

Report to Community and Protective Services Committee

To: Chair and Members,
Community and Protective Services Committee

From: Cheryl Smith, Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and
Community-Wide Services

Subject: London Fire Department Single Source Call Handling Software

Date: January 31, 2023

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services, the following actions be taken with respect to the single source procurement of call handling software:

- a) in accordance with Section 14.4(g) of the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy, Fire Administration **BE AUTHORIZED** to enter into negotiations with Solacom Technologies Inc. of 80 Rue Jean-Proulx, Gatineau, Quebec, J8Z 1W1 for pricing for a single source contract for five (5) years for the provision of Next Generation 9-1-1 - compatible call handling software to the London Fire Department;
- b) the approval a) above, **BE CONDITIONAL** upon The Corporation of the City of London negotiating satisfactory prices, terms, conditions, and entering into a contract with Solacom Technologies Inc. to provide Next Generation 9-1-1 - compatible call handling software to the London Fire Department;
- c) that Civic Administration **BE AUTHORIZED** to undertake all the administrative acts that are necessary in connection with the authorization set out in parts a) and b) above; and,
- d) that the funding for this procurement **BE APPROVED** as set out in the Source of Financing Report attached hereto as Appendix A.

Executive Summary

This report requests authorization from Council for the immediate single source purchase of call handling software to adhere to the federally mandated transfer to Next Generation 9-1-1 (“NG911”) call handling systems.

Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

The London Fire Department Single Source Call Handling Software Procurement is aligned with the following strategic area of focus and outcome from the City of London Strategic Plan 2019-2023:

- Strengthening our Community – Londoners have access to the services and supports that promote well-being, health, and safety in their neighbourhoods and across the city.

Analysis

1.0 Background Information

1.1 Context

The London Fire Department (“LFD”) serves as a Public Safety Answering Point (“PSAP”) for emergency telecommunications. The current analogue 9-1-1 system in place at the LFD is over thirty years old and telecommunication networks have greatly

evolved since it was implemented. As a result of advancements in technology by telecommunications providers, the current 9-1-1 system and its associated infrastructure require a significant overhaul to become compatible with more modern technology.

In 2016, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (“CRTC”) - who regulates all telecommunications providers - adopted new 9-1-1 architecture, referred to as Next Generation 9-1-1 (“NG911”). This technology is based on what the National Emergency Number Agency (“NENA”) developed for the United States. This new architecture will enable 9-1-1 phone calls to be received through wireless Internet Protocol (“IP”) based technology, which will allow the public to send real-time text messages, videos, and pictures from an emergency scene to 9-1-1 centres (PSAPs). This technology is a prerequisite for the nationwide implementation of NG911 services.

In consideration of the above, the CRTC has mandated that all PSAPs upgrade their systems by March 4, 2025.

In London, the LFD serves as the Secondary PSAP, with the London Police Service (“LPS”) serving as the Primary PSAP. Any incoming 9-1-1 calls within the London area are first answered by the Primary PSAP and then transferred to the LFD as required. Both the LFD and LPS are required to upgrade call handling services to the new NG911 architecture.

2.0 Discussion and Considerations

2.1 Case for Single Source Procurement

Dispatch processes and related technologies must be consistent across both PSAPs in the City. LPS has already invested a great deal of resources to prepare for their shift to NG911. There is an opportunity for the LFD to partner with LPS to save both time and money as the LFD also makes this shift.

LPS has agreed to purchase and maintain the majority of the required infrastructure, allowing the LFD to become a tenant. In return, the LFD will provide a predetermined amount of annual funding to LPS as part of this tenancy agreement, throughout which LPS will provide supplementary technical support to both PSAPs and continue to maintain the bulk of the infrastructure.

If this opportunity is leveraged, the LFD stands to save approximately \$800,000 on infrastructure related to the initial setup, and a significant amount of time that would have been spent planning, implementing, and optimizing this project from the ground up. LPS has already begun this work with their chosen call handling software provider, Solacom Technologies, Inc., which was determined to be the best software to meet both PSAPs’ needs.

To pursue the advantages of this partnership with LPS, the LFD seeks to enter a contract with Solacom Technologies, Inc. utilizing the single source procurement clause as outlined in section 14.4(g) of the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy (see below). Therefore, the Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services, seeks authorization to have this call handling solution procured from a single source.

Section 14.4(g) of the Procurement of Goods & Services Policy

14.4 Single Source

Single Source means that there is more than one source of supply in the open market, but only one source is recommended due to predetermined and approved specifications. The procurement may be conducted using a Single Source process if the goods and/or services are available from more than one source, but there are valid and sufficient reasons for selecting one supplier in particular, as follows:

g. It is advantageous to the City to acquire the goods or services from a supplier pursuant to the procurement process conducted by another public body.

City Information Technology Services (“ITS”) methodology consultants have been working in partnership with LPS to determine what will be needed in terms of infrastructure and cross-functionality. The LFD will be required to contract Solacom Technologies, Inc. for software licensing and maintenance, and will also be responsible for providing some initial LFD specific infrastructure. LPS will be responsible for the bulk of the infrastructure setup, maintenance, and support of the overall system.

2.2 Details of Purchase

Solacom call handling software is available for immediate purchase. The price of this software, including the first year of licensing and maintenance is \$423,109 CAD (excluding HST).

3.0 Next Steps

LFD continues to work closely with City ITS and expertise at LPS to grow and maintain a positive relationship between the two organizations and their PSAPs. Approaching this shift to NG911 as partners will allow for a more efficient and seamless transition, which will support the continued provision of consistent and resident-focused emergency services across the City.

This partnership will also be financially beneficial to the LFD, as the tenancy agreement will include ongoing technical support and a clear, efficient path for escalation and issue resolution. Ongoing infrastructure, circuit, and IT personnel costs will be assumed by LPS.

If LFD receives authorization to contract Solacom Technologies, Inc., this software and related hardware will be procured; infrastructure will be developed, procured, and installed; training and quality assurance will take place; and the LFD will plan to go live with this fully NG911 - compliant system by the end of 2024, dependent on LPS’ implementation experience and timelines.

4.0 Financial Impact/Considerations

Per the Source of Financing Report attached as Appendix A, funding for the one-time capital portion of the purchase (including first year licensing and system maintenance) is available in the approved capital budget (project FS1046 – Fire Replace Portable Radios Phase 2).

Future operating costs could potentially include annual fees (exempted under the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy, Schedule B6), life-cycling of hardware and equipment, resourcing for project execution, and staffing. Details of these requirements will be assessed with Solacom Technologies, Inc. and LPS during the first year. At this time, it is known that Solacom Technologies, Inc. on-going licensing and maintenance expenditures will be \$127,019 annually.

The LFD, LPS, City ITS staff, and Solacom Technologies, Inc. will work together to quantify any additional implementation costs as they become known. Related funding requirements will be included through the 2024 - 2027 multi-year budget process.

Conclusion

Authorization for immediate single source procurement of Solacom Technologies, Inc. call handling solution as per Section 14.4(g) of the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy is requested to allow for a resource-saving partnership between the London Fire Department and London Police Service, as London's Public Safety Answering Points are shifted to the federally mandated Next Generation 9-1-1 system.

Prepared by: Katerina Barton, Manager, Finance and Planning, Fire Services

Submitted by: Richard Hayes, Acting Fire Chief

Recommended by: Cheryl Smith, Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services

c: Mat Daley, Director, Information Technology Services
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Steve Mollon, Manager, Procurement and Supply, Finance Supports
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Source of Finance Report

Appendix "A"

#23013

January 31, 2023
(Award Contract)

Chair and Members
Community and Protective Services Committee

RE: London Fire Department Single Source Call Handling Software
(Subledger GG230004)

Capital Project FS1046 - Fire Replace Portable Radios Phase 2
Solacom Technologies Inc. - \$423,109.00 (excluding HST)

Finance Supports Report on the Sources of Financing:

Finance Supports confirms that the cost of this project can be accommodated within the financing available for it in the Capital Budget and that, subject to the approval of the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services, the detailed source of financing is:

Estimated Expenditures	Approved Budget	Committed To Date	This Submission	Balance for Future Work
Vehicles and Equipment	1,660,028	672,555	430,556	556,917
Total Expenditures	\$1,660,028	\$672,555	\$430,556	\$556,917

Sources of Financing

Debenture Quota	152,528	0	0	152,528
Drawdown from Fire Renewal Reserve Fund	1,507,500	672,555	430,556	404,389
Total Financing	\$1,660,028	\$672,555	\$430,556	\$556,917

Financial Note:

Contract Price	423,109
Add: HST @13%	55,004
Total Contract Price Including Taxes	478,113
Less: HST Rebate	-47,557
Net Contract Price	\$430,556

Jason Davies

Manager of Financial Planning & Policy

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