at or over 6-years old in 2025 and will not be eligible for annual maintenance by the vendor if they are not replaced. The systems also need to be redesigned to fully support hybrid court proceedings that started during the COVID-19 pandemic in order for the courts to operate. The current systems used for hybrid court proceedings were hastily put together in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and regularly experience audio visual problems.

A walkthrough of court rooms was conducted in early 2024 and all of the court rooms need some level of technology improvement:

- * Superior Court #1, #2, #3, #4, #4C, #5A, #5B, Room 513/514, New Courtroom for 5th Superior Court Judge
- * District Court #1, #2, #3
- * Main Jail Courtroom

This request was submitted as part of the Capital Improvement Planning process in 2022 and again in 2024.

3. Options

a) What other options have you considered? Why is this the best option?

The primary option is to continue to use the current systems beyond their fully supported equipment lifecycle. This is not a good option since court proceedings would increasingly be interrupted due to failing

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equipment. This would also delay resolving current video conferencing sound and projection problems that our courts experience on a daily basis.

b) What are the specific cost savings? (Quantify)

Minimizing costly and time consuming interruptions to court proceedings.

4. Outcomes / Objectives

a) What outcomes will be delivered and when?

The current court audio visual systems would be upgraded with solutions to improve how they integrate with video conferencing, sound and projection systems starting in 2025 and continuing through 2027.

b) How will you know whether the outcomes happened?

Our courts will be fully operational on upgraded and fully supported audio visual system platforms.

5. Other Departments/Agencies

a) Will this ASR impact other departments or agencies? If so, please identify the departments and/or agencies impacted and explain what the impact(s) will be.

IT will work with the vendor, Facilities Management, Superior Court, District Court and Sheriff's Office during this implementation.

b) If another department or agency is responsible for part of the implementation, name the person in charge of implementation and what they are responsible for.

Superior Court - S. Kraft

District Court - J. Wiebusch

Sheriff's Office Corrections - C. Erickson

Facilities Management - R. Ney

6. What is the funding source for this request?

General Fund 001.

ASR #2025-7175 is a companion ASR for the transfer of funds to the project budget from the general fund..