



DANIEL HARRIGAN, MAYOR



MAYOR DAVID G. KLINE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: October 18, 2017

County of Summit and Cities of Akron, Cuyahoga Falls, Green, Fairlawn, Stow and Tallmadge Move Forward with Exploring Dispatch Consolidations

Earlier this year, the County of Summit and the Cities of Cuyahoga Falls, Stow and Tallmadge entered into a memorandum of understanding laying out the framework for a consolidated computer-aided dispatch system (“Consolidated CAD System”) and possible consolidation of dispatch operations. On Wednesday, October 11, 2017, those communities announced their intention to hire MCM Consulting Group, Inc. to advise the communities on the implementation of the Consolidated CAD System and the possible consolidation of their dispatch operations. The communities were joined by the Cities of Fairlawn and Green in both efforts and by the City of Akron for the Consolidated CAD System only. The City of Akron is not exploring a consolidation of its dispatch operations with the other communities.

Those communities that require legislative approval will present the intergovernmental agreement to their respective councils. The County will contract with MCM Consulting Group, and the balance of the communities will share in the cost. The total cost of the consulting services will not exceed \$196,875, with the County paying \$53,625, Akron paying \$36,000, and the other communities each paying \$21,450.

“Given the changes in dispatching technology, all of our communities are looking at significant future costs to upgrade equipment, and keep it current with advancing technology,” said County Executive Ilene Shapiro. “This joint effort by the communities allows us to share in the cost of planning for our futures—both in terms of a new Consolidated CAD System, as well as looking further into the consolidation of operations.”

Under the agreement, MCM Consulting Group will assist the communities with identifying a Consolidated CAD System vendor, negotiating a contract with that vendor and implementing the new Consolidated CAD System. The process is expected to take approximately 18-24 months to complete. Several of the partnering communities operate computer-aided dispatch systems that are beyond their useful life, and in dire need of replacement. Rather than each replacing their individual systems, the communities intend to buy one Consolidated CAD System, which will be shared and used by all participating communities. It is expected that the County will serve as the owner/operator of the system. By consolidating systems, the participating communities expect to save several hundred thousand dollars, and possibly millions. To help offset the cost of the Consolidated CAD System, the partnering communities received a \$500,000 grant from the State of Ohio's Local Government Innovation Fund.

"As Mayor, I am focused on finding ways to increase efficiency and improve service," said Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan. "Our aging CAD system is in desperate need of an upgrade. By combining the efforts and resources of our partner communities to replace our existing dispatch systems with a single CAD system, we will each be able to advance to the next era of technology, while saving our taxpayers potentially millions of dollars."

For the second phase of the project, MCM Consulting Group will assist the County, Cuyahoga Falls, Fairlawn, Green, Stow and Tallmadge to further explore a possible consolidation of their respective dispatch operations. Currently, each of the communities operates their own dispatch centers, with the exception of Tallmadge, which contracts with Stow for dispatch. Additionally, these communities provide dispatch services by contract to more than a dozen other communities in Summit and Portage Counties. The County, Cuyahoga Falls, Stow and Tallmadge previously expressed their intention to consolidate dispatch operations and to hire a consultant to advise them along the path towards consolidation. Fairlawn and Green have joined in the effort, with each intending to use the consultant to determine if consolidating dispatch operations works for their communities. The consultant is expected to advise the partners on the feasibility of a consolidation, including identifying a location for a possible consolidated dispatch operation, governance, budget and cost allocation, operations and protocol, and staffing structure.

"Bringing MCM Consulting Group to the table is the next step in the process that began a few years ago to look at consolidating our dispatch operations with our neighbors," said Cuyahoga Falls Mayor Don Walters. "As we have moved the project along, we have gained some momentum and brought other communities into these discussions. We look forward to continuing to work with our partners to provide the highest quality of service and safety to our residents."

The participating communities anticipate that they will identify a vendor for the Consolidated CAD System and negotiate a contract with that vendor in the first quarter of 2018. The communities will use the

\$500,000 State Local Government Innovation Fund toward the cost of the system. The communities looking at a potential consolidation of dispatch operations expect the first step of that process will be identifying a location for a joint dispatch center.

“This has been a long, but important, process to identify ways in which we can provide quality and cost-effective dispatch services to our residents,” said Stow Mayor Sara Kline. “Through MCM Consulting Group, we are bringing a wealth of knowledge and expertise on both CAD systems and dispatch operations that will guide us to make the best choices for all of our communities.”

MCM Consulting Group is not new to advising communities on their dispatch and 9-1-1 needs. The consulting group has assisted communities throughout the United States, including Ohio, with their dispatch operations, 9-1-1, emergency management and radio system expertise.

“It was apparent that MCM Consulting Group was the right choice for Tallmadge and all of our partners,” said Tallmadge Mayor Dave Kline. “I look forward to working with all of the communities involved to identify a consolidated CAD system that will maintain the high level of service our taxpayers deserve while also improving operational efficiencies.”

The Mayors of the Cities of Green and Stow both expressed their intention to utilize the consultant’s work to assist their communities with saving money on CAD system upgrades, and to also evaluate whether their communities should join in an operational consolidation. “As technology changes and resources for local governments become more scarce, it is necessary for us to look at new and improved ways to operate our cities,” said Fairlawn Mayor Bill Roth. “I believe it is important for Fairlawn to participate in the consolidation discussions so that we can make an informed decision about whether the consolidated model makes sense for us.” Green Mayor, Gerard Neugebauer added, “The City of Green is unique among the partners in that our dispatching is split between the Sheriff’s Office for police and our City dispatchers for fire and EMS. While that model worked for us for a number of years, it is time to evaluate whether consolidating and partnering with other communities- both for technology and operations- makes sense for the people of Green.”

County Executive Shapiro introduced legislation to Summit County Council to authorize the County to enter into the intergovernmental cost-sharing agreement and hire MCM Consulting Group on October 16, 2017. The remaining communities will follow suit by working through their processes to approve the intergovernmental cost-sharing agreement in the upcoming weeks.