

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE
Report for the Village Council Meeting
5/10/2016

SUBJECT:	SUBMITTED BY:
Motion Directing Staff to Pursue Membership in DU-COMM	David Fieldman Village Manager

SYNOPSIS

A motion directing staff to pursue membership in DuPage Public Safety Communications (DU-COMM) for the provision of emergency and related dispatching services has been prepared.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

The Strategic Goals established by the Village Council include *Steward of Financial, Environmental and Neighborhood Sustainability* and *Exceptional Municipal Services. Identify and Execute a Major Consolidation* is a Top Priority Action Item.

FISCAL IMPACT

The actual fiscal impact will be calculated at the time the Intergovernmental Agreement with DU-COMM is executed (expected to be in June or July). DU-COMM will provide the actual cost of dues and fees at that time.

A preliminary cost estimate indicates that the net annual cost of the services will be approximately \$925,000. The estimated net cost for these services in FY16 is \$852,000.

RECOMMENDATION

Approval on the May 17, 2016 Active Agenda.

BACKGROUND

The Village currently operates a consolidated emergency dispatch center serving Downers Grove and Westmont, known as the Village Operations Center or VOC. The continued operation at the current size and configuration is not feasible due to changes in State law, DuPage County Emergency Telephone Board (ETSB) policy and the resulting creation of County-wide regional dispatch centers that serve populations of 150,000 or more.

About DU-COMM

DU-COMM is an intergovernmental agency formed in 1975 to provide public safety communications services to Police, Fire, and EMS agencies. DU-COMM is one of the largest consolidated 9-1-1 centers in Illinois. In 2014 DU-COMM processed over 1.1 million phone calls and 584,000 police and Fire/EMS incidents. DU-COMM provides a very high level of service with response times and accuracy rates similar to those currently provided by the Village of Downers Grove. Additional information about DU-COMM can be found at <https://www.ducomm.org/>.

The proposed membership in DU-COMM for consolidated emergency dispatching services:

- **Maintains the level of service** currently provided to Downers Grove residents
- **Achieves the Village's Top Priority Action Item** *Identify and Implement a Major Consolidation*
- **Is consistent with the State of Illinois consolidation efforts** including the recommendations in the report issued by the State of Illinois Task Force on Local Government Consolidation and Unfunded Mandates and the Emergency Telephone System Act requiring a reduction in the number of emergency dispatch centers
- **Is consistent with the DuPage County consolidation efforts** as outlined in the ACT initiative (<https://www.dupageco.org/CountyBoard/Chairman/36740/>) and the DuPage County Emergency Telephone Safety Board policy to consolidate dispatch centers
- **Reduces the total cost and increases the efficiency** of providing emergency dispatching services at the County level
- **Reduces the size and cost of the planned improvements** to the Downers Grove Police Station
- Should be **completed within 12 to 14 months**

Maintains the Level of Service Currently Provided to Downers Grove Residents

Emergency dispatching is a vital component of public safety services. The level of service directly affects police, fire and emergency medical services response times. The VOC provides a high level of service meeting and exceeding national performance standards. Both agencies exceed the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) standard for call answering times.

The VOC staff provides a variety of services beyond dispatching police, fire and emergency medical service calls such as assisting walk-in customers in the police station lobby during overnight and weekend hours, responding to calls regarding overnight parking in residential areas and monitoring video cameras. DU-COMM also provides similar services. Village and DU-COMM staff will work together to identify the differences in services provided and service levels. Prior to the transition to DU-COMM, the Village

Council will have the opportunity to select the desired mix and level of non-emergency services to be provided by the Village and modify operations accordingly.

Achieves the Village's Top Priority Action Item *Identify and Implement a Major Consolidation*

The Village's 2015-17 Long Range Plan calls for the *Identification and Implementation of a Major Consolidation* as a Top Priority Action Item. Consolidation of emergency dispatching services within DuPage County has been on-going for several years and has proven to be effective at reducing costs while still providing the high quality public safety services residents have come to expect.

There is an opportunity to participate in a County-wide effort to consolidate emergency dispatching services resulting in two large regional centers serving all municipal police and fire departments and fire districts. Under this proposal the Village would cease its operations of emergency dispatching services as these services would be provided by DU-COMM. The Village may choose to continue to provide certain related services and non-emergency services to maintain the same service levels currently provided.

The Village has been considering further consolidation of its emergency dispatching efforts for the past several years with a renewed focus since 2015, prompted by a new State statute summarized below. The Long Range Plan calls for the Village to participate in cooperative, collaborative and consolidation efforts with other governments when such efforts result in improved efficiencies, greater service levels and/or reduced costs.

Consistent with the State of Illinois Consolidation Efforts

In 2015, the State of Illinois adopted the Emergency Telephone System Act imposing a State-wide mandate requiring emergency telephone safety boards (ETSBs) and dispatch centers to consolidate operations and facilities. The law requires a 50% reduction in the number of emergency dispatch centers by 2017. The law greatly restricts local control and operations of dispatch centers and establishes a uniform surcharge on all telecommunication carriers to pay for dispatch related expenses. The surcharges are paid by all telephone customers, both land lines and mobile devices. The funds are collected and distributed by the State to the local ETSBs that are responsible for providing emergency dispatch services.

The State has been encouraging consolidation of local government services. In December, the State published a report entitled *Delivering Efficient, Effective and Streamlined Government to Illinois Taxpayers*. The report, found here

<https://www.illinois.gov/lgt/issues/localgovernments/Documents/Local%20Government%20Consolidation%20and%20Unfunded%20Mandates%20Task%20Force%20Final%20Report.pdf> attributes the consolidation of DuPage County's 9-1-1 dispatch centers from 20 to 8 facilities (since 2008) with \$4.5 million in savings.

Consistent with the DuPage County Consolidation Efforts

Also in 2015, the DuPage ETSB adopted a policy and plan to reduce the number of emergency dispatch centers in the County. The policy calls for a maximum of four dispatch centers. The ETSB has encouraged and is striving to reduce the number of dispatch centers to three; one operated by the DuPage County Sheriff providing services to its own police force and two regional centers providing services to all municipal police and fire departments and fire districts. The policy also states that the ETSB will provide funds to cover the cost of joining a consolidated center provided that the agency or municipality indicates their intention to join a consolidated center prior to July 2016.

There are currently two regional dispatch centers in DuPage County; DU-COMM which serves 45 public safety agencies and Addison Consolidated Dispatch Center (ACDC) which serves eight public safety

agencies. All municipal police and fire departments and fire districts are dispatched by these two regional centers except Downers Grove and Westmont.

Reduces the Total Cost and Increases the Efficiency of Providing Emergency Dispatching Services at the County level

Each emergency dispatch center in DuPage has its own hardware equipment, software, management staff and dispatchers. The DuPage County ETSB provides financial support for each of the dispatch centers. Reducing the number of centers results in a reduction of all of these items and allows dispatching to take place in a more efficient manner and at a lower cost.

Dispatching efficiency is improved as all municipal public safety agencies in the County will be dispatched by the two regional centers using the same dispatching protocols and procedures. Further, the regional dispatching centers have the ability to dispatch the closest available unit (fire apparatus or police squad car) regardless of municipal jurisdiction. This closest unit response approach reduces response times and improves regional responses to large incidents requiring participation by multiple agencies.

Reduces the Size and Cost of the Planned Improvements to the Downers Grove Police Station

The Village is finalizing the Facilities Sustainability Plan which calls for an addition to the south side of the Police Station and the renovation of all portions of the existing building. The VOC currently occupies about 2,000 square feet in the Station. The move to DU-COMM results in the elimination of the VOC area from the space program for the renovation and will likely reduce the size of the planned addition.

Project Schedule

The transition to DU-COMM is expected to take 12 to 14 months. DU-COMM should begin providing service in later summer 2017. The key tasks are summarized below.

Review & Approve an Intergovernmental Agreement with DU-COMM - All members of DU-COMM must execute the standardized Intergovernmental Agreement. The DU-COMM membership application review and approval process takes approximately 60 days. The DU-COMM Board of Directors must review and approve the IGA. The project schedule calls for the Village Council and DU-COMM Board of Directors to approve the IGA in July, 2016.

Analyze Services Provided by DU-COMM - The VOC staff provides a variety of services beyond dispatching police, fire and emergency medical service calls such as assisting walk-in customers in the police station lobby during overnight and weekend hours, responding to calls regarding overnight parking in residential areas and monitoring video cameras. DU-COMM also provides similar services. Village and DU-COMM staff will work together to identify the differences in services provided and service levels. The analysis of services started earlier this month and is expected to be completed in September, 2016.

Consider Services to be Provided by Downers Grove - Prior to the transition to DU-COMM, the Village Council will have the opportunity to select the desired mix and level of non-emergency services to be provided by the Village and modify operations accordingly. This consideration should take place in the fall of 2016 in conjunction with the review and approval of the FY17 municipal budget.

Prepare a Transition Plan - DU-COMM will prepare a detailed, technical plan to transition all dispatching operations to their facility. The preparation of this plan should take approximately six months and should be completed by the end of 2016.

