



# City Manager's Office

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** 01/24/2023

**TO:** Mayor and City Council

**THROUGH:** Doug Thornley, City Manager Approved Electronically

**FROM:** JW Hodge, Assistant City Manager  
Krysti Smith, Management Analyst

**SUBJECT:** Update on the Regional Collaboration Working Group for the City of Reno, the City of Sparks, and Washoe County addressing Regional Opportunities for Fire, EMS, and Dispatch Services.

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This memo provides an update on the regional collaboration working group for the City of Reno, the City of Sparks, and Washoe County regarding the regional opportunities for Fire, EMS, and dispatch services.

On July 22, 2022, the elected leaders of City of Reno, the City of Sparks, and Washoe County participated in a concurrent meeting that:

1. Provided acceptance of the principles (attachment A) guiding the intent and desired outcome of the regional collaboration opportunities for Fire, EMS, and Dispatch services including, but not limited to, enhanced protocols for the dispatch of emergency services using 911 system based on factors such as deployment of nearest resources to emergency calls and other collaborative opportunities in matters related thereto, and;
2. Provided support of a regional working group led by the managers, comprised of stakeholders from fire, emergency medical services (EMS), law enforcement, and dispatch to identify and contract with a consultant to study the current fire and EMS response system and make recommendations on the development of a high quality, efficient, and cost effective service for the region including potential governance, funding, and deployment of resources.

Following this meeting, the working group has made progress through a series of in person regional meetings. The group began by reviewing the guiding principles, and discussing group readiness. The group also identified organizational and regional barriers to having a dispatch and regional 911-call process that serves the community by prioritizing the user experience and the

appropriate deployment of resources through a reduction in duplicated processes, improved use of technology and resources, and simplified governance. This information was then used to provide a request for proposal to experienced public safety consulting firms, and a facilitator was chosen based on the needs of the region.

A summary of meeting dates and topics are outlined below:

| Date                    | Meeting Topics/Action Items   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 08/11/2022              | Working Group Kick Off Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and intent of the working group</li> <li>• Review guiding principles</li> <li>• Discuss facilitator/consultant process</li> <li>• Discuss group readiness</li> </ul> |
| 08/25/2022              | Working Group Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of barriers (attachment B)</li> </ul>   |
| 09/08/2022              | Working Group Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAD replacement project discussion</li> </ul>  |
| 09/09/2022 - 09/30/2022 | Distribution of Request for Proposals to recommended/qualified consulting firms   |
| 09/16/2022 - 01/10/2023 | Development of draft interlocal agreement for CAD governance  |
| 09/22/2022              | Working Group Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAD replacement project updates</li> <li>• Upcoming facilitation review</li> </ul>   |
| 10/19/2022              | Notification to Federal Engineering for proposal acceptance   |
| 11/03/2022              | Working Group Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of Federal Engineering</li> <li>• Review of scope of work and timeline</li> </ul>   |
| 11/04/2022              | Signed Federal Engineering contract   |
| 11/17/2022              | Facilitator Kick Off Meeting  |

Federal Engineering has outlined the following timeline for facilitation:

| Start Date      | End Date        | Task Name  |
|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| <b>11/1/22</b>  | <b>3/3/23</b>   | <b><i>Ongoing Project Management &amp; Change Management Support</i></b> |
| <b>11/1/22</b>  | <b>11/22/22</b> | <b>Project Initiation</b>  |
| 11/1/22         | 11/8/22         | Collect and review data  |
| 11/9/22         | 11/14/22        | Plan and lead Project Initiation Meeting                                 |
| 11/15/22        | 11/15/22        | Finalize project plan/schedule   |
| 11/16/22        | 11/22/22        | Plan and conduct onsite interviews/observations                          |
| <b>11/23/22</b> | <b>12/21/22</b> | <b>Governance Analysis</b>   |
| 11/23/22        | 12/1/22         | Assess governance/policies, prepare recommendations                      |
| 12/2/22         | 12/2/22         | Facilitate discussions with the Working Group                            |
| 12/5/22         | 12/9/22         | Draft Governance Agreement/ Recommendations Report                       |
| 12/12/22        | 12/21/22        | Facilitate Governance Workshop, client review, then finalize             |
| <b>12/22/22</b> | <b>1/25/23</b>  | <b>Organizational Analysis</b>   |
| 12/22/22        | 1/6/23          | Review existing organization and design proposed structure               |

|                |                |   |
|----------------|----------------|---|
| 1/9/23         | 1/13/23        | Document Organizational Change Report                               |
| 1/16/23        | 1/25/23        | Facilitate review with Working Group, then finalize recommendations |
| <b>1/26/23</b> | <b>2/21/23</b> | <b>Foundation/Operational Analysis</b>                              |
| 1/26/23        | 1/27/23        | Evaluate call processing and dispatching methodologies              |
| 1/30/23        | 1/31/23        | Assess staffing, shifts, and existing dispatch protocols            |
| 2/1/23         | 2/2/23         | Research best practices for Fire/EMS dispatch protocols             |
| 2/3/23         | 2/9/23         | Develop proposed changes to operations and dispatch protocols       |
| 2/10/23        | 2/21/23        | Facilitate review with Working Group, issue revised report          |
| <b>2/22/23</b> | <b>3/3/23</b>  | <b>Funding Analysis</b>   |
| 2/22/23        | 2/23/23        | Review existing funding models and sources                          |
| 2/24/23        | 2/27/23        | Develop proposal for modified funding allocations and sources       |
| 2/28/23        | 3/3/23         | Review recommendations with Working Group; revise as agreed         |

In the next three months, the Managers will work with Federal Engineering to provide access to groups, processes, and information needed for governance, organization, and foundational/operational analysis.

The Cities of Reno and Sparks, Washoe County, and REMSA shared data requested by Federal Engineering to support understanding how each entity operates and guide the development of a regional plan and recommendations. Federal Engineering is currently reviewing the data and will start to form their analysis and proposed solutions.

#### **Next Steps:**

Federal Engineering will be conducting on-site observations for the City of Reno on January 30th, 2023 and on-site regional workshops February 6th - February 10th, 2023 (attachment C).

Future facilitator deliverables include:

- Governance Agreement and Plan Report
- Organizational Framework Recommendations Executive Memo
- Operational Review Executive Memo
- Funding Recommendations Executive Memo

Attachments:

- Attachment A - Guiding Principles
- Attachment B - Regional Problem Statements & Solutions
- Attachment C - Federal Engineering Calendar

# FIRE / EMS / DISPATCH REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

## Guiding Principles

### DESIRED END RESULT

1. Design a dispatch and regional 911-call process that serves the community by prioritizing the user experience and the appropriate deployment of resources through a reduction in duplicated processes, improved use of technology and resources, and simplified governance.

### WHAT ARE WE ATTEMPTING TO SOLVE

1. Disparate dispatch systems, locations, varying semantics, and procedures have created a fragmented approach to deploying police, fire and EMS staff/resources that is leading to delays, errors, and unnecessary or duplicative responses.
2. Multiple computer aided dispatch (CAD) systems do not allow for adequate information sharing and resource deployment to properly respond resources based on needs of the 911 call or emergency. The current system is based on “ownership” of a process rather than the experience of the person calling 911 for help. Reducing the number of transfers and the delays in dispatching multiple needs (police, fire, and medical) should be the impetus for improvement.
3. Multiple fire agencies exist within the same geographical boundaries with borders defined by jurisdiction rather than community need and are operating on separate radio frequencies and CAD systems, impairing the ability to identify, dispatch, and communicate through enhanced auto aid agreements.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Governance – how will the service be governed and how will policy decisions be made
2. Organization – What is included in the service, dispatch, fire, EMS
3. Foundation – Operational considerations including configuration, shifts, station standards, etc.
4. Funding – How will the organization be funded and what will the impact be to jurisdictions.

### MEASUREMENTS OF SUCCESS

1. The time from when the citizen perceives an emergency to the time, they reach the correct answering point – *hard to measure*.
2. The number of transfers required to dispatch a resource from the time the initial call is answered.
3. The time from reception of a call by the agency to the time the emergency service vehicle is dispatched to the scene of the emergency.
4. The time from call to arrival of responders based on triaged need and acuity of the emergency.
5. Identification and deployment of necessary resources based on the call needs.
6. Reduced number of call transfers and requests of callers to repeat information.
7. Reduction in training time required to learn multiple systems for all dispatch staff.

## Dispatch / EMS / Fire Regional Opportunities

### Regional Problem Statements & Solutions

| Desired outcome: Design a dispatch and regional 911-call process that serves the community by prioritizing the <u>user experience</u> and the appropriate <u>deployment of resources</u> through a reduction in duplicated processes, improved use of technology and resources, and simplified governance.   |  |                                 |
|--|--|---------------------------------|
| Problem Statement  | Current or Potential Solution  | Regionalization Effort Solution |
| <p>The current 911 system is overused due to an overreliance of services by citizens. This results in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inappropriate deployment of resources including unnecessary responses and transports</li> <li>2. Delays in call processing and response times</li> </ol>  | <p>Provide educations and proactive outreach to citizens on 911 use.</p> <p>Have alternatives to 911 system available such as MOST team and accredited nurse's hotlines.</p>   |                                 |
| <p>The current configuration of 911 PSAP currently does not provide EMD to the caller without navigation to a secondary dispatch service. This results in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Delays in lifesaving instructions being provided to the caller</li> <li>2. Initial response type is based on caller's first utterance</li> </ol>  | <p>EMD to be completed at the first point of contact at 911 PSAP. Agency providing EMD/EFD will be or will be required to maintain the same level of care, including ACE accreditation and medically trained personnel for medical calls which will ensure proper call-taking from a clinical and operational perspective, employing visible, transparent, reproducible, and standardized processes to ensure QA/QI, in accordance with IAED standards with physician involvement and oversight.</p> |                                 |
| <p>The current EMS/Fire/Dispatch system is short staffed, and the pool for qualified applicants is overly competitive. This results in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inability to recruit new and retain professional talent</li> <li>2. Employee burnout and undue stress due to forced overtime</li> <li>3. Competition between agencies to raise pay scales, reduce hiring process delays, and create lateral incentives</li> <li>4. Long term open positions without ability to fill</li> </ol> | <p>Combine or regionalize staff from all agencies to acquire staffing levels needed to serve the growing region. Shift workloads across functional positions. Do not open redundant locations or agencies and redeploy personnel.</p>  |                                 |

Desired outcome: Design a dispatch and regional 911-call process that serves the community by prioritizing the user experience and the appropriate deployment of resources through a reduction in duplicated processes, improved use of technology and resources, and simplified governance.

| Problem Statement  | Current or Potential Solution   | Regionalization Effort Solution |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
| <p>The current dispatch system is duplicative in information and has extraneous transfers. This results in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Caller having to repeat critical information after every transfer</li> <li>2. Caller frustration</li> <li>3. Increased chance of possible disconnect and/or information loss</li> </ol>  | <p>Primary PSAPs should regionalize 911 call processing to ensure emergency calls can be processed without delay and without call transfer, this also requires a Regional CAD platform shared by all user agencies.</p> |                                 |
| <p>The current emergency response system (EMS/Fire/Dispatch) is based on jurisdictional boundaries. This results in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Citizens do not get the nearest unit or responder – instead, they are provided assistance based on run cards and agency-specific responses</li> <li>2. Delays in processing mutual/automatic aid requests outside of established agreements, which are limited.</li> </ol>  | <p>Remove boundary drops and jurisdictional lines.</p> <p>Reconfigure mutual/automatic aid agreements to broaden scope.</p> <p>Regionalize response agencies so there is no longer a divide.</p>                        |                                 |
| <p>The current dispatch system is made up of multiple agencies that do not share a regional CAD system and regional radio infrastructure. This results in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inefficient sharing of incident details/information including timely safety updates for citizens AND first responders and limits the ability to manage/coordinate multi-agency and/or multidiscipline events.</li> <li>2. Systems Information is not kept or maintained in a singular available source for all agencies. Results in “bad or outdated” information to corrupt system integrity and can change response (e.g. Outdated Premise Hazard may cause a medic to stage for LE during a critical medical event)</li> <li>3. Inability to send the most appropriate/closest type of response</li> </ol> | <p>Regional CAD system</p> <p>Ensure all agencies are complying with confidentiality standards (NCIC/NCJIS)</p>   |                                 |

Desired outcome: Design a dispatch and regional 911-call process that serves the community by prioritizing the user experience and the appropriate deployment of resources through a reduction in duplicated processes, improved use of technology and resources, and simplified governance.

| Problem Statement  | Current or Potential Solution  | Regionalization Effort Solution |
|--|--|---------------------------------|
| <p>The current emergency response system is fragmented and governed by individual agencies. This results in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Different funding opportunities for different agencies</li> <li>2. Different collective bargaining/franchise agreements across agencies – resulting in different standards in community response and labor</li> <li>3. Lack of unified governance and approach to regional emergency and non-emergency call handling</li> <li>4. Isolation of agencies</li> </ol> | <p>Current Regionalization meeting is working to address this. Our hope &amp; intention is to work collaboratively to redefine and complement our existing and future regional call handling to ensure that our community members are provided with the highest level, most responsive, and least cumbersome emergency and non-emergency call experience. In addition, our First Responders receive accurate and timely information to ensure the most appropriate response while ensuring First Responders and our community’s safety. Requires a shared vision, direction, and support from jurisdictional and organizational leadership.</p> <p>Similar to the EMS Joint Advisory Committee (JAC). Construct a group of emergency response leader subject matter experts and managers that will begin to work on policy, process, and infrastructure recommendations that can be adopted, with consensus region wide.</p> |                                 |

# January 2023 - Federal Engineering Regionalization Project

| SUN                           | MON                | TUES              | WED | THURS                            | FRI  | SAT |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----------------------------------|--|-----|
| 1                             | 2                  | 3                 | 4   | 5                                | 6  | 7   |
| <b>Data Collection Period</b> |                    |                   |     |                                  |  |     |
|                               |                    |                   |     |                                  | Data Collection Due to Federal Engineering |     |
| 8                             | 9                  | 10                | 11  | 12                               | 13   | 14  |
|                               |                    |                   |     |                                  |  |     |
|                               |                    |                   |     |                                  |  |     |
| 15                            | 16                 | 17                | 18  | 19                               | 20   | 21  |
|                               |                    |                   |     |                                  |  |     |
|                               |                    |                   |     |                                  |  |     |
| 22                            | 23                 | 24                | 25  | 26                               | 27   | 28  |
|                               |                    |                   |     | 8:30 - 9:30am - Regional Meeting |  |     |
|                               |                    |                   |     | @ RPSTC                          |  |     |
| 29                            | 30                 | 31                |     |                                  |  |     |
|                               | <b>Site Visits</b> |                   |     |                                  |  |     |
|                               | Reno Site Visit    | Sparks Site Visit |     |                                  |  |     |



# February 2023 - Federal Engineering Regionalization Project

| SUN | MON   | TUES  | WED                      | THURS                                       | FRI  | SAT |
|-----|---|---|--------------------------|---|--|-----|
|     |   |   | 1                        | 2   | 3  | 4   |
|     |   |   | <b>Site Visits</b>       |   |  |     |
|     |   |   | Washoe County Site Visit | REMSA Site Visit                            | Any Additional Site Visits / Regional Managers De-Brief<br>Hosted @ Reno City Hall |     |
| 5   | 6   | 7   | 8                        | 9   | 10   | 11  |
|     | <b>Workshops</b>                                      |   |                          |   |  |     |
|     | Business Process Analysis Workshop - Day 1<br>@ RPSTC | Business Process Analysis Workshop - Day 2<br>@ RPSTC |                          | Governance Workshop - Day 1<br>@ RPSTC      | Governance Workshop - Day 2<br>@ RPSTC   |     |
| 12  | 13  | 14  | 15                       | 16  | 17   | 18  |
|     |   |   |                          |   |  |     |
| 19  | 20  | 21  | 22                       | 23  | 24   | 25  |
|     |   |   |                          | 8:30 - 9:30am - Regional Meeting<br>@ RPSTC |  |     |
| 26  | 27  | 28  |                          |   |  |     |
|     |   |   |                          |   |  |     |
|     |   |   |                          |   |  |     |