

REPORT

Fire and Rescue Services

To: Mayor Johnstone and Members of
Council

Date: April 7, 2025

From: Erin Williams
Chief, Fire and Rescue Services

File:

Denise A Tambellini
Manager, Intergovernmental Relations

Item #: 2025-104

Subject: Next Generation 911 Base Funding Grant Application to the Union of
British Columbia Municipalities

RECOMMENDATION

1. *THAT the submission of an application for funding to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities for \$100,000 in base funding to further the Next Generation 9-1-1 Upgrade Project be approved.*
2. *THAT the Chief Administrative Officer and the Director, Finance be authorized to enter into an agreement with the Province of British Columbia.*

PURPOSE

To recommend that the submission for funding to UBCM to fund activities that support the Next Generation 9-1-1 Upgrade Project be approved.

SUMMARY

UBCM has announced a pool of \$25 million in provincial funding to assist municipalities with the Next Generation 9-1-1 Upgrade Project (NG9-1-1). These funds are being distributed via a competitive application process. Attached is the Next Generation 9-1-1 2025 UBCM Grant Program Guide (*See attachment A*) that outlines the eligible activities and rules. An Assessment is currently being conducted by subject matter experts E.S.R.I. (Environment Systems Research Institute) to give guidance on our readiness to move

forward with the project. (See *Attachment B*) New Westminster NG9-1-1 Readiness Assessment Service Request 2025. E.S.R.I will provide a detailed report on the work required to be ready for the change. The deadline for submission to UBCM is April 11, 2025.

BACKGROUND

Telecommunications networks across Canada, as mandated by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), are transitioning to NG9-1-1, which use a modern Internet Protocol (IP) technology. NG9-1-1 will provide increased abilities such as new and enhanced 911 services that can better facilitate the flow of digital information, such as, photos, texts and eventually video calling. The new system will provide improved location information for emergency incidents to first responders before arrival on scene.

DISCUSSION

The details and specification for the transition to NG-911 are currently being developed and will be rolled out by E-Comm. The City currently employs the consultant E.S.R.I. to work with all departments across the City to assess the information technology needs across the City. The requested funds will be allocated across the proposed activities resulting from the E.S.R.I. readiness assessment.

In order to ensure the smooth transition of the Next Generation 9-1-1, staff from New Westminster Fire Rescue, Information Technology and the New Westminster Police Department are proposing the funding from UBCM to be used in the following ways:

1. Fund a half time to full time project manager to help prepare the City to implement the specifications currently being developed for the transition to the NG911 program. The Project Manager will act as project lead. Work includes:
 - Develop public education specific to NG911, including information related to increased opportunity for better location identification, voice, real time text (RTT), and eventually sending image/video to 911. Examples include Specific education activities tailored to local demographics or economy (translation, culturally appropriate education materials, education tailored for tourism, seasonal workers, work camps, etc.) and updating local websites, social media, newsletters.
 - Develop and advance mapping and GIS as required. Examples include:
 - Mapping/GIS readiness assessments.
 - Mapping/GIS improvements related to boundary disputes, outdated place/road names, Indigenous place names.
 - Mapping/GIS software licenses provided the software license is dedicated to NG911 (or cost is pro-rated).

- Implement Training for staff, local agencies, etc. including development of training materials. Examples include:
 - Targeted training for staff, elected officials, emergency response personnel, local fire departments, and/or community organizations (e.g., search and rescue, mental health workers, frontline support staff for unsheltered community members, etc.).
- Advance Civic addressing and signage specific to NG911. Examples include:
 - Signage to standardize road names with GIS-based information.
 - Signage to support geolocation (Latitude -Longitude).
 - Signage to convert local names to names shown in Mapping/GIS applications.

Any other signage supporting compliance with Mapping/GIS and geolocation standards.

2. Purchase and install Mobile Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) agents (i.e. mobile data terminals) in fire department vehicle(s) owned by the eligible applicant, provided the Mobile CAD agent is compatible with NG911-enabled capabilities based on the EIDO and/or IDX standards, and allowing the exchange of multi-media, secure data streams, and RTT.
3. Offset the legal and contract costs for migration to NG911 only, including service provider agreements with primary PSAPs and secondary PSAPs. Examples include: Costs associated with reviewing and signing contracts (e.g., E-Comm, TELUS, or dispatchers for NG911).

Work must be concluded and funding allocated within 2 years from initial grant approval. If the City is successful, we will be required to enter into a contract with the Provincial Government. These contracts typically require the City to indemnify the Province of risk for the project. These are standard contracts in favour of the senior level of government.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is \$100,000 available to the city from a successful funding submission. The requested funds will be allocated across the proposed activities listed above and based on the findings from the E.S.R.I. readiness assessment. Funding will offset the cost of the project manager, legal costs to develop new contracts and potentially installing mobile data terminals in Fire Rescue and NWPD vehicles, if the equipment is required.

OPTIONS

There are three options for Council's consideration.

1. *THAT the submission of an application for funding to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities for \$100,000 in base funding to further the Next Generation 9-1-1 Upgrade Project be approved.*
2. *THAT the Chief Administrative Officer and the Director, Finance be authorized to enter into an agreement with the Province of British Columbia.*
3. Provide staff with other direction.

Staff recommend Options 1 and 2.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Next Generation 9-1-1 2025 UBCM Grant Program Guide
Attachment B – New Westminster NG9-1-1 Readiness Assessment Service Request 2025

APPROVALS

This report was prepared by:
Jeff Romanyk, Acting Assistant Fire Chief
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This report was reviewed by:
Paul Taylor, IT Senior Manager, Chief Information Officer
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This report was approved by:
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Lisa Spitale, Chief Administrative Officer