The Corporation of the Town of LaSalle

Date	October 17, 2017	**Report No:**	CAO-20-17
Directed To:	Mayor and Members of Council	**Attachments:**	Critical Analysis Chart
Department:	Administration	**Policy References:**	
Prepared By:	Kevin Miller, CAO		
Subject:	**Second Satellite Fire Station Location Options and Radio Communications Needs**		

RECOMMENDATION:

For Council decision.

BACKGROUND:

As Council will recall, at its meeting of July 11, 2017 a public meeting was held regarding the construction of a satellite fire station on municipal lands adjacent to John Dupuis Park. At that meeting the following resolutions were passed:

> 259/17
> Moved by: Councillor Meloche
> Seconded by: Deputy Mayor Bondy
>
> That the report prepared by Administration dated June 30, 2017 (CAO-16-17) regarding the Fire Master Plan Recommendation - Second Fire Station BE RECEIVED and that the construction of a satellite fire substation and community/EOC room on Hazel Street adjacent to John Dupuis Park, as recommended by administration BE REJECTED.
>
> **Carried.**
>
> 260/17
> Moved by: Councillor Meloche
> Seconded by: Councillor Burns
>
> That the matter of the location of a satellite fire station BE REFERRED back to Administration for consideration and a report back on options, statistics on response time and use of GIS mapping.
>
> **Carried.**

REPORT:

Pursuant to the direction of Council, the following options are put forth for Council's consideration:

Option 1: Council provide direction to Administration to provide for the construction of a satellite station on an alternative municipally owned site.

Option 2: Council authorize additional Capital dollars to acquire property for the purpose of constructing a satellite station.

Option 3: Council authorize retaining a qualified consultant to complete a study specifically for the purpose of identifying a site for the construction of a satellite substation.

Option 4: Council authorize retaining a qualified consultant to complete a new Fire Master Plan which will include a review of all department operations, explore service delivery models, and provide a recommended site for the construction of a satellite substation.

Discussion:

Option 1 would provide the opportunity for Council to determine if one of the other identified sites (refer to attached critical analysis chart) would be considered appropriate for the construction of a satellite substation. As previously noted by staff, while the selection of one of the alternative sites would provide the required infrastructure for the recommended two station model, it is believed by the professional fire staff that such sites would not consistently improve current response times. Further, alternative sites would not improve the intended effectiveness until such time as the current composite model shifts to a more full-time staffing model. At that point, sites for example along the west side of Front Road would be considered differently as part of any critical analysis.

Therefore, based on the current operating model, Administration is not in a position to recommend any of the other sites.

Option 2 would allow Council to consider providing additional dollars to the project to acquire lands for the construction of a satellite substation. Although Administration could certainly engage in this process, there is reasonable likelihood that any potential site would meet with similar concerns expressed by residents living near John Dupuis Park. During the public consultation process, significant concern was expressed for resident and pedestrian safety in relation to the current paid-on-call response model and responders navigating residential neighbourhoods in personal vehicles to access a conveniently located station for an efficient and timely response to calls. At the July 11th Council meeting, part of the resolution requested statistics on response times and the use of GIS mapping. As part of the July 4th report, Administration input all of the statistics that were readily available, and deemed necessary for the purpose of station location. In the event Council believes there are additional statistics the Town should rely on as part of any decision making process, then Administration would suggest either Option 3 or 4 be pursued. With respect to GIS mapping, as noted in the July 11th report, Administration used internal GIS resources (Spring 2017) as part of the analysis and recommendations to Council on station location. In addition, Administration also relied on the GIS mapping identified by Dillon in the 2008 Master Plan. Certainly if Option 2 is pursued, the same statistical data and GIS mapping would be utilized by staff, and may therefore no satisfy the concerns of Council. Furthermore, Council may end at another impasse if there is significant concern raised during the public consultation process.

Option 3 and 4 both involve retaining an outside consultant. Option 3 would be scoped to specifically look at making recommendations with respect to the location for a satellite substation. Option 4 would undertake to complete a new Master Plan. Since station location is directly associated with the service delivery model, it is suggested that Option 3 (although likely shorter and less expensive to complete) will not produce the desired outcome. Therefore, in the event Council pursues an outside consultant, Administration would suggest consideration be given to approve Option 4.

As part of engaging an outside consultant, Council could also have the successful proponent examine the future radio needs. The following summarizes the current radio status.

- The Town entered into an agreement with vendor on their proprietary 400Mhz. radio system for a 3 year term which expires January 2020.
- Use of this system for the term of this agreement is approximately $32,000 per year. Monthly rates at renewal are unknown. Capital costs for equipment upgrades and replacements are anticipated.
- Police and Public Works currently on municipally owned VHF system. Intermittent failures on VHF system caused fire service significant health and safety concerns as well as sudden and unpredictable operational challenges, over an extended period. Ultimately significant unbudgeted costs were incurred to quickly move to sole-sourced, immediately available system to restore reliable emergency communications.
- Radio equipment currently in all municipal applications will eventually require upgrade or replacement.
- VHF band has traditionally served our needs. Conventional expert opinion is that VHF is that as technology changes, and as the municipality becomes more urban with greater building mass, the reliability of a VHF system may be reduced. Additionally as the proliferation of radio controlled devices in daily use continues, the VHF band is becoming increasingly congested, and detection of harmful interference on licensed frequencies becomes more difficult to determine.
- Prior to the need for replacement or renewal of further capital expenses for radio communications based on the current platforms, it may be prudent opportunity to study our anticipated future needs and uses for radio communications, changes in the built environment that may affect performance of traditional systems, and advances in technology that may improve municipal operations and enhance staff health and safety.
- In the absence of a new Master Plan Study, it would be proposed that a collaborative project team be assembled including staff from the various user groups and the IT department to develop the desired scope and terms of reference for an RFP to engage a professional consultant to complete a comprehensive study of the town's needs, limitations and opportunities, and provide recommendations for a proposed platform and infrastructure required to serve the town's current and anticipated future radio communication needs. In the event a Master Plan Study were pursued, then the RFP could include details with respect to completing a review of the future communication needs of the Town.

Based on all of the above, it is suggested that Council endorse Option 4, and the matter be referred to the 2018 budget deliberations.

Respectfully submitted,

K. Miller, CAO

Reviewed by:							
CAO	Treasury	Clerks	Env. Services	Planning	Parks & Rec	Building	Fire

FIGURE 5

STRATEGIC STATION LOCATIONS
CRITICAL ANALYSIS

CRITERIA	POTENTIAL SITE LOCATIONS			
	Hazel St. Site	Centennial Arena	Lafferty Park	Laurier/ Front Rd
Optimal urban coverage within 4 km response area (NFPA standards for response times)				
Proximity to critical mass of paid-on-call responders				
Access to efficient response routes				
Ease of access for responders in personal vehicles				
Strategic positioning for response based on growth patterns, call volumes, areas of greater risk				
Neighborhood Impact & land use compatability				
Environmental impacts (endangered species, site remediation etc)				
Costs of acquiring and const ready				