




CITY OF HAMILTON
HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT
Hamilton Fire Department

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	September 19, 2024
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Hamilton Fire Department Next Generation 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Point Contingency Routing Agreement (HSC24034) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Michael Rember (905) 546-2424, Ext. 3376
SUBMITTED BY:	David Cunliffe Chief, Hamilton Fire Department Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

That the Fire Chief, Hamilton Fire Department be authorized to negotiate, enter into and execute, on behalf of the City of Hamilton, a contract, renewals, extensions, amendments, any ancillary documents and any new agreement(s) required to establish and maintain a 9-1-1 Secondary Public Safety Answering Point Emergency Contingency Service Agreement for the Hamilton Fire Department, in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Hamilton, including the Hamilton Fire Department and the Hamilton Police Service are transitioning to Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) Service.

In August of 2022, the General Manager, Finance and Corporate Services signed a Next Generation 9-1-1 Authority Service Agreement with Bell Canada. There are requirements in the Bell Canada Agreement that must be met by the Hamilton Fire Department (Hamilton Fire) and the Hamilton Police Service Public Safety Answering Points before connection will be permitted to the Next Generation 9-1-1 network. Specifically, each agency must specify a partner third party Public Safety Answering Point to act as backup in the event the local (Fire, Police) Public Safety Answering Point

SUBJECT: Hamilton Fire Department Next Generation 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Point Contingency Routing Agreement (HSC24034) (City Wide) - Page 2 of 4

is not able to respond to 9-1-1 Calls. The Hamilton Police Service has already established a 9-1-1 Primary Public Safety Answering Point Emergency Contingency Service Agreement with the Niagara Regional Police Service.

Staff from the Fire Department and the City's Legal Department have worked with their equivalent counterparts from The Corporation of the City of St. Catharines and St. Catharines Fire Services to author a 9-1-1 Secondary Public Safety Answering Point Emergency Contingency Service Agreement to comply with this mandatory requirement per the Bell Canada Next Generation 9-1-1 Authority Service Agreement.

Under this contingency routing agreement, should either the Hamilton Fire Department Public Safety Answering Point or St. Catherines Fire Service Public Safety Answering Point experience a service outage or event that results in loss of functionality to their respective call handling system, Bell Canada can route inbound calls to the other contingency agency for handling until such time that the deficiency or outage has been restored.

The purpose of this report is to seek authorization from Council for the Fire Chief of the Hamilton Fire Department to enter into a 9-1-1 Secondary Public Safety Answering Point Emergency Contingency Service Agreement. This agreement will be entered with The Corporation of the City of St. Catharines (St. Catharines Fire Services). The report also seeks authorization to enter and any additional agreements that may be required to ensure continued compliance with the requirement to have an contingency service agreement in place whether with St. Catharines or another municipality.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: The proposed 9-1-1 Secondary Public Safety Answering Point Emergency Contingency Service Agreement involves the exchange of in-kind service only and is anticipated to have minimal or no financial or monetary impact.

Staffing: Not Applicable

Legal: Legal Services assisted in the creation and review of the 9-1-1 Secondary Public Safety Answering Point Emergency Contingency Service Agreement and will be consulted on future iterations as necessary.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The City of Hamilton's Next Generation 9-1-1 project was initiated in 2020 by the Hamilton Fire Department and Hamilton Police Service. Public Safety Answering Points,

SUBJECT: Hamilton Fire Department Next Generation 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Point Contingency Routing Agreement (HSC24034) (City Wide) - Page 3 of 4

commonly known as dispatch centres, will no longer be able to take legacy, or Enhanced 9-1-1 (E9-1-1) calls after March of 2025 without the required Next Generation 9-1-1 technology. Every Public Safety Answering Point within Canada will be required to update and replace their Call Handling Systems to be compatible to receive Next Generation 9-1-1 calls and transfer them accordingly.

In August of 2022, the General Manager, Finance and Corporate Services signed a Next Generation 9-1-1 Authority Service Agreement with Bell Canada. The Agreement included a list of mandatory requirements that the City would need to meet before being allowed to connect to the Next Generation 9-1-1 network. One of the requirements is that each agency must specify a partner third party Public Safety Answering Point to act as backup in the event the local (Fire, Police) Public Safety Answering Point is not able to respond to 9-1-1 Calls.

To satisfy this requirement, the Hamilton Fire Department must establish a reciprocal agreement with another municipal fire service Public Safety Answering Point (dispatch centre) to intake and handle emergency calls if the Hamilton Fire Public Safety Answering Point experiences a service outage or event that results in loss of functionality to the call handling system until such time that the deficiency or outage has been restored.

Staff from Hamilton Fire and the City's Legal Department have worked with their equivalent counterparts from the City of St. Catharines and St. Catharines Fire Services to author a 9-1-1 Secondary Public Safety Answering Point Emergency Contingency Service Agreement to comply with this mandatory requirement described in the Bell Canada Next Generation 9-1-1 Authority Service Agreement.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

The migration to Next Generation 9-1-1 is mandated and legislated by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) Telecom Regulatory Policy: CRTC 2017-182.

Failure to meet the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission platform migration to Next Generation 9-1-1 by March 4, 2025, will result in disruption (failure) of 911 services provided by the City of Hamilton.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Consultation for this report took place as follows:

- Corporate Services - Information Technology and Privacy
- Legal

- City of St. Catherines Fire Services

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The City has already committed significant resources and budget expenditures to the Next Generation 9-1-1 Project including the acquisition of hardware and software technologies, modifications and additions to infrastructure, renovations to facilities, purchase of the Solacom call-handling solution, and engagement with multiple consultants.

As of July 30, 2024, the overall project was 85% complete. The Next Generation 9-1-1 cutover or “go-live” date is projected for October 2024 – well ahead of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission deadline of March 4, 2025. However, Bell Canada will not authorize Hamilton Fire to access Bell’s Next Generation 9-1-1 Service until it has a 9-1-1 Secondary Public Safety Answering Point Emergency Contingency Service Agreement in place.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

None