
Subject: Initiation Report for 2020 Capital Funds – 911 Backup Rationalization

Confidential Report to: Corporate Services Committee

Report date: Wednesday, March 11, 2020

Recommendations

1. That financing in the amount of \$1,000,000, **BE INITIATED** from the capital budget for 911 Backup Rationalization (20001271) and that the project **BE FUNDED** as follows:
 - Capital Levy: \$1,000,000; and
2. That staff **BE AUTHORIZED** to amend Recommendation #2 of CSD 4-2017, the existing agreement with Niagara Regional Police Services (NRPS) respecting the Region's commitment to maintain 68 Church Street, St. Catharines as an interim backup 911/NRPS Communications Centre, to reflect that the NRPS 3 District facility be outfitted and maintained as the temporary and interim backup 911/NRPS Communications Centre until such time as a permanent backup centre is established.

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to initiate funding in the amount of \$1,000,000 from the 911 Backup Rationalization project (20001271) to move the backup 911 infrastructure from 68 Church Street, St. Catharines to 5 Lincoln Street, Welland until the permanent backup 911 site is determined.
- NRPS 1 District is scheduled to move out of their current facility located at 68 Church Street, St. Catharines by the end of 2020.
- The NRPS backup 911 infrastructure is also located in the 68 Church facility. Once this building is vacated at the end of 2020, the infrastructure is at risk of being stolen, damaged, or rendered unusable.
- The Niagara Region in collaboration with the NRPS has identified 5 Lincoln Street, Welland (3 District Police Facility) as a suitable relocation site for the temporary backup 911 infrastructure.
- The capital funds will be used to renovate 5 Lincoln in order to accept the backup 911 infrastructure.
- At the present time Regional staff, local municipal staff and NRPS staff are planning for 5G 911 backup. The change to next generation capabilities is required by July 1, 2023. The project to transfer the existing 911 backup to District 3 provides an opportunity for all stakeholders to carefully plan and implement an optimal solution.

- The move of backup 911 to District 3 will allow Regional staff to identify opportunities to repurpose the 68 Church Street property.
- In the 2020 capital budget, this project was uninitiated because a full business case was still being reviewed and developed. As per section 4.2 of the Capital Asset Management Policy, an initiation report is required to allocate funding to the approved capital project and begin spending.

Financial Considerations

As part of the 2020 Capital Budget, a project budget of \$1,000,000 was approved to be initiated in the future by Council for 911 Backup Rationalization (Project #20001271). This project was approved to be funded 100% by capital levy. The construction costs for outfitting 5 Lincoln Street are dependent on final layout and detailed design, but are not expected to exceed \$650,000. The remaining funds under this project will be used toward the pursuit of the permanent backup 911 location.

The 2020 operating budget for the 68 Church facility that currently houses the 911 backup centre is \$573,438. This facility is to be vacated upon completion of the new 1 District Police Facility in St. Catharines in the fall of 2020. As part of the multi-year 2021 budget, Facilities staff forecasted an operating budget for 68 Church of \$645,838 assuming the building would be required to stay open to house the 911 backup infrastructure. It is anticipated that moving to 5 Lincoln Street in Welland will eliminate the need for this full operating budget at 68 Church Street beyond 2020.

It is anticipated that there will be no increase in operating costs for 5 Lincoln associated with relocating the 911 backup infrastructure.

Analysis

The Region is recommending the relocation of the backup 911 infrastructure to 5 Lincoln before 68 Church Street is vacated at the end of 2020.

Beginning in September 2019, Region staff began investigating possible relocation options for the backup 911 infrastructure at 68 Church Street. All promising locations were identified (including Niagara Region Headquarters) and site visits were conducted in order to take measurements and assess each building. After evaluating all locations, the 3 District Facility at 5 Lincoln Street in Welland was the only site that met all requirements for relocation:

- Different city than primary backup 911 infrastructure (Niagara Falls)
- Outside of downtown core and accessible by multiple routes

- Facilities staff member assigned to site on a full time basis
- Secure and unlikely to be a target of theft or vandalism
- Ample parking
- Accessible by elevator
- Amenities on site (locker rooms, washrooms, lunch room, break area)
- Backup generator in place with available capacity

In January 2020, Region and NRPS staff cataloged all components of the backup 911 infrastructure at 68 Church Street and verified that relocation is a viable option with the reuse of all equipment. Upon receiving this information, the NRPS confirmed that it was their preference to relocate the backup 911 infrastructure to 5 Lincoln Street in Welland.

On February 13, 2020, Niagara Region Clerk's Office was notified by NRPS Police Services Board of a Confidential Accommodations Steering Committee meeting that was held on the same day, where a motion was passed to amend the existing agreement with the Niagara Region to maintain 68 Church as an interim backup 911/NRPS Communications Centre, to reflect NRPS 3 District be outfitted and maintained as the temporary interim backup 911/NRPS Communications Centre.

The Niagara Region's Construction, Energy, and Facilities Management department believes that moving forward with this amendment is in the best interest of both the NRPS and Niagara Region. It will enable the Region to better maintain the security of the backup 911 infrastructure, while also investing in a long-term capital improvement to an owned facility, benefiting the NRPS and Region even after the interim backup 911 is no longer required.

Future of 68 Church Street

Before 68 Church Street is deemed surplus, staff from the Region and the City of St. Catharines are currently reviewing the future opportunities for the site. 68 Church Street is located within the St. Catharines *Downtown Creative Cluster Master Plan (2008)* and provides a redevelopment opportunity within the Downtown core for a more integrated mixed-use site.

Alternatives Reviewed

Another alternative reviewed was to leave the backup 911 infrastructure at 68 Church Street and make capital improvements to the building in order to keep it operational. In order to leave the infrastructure at its current location (68 Church Street), the building would require a capital investment toward the roof, HVAC, and security systems in the amount of approximately \$200,000. The operational costs to maintain the vacant building (heating, cooling, lighting, etc.) would also be fully incurred. Most importantly, housing this critical infrastructure in a vacant building presents a significant risk of theft

or vandalism. Even with a 24/7 security presence, the Region would not be able to guarantee the safety of the equipment.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

This report aligns with Council's Strategic Priorities:

Strategic Priority 03 – Responsible Growth and Infrastructure Planning

Strategic Priority 04 – Sustainable and Engaging Government

Other Pertinent Reports

CSD 4-2017

Corporate Services Committee

November 29, 2017

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This report was prepared in consultation with Donna Gibbs, Director Legal and Court Services.

Appendices

Appendix 1

CSD 4-2017 - NRPS 1 District Project Update

Appendix 2

CSD 22-2020 - Confidential Memo - Appendix 2

Subject: NRPS 1 District Project Update

Report to: Corporate Services Committee

Report date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017

Recommendations

1. That the approach for moving forward with the design of 1 District, as outlined in this report, **BE APPROVED**.
2. That the commitment to maintain the NRPS and 911 back-up communications centre at 68 Church Street until the latter date of January 1, 2023 or two years from the occupancy of the new 1 District building **BE APPROVED**.
3. That staff **BE AUTHORIZED** to enter into discussions with appropriate parties in order to develop a multi-user communication centre that would house primary or backup communications capacity for a variety of emergency based users.
4. That the Chief Administrative Officer **BE DIRECTED** to prepare and issue the necessary correspondence and agreements to the Police Service Board ("PSB") outlining details and timelines for maintaining a suitable NRPS back-up communication location, until such time that a permanent solution is provided.

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to ensure that Committee and Council are supportive of the approach for moving forward with the design of 1 District. The new approach includes a total building program of between 30,000 to 31,000 square feet. The new program does include a communications centre. The new program allows for the potential for future expansion of the building to accommodate modest growth in the future.
- The proposed approach has been vetted through and approved by the NRPS Steering Committee and Police Service Board Accommodations Committee.
- The proposed design solution has a high likelihood of coming in at or under budget guidance established by Council and allows for an efficient, cost effective expansion to the facility in the future.
- Removal of the 911 back-up communications centre from the 1 District program will allow the Region to explore a multi user back-up centre solution with NRPS, EMS, Fire and Region EOC.
- As part of design approach moving forward, the Region will need to allow for continued operation of the 911 back-up communications centre at 68 Church Street

until such time that a regional back-up centre is established or an alternate, suitable location is provided.

Financial Considerations

For each of the 1 District design options that have been developed to date, estimates of probable cost were prepared by the Architect's Cost Consultant. Cost estimates at this stage of design have inherent risks, as such these costs are provided with a potential variance of plus or minus 15%

The proposed recommendation for moving forward with the 1 District design has a high likelihood of coming in at or under budget guidance based on costing information provided by the Cost Consultant. While no additional capital funding is anticipated, consideration needs to be given to maintaining the existing back-up communications centre at 68 Church Street while a Region based solution is being investigated. Ongoing maintenance and operational costs will be incurred to maintain the back-up centre at 68 Church once the new 1 District facility has been built and until such time that a new multi-user back-up centre (NRPS, EMS, Fire & Niagara Region EOC) is designed and constructed. It is expected that the total cost to the Region would be reduced if a multi-user back-up centre can be developed in lieu of providing separate back-up facilities for each user group.

Analysis

Several design options were investigated in response to direction received from the NRPS Project Steering Committee ("Steering") and PSB Accommodations Committee ("PSB") to bring the project within budget guidance of \$17.2M while maintaining NRPS operational requirements. As part of the analysis for each option, estimates of probable cost and associated risks were determined.

The first option considered (Option 1 A) provided for increased capacity for NRPS operational requirements and accommodation for future growth and expansion, however it was significantly over the approved project budget by \$2.55M. In an effort to bring the project within budget guidance successive value engineering exercises were carried out by the project team eliminating program area, circulation space and ultimately the 911 back-up centre, as directed by the PSB. The most recent design iteration (Option 1C), while meeting the project budget, presented some operational concerns for NRPS. One of the primary concerns highlighted was that future expansion space had been removed from the building program, limiting the ability to accommodate any growth or any operational changes in the future.

In an effort to move the design process forward, the Region submitted to NRPS a recommendation to prepare an updated design that builds off of Option 1C, where the 911 back-up communications centre and future expansion space have been removed from the building program. In the updated option, the design team would conceptually plan a building addition to accommodate future growth and expansion and then only incorporate the necessary structural provisions into the design, at a minimal upfront cost of approximately \$50K. This approach has a high likelihood of coming in at or under budget guidance and allows for an efficient, cost effective expansion to the facility in the future, if required. Retaining flexibility in the design for future expansion did help allay NRPS concerns of not having the ability to manage operational changes or growth in the future. Also, by removing the 911 back-up centre from the 1 District program affords the Region the ability to explore a regionally based back-up communication centre. As part of this recommendation the property at 68 Church Street will need to be maintained by the Region to allow for the continued operation of the current NRPS 911 back-up until such time that a regional back-up centre is established or an alternate, suitable location is provided.

The recommendation has been endorsed by the NRPS Steering Committee and was presented to the PSB Accommodations Committee for approval on November 9, 2017. The PSB were in support of the recommendation, but requested written confirmation from the Region outlining the details and timelines for maintaining the back-up communications centre at 68 Church Street. The resolution passed at the November 9, 2017 PSB Accommodations Committee was as follows:

PSB Resolution:

- 1. That the Board's Accommodation Steering Committee approve the recommendation to proceed with a modified Option 1C as outlined in the report;*
- 2. And further, that the approval of the recommendation is subject to a written agreement from the Regional Chief Administrative Office to put a firm timeline in place on the interim secure and controlled use of the 68 Church Street building as a communications back-up centre*
- 3. And further, that the 68 Church Street building will not be used beyond the latter of January 1, 2023 or two (2) years from occupancy of the new 1 District facility;*
- 4. And further, that the Committee's decision be reported publically at the November 23, 2017 Regional Council meeting.*

Alternatives Reviewed

Several design options for 1 District have been investigated by the project team in an effort to meet budget guidance while maintaining NRPS operational requirements. As part of the analysis for each option, estimates of probable cost and associated risks have been considered. Through this investigation it has been established that in order to meet budget guidance, a facility of no more than 31,000 square feet can be constructed. The project team has developed an option that meets these criteria, Option 1C, and will proceed with refining this plan.

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