



**Department:** Information Technology  
**Cost Center:** 1101  
**For Agenda of:** 2/17/2026  
**Placement:** Consent  
**Estimated Time:** N/A

**FROM:** Greg Hermann, Deputy City Manager  
**Prepared By:** Josh Erquiaga, Information Technology Manager

**SUBJECT:** AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT FOR 911 CALL HANDLING EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES

## RECOMMENDATION

1. Authorize the City Manager to execute a five-year contract with AT&T for 911 call handling equipment and services; and
2. Waive formal bids and authorize use of California Department of Technology Agreement 6138-2020 (Attachment A) to procure this purchase as allowed under 03.24.060E of the City of San Luis Obispo Municipal Code.

## POLICY CONTEXT

Per the Purchasing Policy, purchases greater than \$150,000 (professional services) and \$200,000 (general goods) must come before City Council for approval. Waiving formal bids and authorizing the use of California Department of Technology Agreement 6138-2020 (Attachment B) to procure this purchase is consistent with City Purchasing Policy, Section 204: No-Bid Purchasing, and Municipal Code Section 03.24.060E, which permits staff to dispense with bidding requirements, "when the purchase will be made cooperatively with one, or more, other units of government, or from a local dealer within the city limit that can provide the same brand, model and configuration of item(s) identified in the cooperative purchase agreement(s) at or below the cooperative purchasing net cost within the same terms and conditions."

## DISCUSSION

### Background

The City of San Luis Obispo maintains a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) at the Emergency Communications Center (ECC), which is co-located with Fire Station 1. The PSAP is responsible for handling all 911 emergency calls for service within the City limits and for transferring all calls for other agencies to those agencies (e.g., a misrouted call from a cell phone in another jurisdiction). For the last five full years, 2020 through 2024, the ECC has handled an average of 105,169 calls annually, including:

- 52,655 - Non-emergency calls into the ECC
  - 28,135 - 911/emergency calls into the ECC
  - 20,433 - Outbound calls from the ECC
  - 2,926 - Abandoned calls into the ECC
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- 105,169 - total calls through the ECC annually

These averages reflect a broad range of both emergency and non-emergency calls received from the public. This includes traditional 911 calls requesting police, fire, and medical assistance, as well as non-emergency requests for public safety services, alarm company notifications, and interagency coordination during large-scale incidents. In addition, the ECC serves as a point of contact for community members seeking assistance when they are unsure where else to direct their call.

The outbound calls represent many different call types:

- Requests from field units to the ECC to place calls on their behalf while handling incidents in the field.
- Trying to reach abandoned calls in to the ECC.
- The ECC calling third-party vendors for translation services.

Handling the volume of calls and the requests that result requires specialized systems to receive calls, along with location information and other metadata used to dispatch the appropriate resources and track those calls until they are closed. The State of California's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES), through the California Department of Technology (CDT), has negotiated with vendors to provide these systems to PSAPs. In addition, CalOES provides funding to local PSAPs, based on their emergency call volume, to acquire these systems. CalOES has allocated \$490,000 to the City of San Luis Obispo to acquire upgraded systems for its emergency call-handling needs. In addition to State funds, the City proactively funds 911 upgrade projects through the Information Technology Capital Improvement Program (IT CIP). IT CIP funds are programmed in case State funding is reduced between upgrade cycles, or the State formula doesn't fully provide for the equipment necessary to fulfill the City's operational needs.

The City last updated its 911 call-handling equipment in 2015. Normally, 911 call-handling equipment is replaced every five to seven years. The City's systems were eligible for upgrade in 2022, but the upgrades were postponed by the State as it was in the middle of its initial attempt to roll out a state-wide Next Generation 911 program. Due to delays in the statewide roll-out of that program and the age of the City's systems, CalOES authorized upgrading the existing systems at this time.

City staff recommend that the Council authorize the contract with AT&T to purchase its VIPER call-handling equipment and services, along with transcription and translation services (identified as "New technology integration" in Attachment D). The new transcription and translation services are built into the software and allow Dispatchers to better serve callers who may not speak English fluently. Because these services are built

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into the software, they can be used immediately to address a caller's emergency request while an official translation request is submitted, allowing for a quicker emergency response. Currently, Dispatchers rely on a third-party contractor to provide translation services, which results in much slower responses to emergencies, as well as limited information being received by the ECC due to the time it takes to manually translate those calls. Additionally, the current translation service used by the ECC typically provides only Spanish translation. Right now, when dispatch receives an emergency call from any other language, it takes around 10 minutes to find a translator. Viper, integrated with translation, currently supports over 40 languages, which allows Dispatchers to converse seamlessly with callers who speak different languages in real time without the need for a third-party contractor. The current third-party translation contractor is provided by the State at no charge to PSAPs, so there is no savings to the City if they do not use the third-party translation service. The State funding contribution will fully cover the equipment purchase; however, the City will need to pay for the transcription and translation services. The cost for the additional services is \$113,342. Staff recommend using the IT CIP project funds to increase the total available funding to accommodate the purchase of both the hardware and the transcription and translation services.

### **Previous Council or Advisory Body Action**

The City Council last approved an upgrade of the 911 call-handling equipment at the October 6, 2015 City Council meeting as part of the consent agenda ([Item 8](#)).

### **Public Engagement**

This item is on the agenda for the February 17, 2026, City Council meeting and will follow all the required posting and notification. The public may comment on this item at or before the meeting.

### **CONCURRENCE**

City Information Technology staff have worked closely with the Police Department on this project and agree with the recommendation.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) does not apply to the recommended actions in this report, because the action does not constitute a "Project" under CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15378.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Budgeted: Yes

Funding Identified: Yes

Budget Year: 2025-26

## Fiscal Analysis:

<b>911 Phone System, Project # 2000601-01</b>			
<b>Project #2000601-01</b>	\$172,345	\$490,000	
<b>Funding Source*</b>	InfoTech Repl - LRM	CalOES	Project Total Costs
<b>Fund #</b>	403		
AT&T	\$113,342	\$490,000	\$603,342
Contingencies	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total for Construction</b>	\$113,342	\$490,000	\$603,342
Construction Management:	\$0	\$0	\$0
Materials Testing:	\$0	\$0	\$0
Public Relations:	\$0	\$0	\$0
Printing:	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$113,342	\$490,000	\$603,342
Current Project Balance:	\$172,345	\$490,000	\$662,345
Additional Funding:	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Post Project Remaining Balance:</b>	<b>\$59,003</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$59,003</b>

The main funding for this project is the \$490,000 allotment from CalOES. CalOES will pay AT&T directly based on the attached quote (Attachment C), so no funding will pass through the City. If the City opts to move forward with the purchase of the additional translation and transcription quote (Attachment D), the City would fund the remaining \$113,342 from the budgeted CIP Project # 2000601-01, 911 Phone System. The 911 Phone System project was originally funded in FY 2021-22 based on the expected replacement lifecycle of the 911 call handling equipment but was delayed due to changes at the State level with the state-wide 911 system. This project funding would be expended in the current fiscal year in support of this request.

**ALTERNATIVES**

- 1. Council could decide not to authorize the additional new technology services.** Should Council choose this option, the City would receive new call-handling equipment but would not have access to new translation and transcription technologies.
- 2. Council could decide not to award the contract to AT&T.** Should the Council choose this option, City staff would need to work with CalOES to identify other approved vendors of 911 call-handling equipment to implement. Bringing in a new vendor would add additional cost and time to the project and could require extensive retraining of Dispatch staff to learn a new call handling system.
- 3. Council could decide not to award the contract using the California Department of Technology contract.** Should the Council choose this option, City staff would need to run a new procurement process to acquire new call handling equipment and

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services. Given the size of the State contract and its purchasing power, it is unlikely that the City of San Luis Obispo would be able to negotiate a more favorable contract.

- 4. Council could decide not to award the contract.** Should the Council choose this option, the City would not update its 911 call handling equipment. This would leave the City vulnerable to failures of its 911 system and its ability to take emergency calls from the public. Service and support for the current system will expire in June 2026, and AT&T is unlikely to renew those contracts due to the system's age.

### ATTACHMENTS

A – Cal OES Allotment Letter.pdf

B – California Department of Technology Agreement 6138-2020.pdf

C – SLO PD – ATT VIPER Hardware and Services Quote.pdf

D – SLO PD – ATT VIPER Translation and Transcription Quote.pdf