

Critical Issues & Budget Development Guidelines

The District Administration working with the Board of Directors is beginning the process of developing a new 5-year plan that will allow the District to address personnel, equipment and facility concerns. The following Critical Issues and Budget Development Guidelines will help develop that plan for fiscal years beginning 2022-2023.

ENSURE ADEQUATE STAFFING TO PROVIDE QUALITY SERVICE DELIVERY THROUGH EFFECTIVE RECRUITMENT SELECTION, TRAINING, COMPETITIVE COMPENSATION AND RETENTION OF EMPLOYEES

The District strives to provide the highest level of service to our constituents and users through a quality recruitment, training and retention program. Currently, the District is staffed with 11 full-time Comm Specs, two of which are Lead positions, and two part-time Comm Specs. It is our goal to bring operations staffing level to three full-time Comm Specs on duty nearly 24 hours a day by hiring six more Comm Specs, bringing operations to 17 employees. A recruitment process has recently started and applicants are proceeding through pre-employment testing. We will continue to hire and train until full staffing is reached.

The District supports a compensation and benefit package to attract and retain qualified and motivated staff. Initial and ongoing training and quality assurance programs are kept at the highest level of priority.

ENSURE OPTIMALLY FUNCTIONING EQUIPMENT TO ALLOW FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY

A Request for Information (RFI) was released to gather necessary information and cost estimates that will aid the Board of Directors in making a decision on the most efficient and cost-effective way to upgrade the current very high frequency (VHF) radio system.

A contract was entered into with an engineering firm for the completion of Phase I of the project which included a review of the RFI responses, a list of system replacement alternatives and established unbiased cost estimates of the various solutions. A presentation was made to the Board and partner agencies showing the pros and cons of each system and provided an opportunity to address concerns. Phase II and III will include the development of a plan, contract negotiations with selected vendor, procurement and project management. The project will be funded through a GO Bond process.

ENSURE CONTINUED EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS IN THE EVENT OF DISASTER BY SECURING A VIABLE BACK-UP COMMUNICATIONS ENVIRONMENT

The implementation of the Regional CentralSquare CAD system for C911CD, Washington County Consolidated Communications Agency (WCCCA), Clackamas County Communications (CCOM) and Lake Oswego Communications (LOCOM), gives us the ability to operate our CAD system at a partner's center. CAD connectivity is only one component needed for a redundant system. The remaining components needed are the ability to transfer emergency phone lines and the ability to send and receive radio transmissions to and from public safety end users within the county. 9-1-1 telephone routing is controlled and coordinated through a partnership of the local telephone provider and the State of Oregon Office of Emergency Management. An agreement can be established with one of our partners to reroute the District's 9-1-1 telephone trunks to one of their locations.

The most complex and fiscally challenging is the radio system. Currently there is no radio interface built that would connect our District's radio system to other neighboring systems. The potential upgrade of the District's radio system from VHF to a 700/800 MHz system could allow the District to form partnerships with regional neighbors who operate similar radio systems.

ENSURE FACILITY SECURITY AND PROPER STATE OF MAINTENANCE

The completion of the security fencing that encompasses the entire campus of C911CD is being proposed. Upgrades to the facility access control system (key cards) as well as the camera surveillance system were installed. Security measures at the District's radio sites needs to be evaluated and improved to include intrusion and back-up power alerts that are monitored by the dispatch center or remotely by designated District staff. As the District continues to develop the plan for the new radio system, these needs will be considered as part of the system upgrade package.

ENSURE APPROPRIATE AND EFFECTIVE USE OF SERVICES THROUGH PUBLIC AWARENESS, EDUCATION AND THE DISSEMINATION OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

Public education is an effective tool in assuring appropriate use of public safety resources and helping to reduce the number of inappropriate 9-1-1 calls. The District provides educational material to schools, publishes print ads, runs radio spots and sends periodic newsletters to all postal customers highlighting public safety and citizen preparedness issues and best practices. The District's website and social media outlets will provide additional resources of information. Community outreach efforts will need to be sustained for public awareness and education of future system upgrade needs and the continuation of funding for operations.

ENSURE PREPAREDNESS FOR CATASTROPHIC EVENTS THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT AND PROMULGATION OF BUSINESS AND OPERATIONS CONTINUITY PLANNING AND PRACTICE

Columbia County Emergency Management (CCEM) has begun a planning process for continuity of operations (COP) and continuity of government (COG). This process is made available to District staff to use in developing our own plan that can be coordinated with the plans of our partner agencies. Staff continue to review and update the District's current COP and COG plans as well as further identifying solutions for operational capabilities during catastrophic events.

MAXIMIZE INTEROPERABILITY PROJECTS THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER NEIGHBORING JURISDICTIONS

The District remains deeply involved in interoperability projects. The District is fully engaged with the 9-1-1 community and will work closely with all stakeholders to move forward with thoughtful planning and decision making. C911CD staff has served on the Portland Dispatch Center Consortium (PDCC) group since 2003. The PDCC serves as the regional planning source for a variety of projects. Along with the upgrade to the new regional CAD system in 2018, was the replacement of the antiquated CAD to CAD interface that ties together ten dispatch centers within the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) region. This interface is continually being expanded to include connections to multiple public safety agencies including METCOM, Newberg 9-1-1, Oregon State Police, and Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) as well as public utility providers, such as Portland General Electric (PGE), NW Natural Gas and Portland Power and Light. Several 9-1-1 centers in central Oregon are also expected to be joining soon.