

**From:** "Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>  
**To:** "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"  
**Date:** 3/2/2023 9:22:14 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Provincial Funding for implementation of Next Generation 9-1-1  
**Attachments:** Backgrounder - Provincial Funding for Implementation of Next Generation 9-1-1.pdf

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Good morning Mayor and Council,

As referenced in the following message from EComm's President and CEO, the Province has announced a significant allocation of funding to EComm to support the upgrade of 9-1-1 technology. As you will recall, the Federal Government has mandated the replacement of the existing analog technology that supports 9-1-1 services across Canada. The implementation of Next Generation 9-1-1 infrastructure will require a major investment over the coming years which, up to this point, would have been borne by local governments as the funders of the 9-1-1 system.

We expect to receive additional information from EComm regarding the financial implications of this announcement for the City of Vancouver and will share those details once we have them. Without question, the Provincial funding will provide a substantial offset to costs that would have otherwise been added to EComm levies in future years.

If you have any immediate questions, please don't hesitate to contact Karen or me.

Best,  
Paul

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**From:** President's Office <President's.Office@ecomm911.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 01, 2023 1:06 PM  
**Subject:** Provincial Funding for implementation of Next Generation 9-1-1

Dear local government partner,

I am pleased to advise that the Province of BC has today [announced](#) significant new funding to assist E-Comm and its local government partners with the cost of implementing federally-mandated Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) technology improvements in B.C.

### What it includes

The Province has announced \$90 million for E-Comm to assist with our implementation and start-up costs for NG9-1-1 technology improvements. This funding will help E-Comm, as the first answer point for 99% of the 9-1-1 calls in B.C., to complete NG9-1-1 technology upgrades on behalf of: the 25 Regional Districts for which we provide 9-1-1 call-taking services; the 33 police and 40 fire agencies across B.C. for which we also provide call-taking and dispatch services, and all RCMP detachments in the province.

In addition, \$60 million will be provided to the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) to defray implementation costs associated with emergency communication centres, including police and fire agencies that are not part of E-Comm's program.

### Avoided costs for local governments

NG9-1-1 will enable important improvements to public safety, including better 9-1-1 caller location information, real time texting, streaming audio and video and new ways to direct calls to services other than police, fire and ambulance, such as mental health support.

This new provincial funding represents a significant avoided cost for all local governments in B.C., and E-Comm is proud to have led the way in helping enable it, by working collaboratively with the Province, UBCM, and our local government and agency partners.

What it means for you:

- For Regional Districts and municipalities for which E-Comm provides 9-1-1 call-taking, or police or fire call-taking

and dispatch services, this funding will now help cover our NG9-1-1 implementation costs that would've otherwise been passed on to you, our funders.

- For the local government and agency partners which are also E-Comm shareholders, the provincial funding removes a significant financial liability for you, our owners.
- And for other municipalities whose police or fire call-taking services are not provided by E-Comm, there is now provincial funding available to you too through UBCM to help defray your agency's NG9-1-1 implementation costs.

We will be providing further information on the financial impact on your community or agency once we know more of the details of the Province's funding plan.

#### Implementation costs versus future operating costs

It is important to note that the Province's funding will help offset E-Comm's one-time implementation and start-up costs for NG9-1-1, incurred between 2022 to 2026 on behalf of local governments, but not the ongoing future operating costs.

That is why E-Comm supports UBCM's call for a new provincial mandate for 9-1-1 moving forward.

A new provincial mandate for 9-1-1 will take time to plan and implement. There are a number of issues the Province will need to consider with local governments, including governance, funding, operational structure, coordination and service-standards. E-Comm will continue to work with the Province, and our local government partners to advance this priority, and to plan for the funding of future operating costs which remain a local government responsibility.

The attached backgrounder provides additional information. If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me anytime.

Sincerely,

Oliver Grüter-Andrew  
President and CEO  
604.215.5002  
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**Oliver Grüter-Andrew, President & CEO**

**E-Comm 9-1-1**  
Helping to Save Lives and Protect Property

**Backgrounder for Local Government Partners:**  
**Provincial Funding for Implementation of Next Generation 9-1-1**

March 1, 2023

**Q: What is NG9-1-1?**

**A:** Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) refers to the modernization of 9-1-1 networks and infrastructure across Canada. It is a federally-mandated transition of the emergency communications network from the current network to an Internet Protocol (IP) based technology. E-Comm, as the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for 99 per cent of 9-1-1 calls in British Columbia, has initiated an NG9-1-1 program team dedicated to the implementation of NG9-1-1 for the 25 Regional Districts and contracted public safety partners currently served by our emergency communications centres.

**Q: Why is this change necessary?**

**A:** While the current 9-1-1 system is both resilient and reliable, it was designed for landline devices. The network itself is decades old and at risk of failure. The purpose of E-Comm's NG9-1-1 program is to safely establish an NG9-1-1-compliant call-handling system and the associated supporting services for our own operations and those of our partner organizations across the province.

**Q: Who is mandating this change?**

**A:** The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) is the federal body that is mandating NG9-1-1. The CRTC regulates telecommunications carriers, such as TELUS and Bell, which supply the network needed to direct and connect 9-1-1 calls to emergency communications centres, like E-Comm.

**Q: What is the process for implementation?**

**A:** The rollout of NG9-1-1 technology will involve and impact every public safety organization in the province and affect many aspects of E-Comm's 9-1-1 operations and the operations of our member agencies and contracted partners. The way the public interacts with PSAPs and first responder agencies in an emergency will also change.

E-Comm has undertaken planning to ensure we can safely establish an NG9-1-1-compliant call-handling system and supporting services for E-Comm 9-1-1 operations and the agencies and partners that depend on us, according to the schedule determined by the CRTC.

**Q: What are the timeframes?**

**A:** The underlying TELUS network technology for NG9-1-1 voice services went live March 1, 2022. Basic Real Time Texting (RTT), also known as "text-to-911" capabilities, are anticipated to be operational by April 2024, with enhanced RTT in place by March 2025. In spring 2025, current funding will cease being available for the legacy TELUS 9-1-1 network. By then, we must all be fully transitioned to NG9-1-1.

**Q: What new features will NG9-1-1 enable?**

**A:** NG9-1-1 technology upgrades will enable better caller location information. Cellular calls will provide latitude/longitude information for each call. This allows call takers to precisely identify the location of a caller. In later years, elevation coordinates will also be available, showing the call taker and first responders what floor of a building the person is calling from.

Basic Real Time Texting (RTT) will be particularly helpful for the hearing impaired community and in cases where the caller can't speak freely or needs to be discreet – for example, domestic abuse or a robbery in progress. With 88 percent of BC households having at least one cellphone and 80 percent of 9-1-1 calls now coming via cellphone, texting options will make 9-1-1 even more accessible. In the future, the potential also exists to send images and video to 9-1-1 that would improve situational awareness by feeding scene data and imagery to first responders via video or even drones.

**Q: What other benefits will NG9-1-1 provide for first responders?**

**A:** Providing direct incident information to first responders on the road. New ways to triage and direct calls to services other than police, fire and ambulance, such as mental health support, a key recommendation of the 2022 report of the Special Committee on Reforming the *Police Act*, and one that has been endorsed by UBCM.

In B.C., NG9-1-1 also has the potential to create improved service equity for rural and remote communities, Indigenous communities and diverse populations – providing culturally safe emergency communications and service options to populations that may not be as comfortable with police responding to the call, or where police are not the appropriate first responder.

**Q: What is the Telus LGA agreement for NG9-1-1?**

**A:** The Telus NG9-1-1 Local Governing Authority (LGA) agreement is a legal document between TELUS and an LGA for the provisioning of the NG9-1-1 communications network. Current legacy 9-1-1 agreements will terminate with the current network's decommissioning in March 2025. The LGA agreement outlines key terms and conditions, including system reliability, security, privacy, geographical mapping and outage reporting. This agreement will need to be signed by an LGA prior to an LGA transitioning its PSAP or other emergency services to the NG9-1-1 network.

**Q: Do Regional Districts still need to sign an LGA agreement with Telus now that the Province has provided NG9-1-1 funding?**

**A:** Yes, as the organizations with statutory responsibility for 9-1-1 service delivery in B.C., Regional Districts must sign an LGA agreement with Telus for NG9-1-1. The LGA accountable for their respective PSAP operations (or if contracted externally, the authority that manages the contracted relationship with third-party PSAP vendors) is the organization required to sign the TELUS NG9-1-1 LGA agreement.

**Q: What happens now to the “Estimated Annual NG9-1-1 Levy” that was communicated by E-Comm to its police, fire and Regional District partners in July 2022? Does this still apply?**

**A:** It is important to note that the Province's funding will help offset E-Comm's one-time implementation and start-up costs of NG9-1-1 through to 2026, but not the ongoing future operating costs. In particular, the “Estimated Annual NG9-1-1 Levy” communicated in July 2022 was a projection based on E-Comm's total implementation and costs, allocated to each of our police, fire and Regional District partners, and financed over five years. Billing was to begin in 2024 through to 2028. These levies will now be reduced or eliminated in light of the Province's announcement.

After NG9-1-1 is fully implemented, E-Comm will still have ongoing operational costs associated with this program. That is one reason why E-Comm supports UBCM's call for a new provincial mandate for 9-1-1 moving forward.

We will provide further information on the financial impact on your community or agency once we know more of the details of the Province's funding plan.

**Q: Why is a new provincial mandate needed for 9-1-1 in B.C.?**

**A:** There is currently no provincial agency responsible for the planning, operation and coordination of 9-1-1 service in B.C. Population growth, ageing demographics, cell phone and smart watch adoption, increased climate-change related emergencies, and the opioid-overdose crisis have all increased 9-1-1 call volumes and put further strain on municipally-funded 9-1-1 and public safety services.

Local governments have called for new funding sources to support local 9-1-1 services, and have adopted resolutions through the UBCM calling for a provincial wireless call-answer levy, as exist in seven other provinces. E-Comm supports UBCM’s call for a new provincial mandate for 9-1-1 moving forward, as endorsed in 2022, and will continue to work collaboratively with the Province to advance this priority.

**Q: What happens next?**

**A:** Over the course of the next two years, the E-Comm NG9-1-1 Program Team will lead an extensive effort to plan, design, build, and transition to a completely new call-handling system and service offering, which will impact people, processes and technology.

The leadership of our contracted partners and member agencies will need to be aware of the NG9-1-1 program impact to their organizations and the need for schedules to be aligned for the purpose of technology compliance, integration testing, operational readiness and go-live. A co-ordinated, province-wide education and awareness campaign will also be needed to ensure B.C. residents know what the new features are and how best to access them in the safest and most effective way possible.

Our NG9-1-1 program team will be following up with each of our contracted partners in the coming weeks with more details on this work and what it means for your community.