



To the Mayor and Members of the City Council

February 21, 2023

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**SUBJECT: TARRANT COUNTY 9-1-1 DISTRICT'S REGIONALIZATION
FEASIBILITY STUDY**

The purpose of this Informal Report is to provide an update on the Tarrant County 911 District's Board Regionalization Feasibility Study that will evaluate Tarrant County Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP's) and the feasibility of taking a regional approach that may result in a measured, deliberate reduction in the number of PSAP's in the region over time. The Tarrant County 911 approach aligns with our FY23 focus on fixing the 911 system and to ensure processes and services are focused on providing patient-centric care.

Tarrant County Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP's)

PSAP's are the local 24-hour centers responsible for answering 911 calls and directly dispatching emergency response services. Currently there are 32 PSAP's operating in Tarrant County.

Current 911 System is Not Sustainable

Due to the following three key drivers, the current Tarrant County 911 system is unsustainable:

1. Staffing has not kept up with community growth and agencies are challenged with maintaining adequate staffing levels that meet operational needs, industry standards, and community expectation.
2. Technology advances to meet community needs and expectations are at risk, and present funding challenges, i.e.: Next Generation 911.
3. Current funding model is finite and not sustainable to support advancing technologies and the workforce.

Citygate and 911 Dispatch Recommendations

The Citygate Fire and EMS Operational review called out that the City's public safety dispatch processing times from 911 to answer are significantly longer than best practices, and recommended the need to explore why the City has three separate communication/dispatch centers that a 911 caller must navigate. The efforts to begin the process of bringing Fire, Police, and MedStar together in one location with a 911 Administrator who will be responsible for the 911 process.

Regionalization Feasibility Study

The Tarrant County 911 District has hired Mission Critical Partners (MCP) to evaluate the feasibility of regionalization within the District. To achieve buy-in from the 32 PSAPs, Mission Critical Partners recommends taking an organic approach to pursuing regionalization efforts where agency stakeholders work collaboratively toward a common goal of improving emergency response outcomes and providing patient-centric care.

Mission Critical Partners will focus on three levels of regionalization:

- Physical
 - Facility-based consolidation and co-location
- Technology and Shared Systems
 - Virtualization
 - Shared or hosted solutions for mission-critical systems and equipment, i.e.: CAD system
- Policy and Operations
 - Policies, procedures, and protocols
 - System support functions
 - Workforce staffing

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MPC spent December and January holding 911 stakeholder engagement meetings and informational sessions that created forums for the Districts dispatch center personnel to interact and learn more about the regionalization strategy and share their ideas and concerns.

Benefits of Regionalization

The benefits of PSAP regionalization include opportunities to maximize jurisdictional spending power and can result in services that improve emergency responses and utilizes a patient-centric focus:

- Reduces 911 call transfers
- Reduces staffing shortages
- Eliminates cost duplication to operate 32 individual PSAPs
- Greater opportunities for interagency response, backup, situational awareness, and data sharing
- Standardize processes to promote community education, trust, and support.
- Eliminates workforce competition between PSAPs
- Eliminates duplicative support services
- Decreases the number of points of infiltration for cybersecurity risks

Next Steps

Tarrant County 911 staff will continue to assist as Mission Critical Partners works with Tarrant County dispatch centers to complete data gathering, and anticipate providing a draft report to the Tarrant County 911 Board by May 2023, and will share the draft with Tarrant County jurisdictions for review and comment. The final report is expected to be completed by June 2023.

If you have any questions, please contact Valerie Washington at Valerie.washington@fortworthtexas.gov or Fernando Costa at Fernando.costa@fortworthtexas.gov.

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