



Legislation Text

File #: 22-0051, Version: 1

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

DATE: 01/19/2022

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Fire Department

SUBJECT:

Fire Dispatch and Emergency Communications Services Agreement between the City of Corona and the City of Ontario.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Corona Fire Department Dispatch and Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) services have historically been provided by the Corona Police Department. The actions under this item would establish a strategic partnership with the Ontario Fire Department for Dispatch and CAD services. The Ontario Fire Department is a fire-centric dispatch center with the technology and staffing to allow the Corona Fire Department to meet its strategic plan objectives.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council:

- a. Approve the Fire Dispatch and Emergency Communications Services Agreement between the City of Corona and the City of Ontario.
- b. Approve the Master Services Agreement between the City of Corona and Soma Global.
- c. Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to execute the Fire Dispatch and Emergency Communications Services Agreement between the City of Corona and the City of Ontario.
- d. Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, the Master Services Agreement between the City of Corona and Soma Global.
- e. Authorize an appropriation of \$210,000 from the General Fund Measure X Reserve (Public Safety) to the Fire Department's operating budget.

BACKGROUND & HISTORY:

The State of California provides a statewide 9-1-1 network managed by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). Individual agencies are connected to the 9-1-1 network through dedicated Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP), a communications center where emergency calls for public safety services are answered. Over 400 public safety agencies within the state, including the City of Corona, operate a PSAP. The City of Corona PSAP operates from within the 9-1-1 Dispatch Communication Center at the Corona Police Department. The 9-1-1 Dispatch Communication Center, commonly referred to as Dispatch, is currently responsible for the intake of emergency, non-emergency, and administrative calls related to Police and Fire services in the City of Corona.

A component of emergency call processing is Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD). EMD refers to a system that enhances services provided by 9-1-1 call takers. It allows the call taker to quickly narrow down the caller's medical or trauma situation, better dispatch emergency services, and provide quality instruction to the caller before help arrives. Due to current staffing conditions in the City of Corona 9-1-1 Dispatch Communication Center, EMD is not consistently provided to all 9-1-1 callers. The Service Agreement with the City of Ontario provides a temporary solution to this issue allowing calls needing EMD to be forwarded to Ontario Fire Dispatch when an EMD dispatcher is not available in the Corona Dispatch Communications Center.

On November 22, 2019, the Corona Fire Department published the findings of a Standards of Coverage conducted by Citygate Associates. One of the findings indicated that 9-1-1 call processing performance, at 3:23 minutes for 90 percent of the fire/EMS incidents, is significantly slower than a best practice recommendation of 1:30 minutes. As a result, the fire department researched opportunities to improve overall response times through alternatives to the current model. The goal was to affiliate with a strategic partner that can provide an innovative Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system in a fire-centric dispatch with enhanced staffing. That partner was identified as the Ontario Fire Department, the only regional 9-1-1 dispatch center that utilizes the emerging technology of a cloud-based dispatch system.

The 2021-2026 City of Corona Strategic Plan includes six strategic goals. Goal four, Safe Community, seeks to protect our quality of life by ensuring the community is safe and clean. Improving public safety services and emergency response is essential to meeting this goal. To help accomplish that, the City can develop a more efficient process to scale emergency response to call type and need, explore opportunities to adopt best practices and computer-aided dispatch systems, and improve emergency response times to meet or beat national benchmarks.

The Corona Fire Department previously presented the subject of partnering for dispatch and CAD services to the City Council on September 29, 2021, at the Fall Council Workshop. The key operational enhancements that were highlighted include the doubling of daily dispatcher staffing, increased number of radio frequencies, a fire-centric dispatch center, an innovative cloud-based CAD system, and the future addition of an Emergency Communication Nurse System (ECNS).

ANALYSIS:

There are four financial components to the partnership with the Ontario Fire Department. Two are one-time costs, and the other components are reoccurring costs for technology and dispatch services.

The first one-time cost component allows the Corona Dispatch Communication Center to forward calls that need EMD to Ontario Fire Dispatch before the full-time transition of service to Ontario Fire Dispatch. This service is billed at a per-call cost and will allow 9-1-1 calls to receive the highest level of service. Approximately 6,000 calls per year require EMD, and it is anticipated that over a six-month period approximately 3,000 calls will be forwarded to Ontario Fire Dispatch in advance of the transition.

The second one-time cost component is the startup implementation phase costs. The one-time startup costs will be approximately \$150,000 and includes system connectivity, project management, phone connections, radio connections, application program interfaces, and other associated processes.

The final cost components of the transition of dispatch service to the Ontario Fire Department Dispatch Center are the reoccurring costs for technology and dispatch services. The annual CAD costs from SOMA Global are \$76,475 and the annual radio costs are \$24,000. The annual dispatch service costs for Fiscal Year 2023 are \$420,000.

Dispatch Service Costs Through the Ontario Fire Department Dispatch Center

Phase	Component	Costs
One-time costs		
	EMD services (as needed prior to change over)	\$20/call (est. \$60,000)
	Start-up costs	\$150,000
	Short-term cost TOTAL	\$210,000
Reoccurring costs		
	Annual Technology Costs (starting FY22/23)	\$100,475
	Annual Dispatch Costs (starting FY22/23)	\$420,000
	Reoccurring cost TOTAL	\$520,475

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Approval of the recommended actions will appropriate \$210,000 from the General Fund Measure X Reserve (Public Safety) to the Fire Department's operating budget. Future fiscal year costs will be incorporated through the budget process.

GENERAL FUND	
Adopted Budget - FY 2022 Estimated Revenue Over Expenditures	\$ 14,593,660
Less Measure X Reserves	(13,144,418)
Previously Approved/Revised Budget Adjustments (Net)*	(871,350)
Current Estimated Revenue Over Expenditures	577,892
Appropriation - Fire Dispatch and Emergency Communication Services	(210,000)
Measure X Reserve Adjustment - Fire Dispatch and Emergency Comm. Services	210,000
Revised Estimated Revenue Over Expenditures [Note 1]	\$ 577,892
Budget Balancing Measures Reserve - Estimated 06/30/2021	27,665,595
Estimated FY 2022 Change in Budget Balancing Measures Reserve	577,892
Estimated Budget Balancing Measures Reserve - 06/30/22	\$ 28,243,487

* Approved through Council Action or other operational process.

Note 1: Includes other General Fund items on the January 19, 2022 agenda.

GENERAL FUND	
Measure X Reserve (Public Safety) Balance	\$ 802,048
Fire Dispatch and Emergency Communication Services Appropriation	(210,000)
Measure X Reserve (Public Safety) Balance - REVISED	\$ 592,048

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

This action is exempt pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the Guidelines for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which states that a project is exempt from CEQA if the general rule covers the activity that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. This action merely approves an agreement, and there is no significant effect on the environment.

PREPARED BY: BRIAN YOUNG, FIRE CHIEF

REVIEWED BY: ROGER BRADLEY, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER

Attachments:

1. EXHIBIT 1 - Fire Dispatch and Emergency Communications Services Agreement
2. EXHIBIT 2 - SOMA Global Master Services Agreement