



**CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS
STAFF REPORT**

Meeting Date: April 1, 2014

To: Honorable Mayor & City Council

From: Erick Lee, Division Commander 

Subject: Update on the Status of the Los Angeles Regional Interoperable Communications System (LA-RICS) Joint Powers Authority

Attachments: 1. Transmittal Letter and Draft Proposed Funding Plan

INTRODUCTION

The City of Beverly Hills has a longstanding commitment to interoperable communications and understands the tangible benefits to public safety that are realized by having its police and fire personnel operating on a regional communications network along with other first responders. To that end, the City is a member of two joint powers agencies that relate to its interoperable communications needs.

The first is the Interagency Communications Interoperability System (ICIS) Joint Powers Authority (JPA). The City is a charter member of the ICIS JPA. Other ICIS members include the cities of Burbank, Culver City, Glendale, Montebello, Pasadena, and Pomona. Since over two dozen more agencies subscribe to the services offered by ICIS, total system users include roughly half of the municipal fire departments and 14 law enforcement agencies in Los Angeles County. In total, ICIS provides radio communications for local governments that serve more than 1.5 million residents and have jurisdiction for over 170 square miles. Collectively, the ICIS agencies have invested more than \$72 million in local funds to develop this highly effective interoperable radio network. The City currently utilizes the ICIS system for radio communications.

The second joint powers agency is the Los Angeles Regional Interoperable Communications System (LA-RICS) JPA. LA-RICS seeks to establish a public safety radio network to meet or enhance current public safety radio

A

Meeting Date: April 1, 2014

communications needs and to provide an architecture capable of expanding to meet future needs. The vision of LA-RICS is to create a communications system that will support all 88 cities and 34,000 public safety employees (police, fire, and public health) in Los Angeles County. Its membership includes the County of Los Angeles, nearly every incorporated city in Los Angeles County, the Inglewood Unified School District, the Los Angeles Unified School District, and the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). LA-RICS anticipates having its radio system operational in three (3) to four (4) years. It also anticipates having a broadband data network operational in 2015.

The purpose of this report is to brief the City Council on recent developments with LA-RICS and present an overview of the issues facing the City in the near future.

BACKGROUND

The City has supported the region's efforts to develop the LA-RICS project and has remained an engaged charter member of the JPA since its inception in 2009. The formation of the LA-RICS JPA was an important step in developing an interoperable communications system for the region that will benefit first responders and communities throughout the county, and its purpose continues to remain aligned with the City's pursuit of interoperability and information sharing.

However, the City joined LA-RICS knowing that there were significant issues with the way the Joint Powers Agreement was constructed and with how LA-RICS plans to achieve its goals. Because the Joint Powers Agreement allows for charter members to withdraw from LA-RICS at no cost once member costs are determined, the City joined the JPA alongside other independent cities to help shape the future of interoperable communications in the Los Angeles region. By participating as a member of the LA-RICS JPA over the past five (5) years, the City of Beverly Hills has had a voice and a vote during the JPA's developmental phase. Up to this point, no costs have been incurred by the City.

In 2010, the scope of the LA-RICS project was increased beyond the original intention of creating a Land Mobile Radio (LMR) system and now includes the creation of a public safety broadband (LTE) network. This development was brought about by a \$154 million grant that was awarded to LA-RICS under the federal Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP).

DISCUSSION

For the past 5-10 years, the LA-RICS project has been the top recipient of the Los Angeles region's federal Homeland Security grants. Up until recently, nearly 50% of all Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant funds had been dedicated to the planning, design, and development of LA-RICS. This federal funding, along with contributions from the County of Los Angeles, has sustained LA-RICS's project expenses and administrative costs since the JPA was established.

Meeting Date: April 1, 2014

As of March 2014, LA-RICS has entered into contracts with Motorola Solutions, Inc. for the development of both its LMR and LTE systems. The LMR aspect of the project is still in the design/planning phase and construction is not anticipated to commence until sometime in 2015. However, the JPA intends to begin construction on the LTE system within the next 3-9 months in order to meet deadlines associated with its \$154M BTOP grant. This grant mandates that the LTE system must be fully constructed and operational by the summer of 2015.

A key provision of the LA-RICS Joint Powers Agreement is that construction of the system cannot start until after the JPA adopts a plan to fund the system (Funding Plan). This Funding Plan must specify a means or formula for funding the construction, operation and maintenance of the system and include an allocation of costs among the members, subscribers, and/or other funding sources. Because LA-RICS is preparing to enter the construction phase of the LTE aspect of the project, it has reached the point where long-term financial commitments from its members will be required. Thus, the JPA cannot move on until it adopts the Funding Plan.

On March 6, 2014, the Board of Directors voted to release the proposed Funding Plan to the JPA membership for a 60 day comment period. This comment period is specified in the Joint Powers Agreement as a precursor to the actual adoption of the plan. At the conclusion of this 60 day period, the Board will have the option of adopting the plan as proposed or revising the plan to address issues raised by members during the comment period. The Board has designated May 6, 2014 as the end date for the comment period. Once the Board adopts the Funding Plan, member agencies will have a period of at least 35 days to withdraw from LA-RICS. Agencies that withdraw during this period will not be liable for any costs incurred by the JPA.

The proposed Funding Plan, Attachment #1 of this report, outlines potential costs to the City as follows:

System	Proposed Total LA-RICS Annual Costs	Beverly Hills' Share of Proposed Annual LA-RICS Costs
LMR	\$9,824,800	\$75,200
LTE	\$10,359,502 – \$14,964,900	\$173,968 – \$251,300
TOTAL	\$20,184,302 – \$24,789,700	\$ 249,168 – \$326,500

It's important to note that the above costs assume that federal grants will completely fund the initial build-out of the LMR system. Additionally, they do not include the costs of maintaining the City's user equipment or any infrastructure necessary to maintain operations unique to the City. The range of costs specified for the LTE system relate to unresolved issues of whether LA-RICS will adopt a Funding Plan that includes payments to members for providing infrastructure to the JPA and whether that plan will include provisions for a capital replacement fund. This range considers either Scenario 1 (Baseline) or Scenario 12, which has been recommended by the LA-RICS Technical Committee as the most appropriate technological solution at this time.

Meeting Date: April 1, 2014

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact at this time. Once the LA-RICS Board of Directors ultimately adopts the Funding Plan, the City will have no less than 35 days to withdraw from the JPA without penalty.

RECOMMENDATION

No action needed as this is an informational item. Staff is in the process of developing recommendations for the City's comments on this plan. These recommendations will be presented to the City Council for review and direction during its Study Session on April 22, 2014.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David L. Snowden".

David L. Snowden, Chief of Police

Approved By