



County Council

Meeting Date: March 14, 2023
Submitted by: Bill Rayburn, CAO
Subject: Land Ambulance Dispatch Consultant

BACKGROUND:

Since 2011, Middlesex County has been advocating for direct delivery of the London Central Ambulance Communication Centre, currently operated by the Ministry of Health. A proposal was submitted to then Minister of Health Christine Elliott during the COVID Pandemic, but this proposal was not actioned at that time.

In August of 2022, then Warden Alison Warwick and Past Warden Cathy Burghardt-Jesson led a delegation with Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, Sylvia Jones, requesting that management and operation of the London Land Ambulance Communication Centre be transferred to Middlesex County and a business case/proposal be presented.

In January 2023, Warden Burghardt-Jesson and Chief Administrative Officer Bill Rayburn met with Premier Doug Ford and Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, Sylvia Jones to advocate for Middlesex-London Paramedic Service to assume control of the London Central Ambulance Communication Centre. A further meeting with Deputy Premier and Minister of Health Sylvia Jones took place at the 2023 ROMA meetings. At the conclusion of both meetings, Middlesex County committed to meeting the Premier's request for a business case (within 90 days), to allow the Province to fully consider the request tabled by the County.

To assist in the preparation of this business case, it is recommended that a consultant, Fitch & Associates, be retained. Fitch & Associates is the only consultant that has direct experience working with an Ontario municipality (Niagara Region) to submit a business case to the Province for the assumption/operation of a Ministry of Health (operated) Land Ambulance Communication Centre. Fitch & Associates is the only firm (to date) that has been involved in setting up and transitioning to a live operation, a high performance and state of the art dispatch system in Ontario.

Staff have entered in to negotiations with Fitch & Associates and are recommending Council approve the hiring of this consultant.

ANALYSIS:

In accordance with section 9 and subsection 9.3 of the County of Middlesex’s Purchasing Policy, the requirement for inviting Tenders and Quotations may be waived where there is only one source of supply for the goods and services. In such a case, a Department Head may, under direction of the Chief Administrative Officer, purchase by negotiating with one or more vendors.

Section 13.1 of the County’s Purchasing Policy states that a Department Head will recommend to the Committee the hiring of any consulting firm in excess of \$5,000.00.

As noted above, staff has determined that Fitch & Associates is the only source of supply for the services required for this project and, in reliance on section 9 and subsection 9.3 outlined above, has entered into direct negotiations with Fitch & Associates for the provision of Land Ambulance Dispatch consulting services. In accordance with section 13.1, staff is seeking Council approval to proceed with hiring Fitch & Associates for this purpose.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Fitch & Associates has agreed to provide the consulting services necessary to assist in the preparation of MLPS’ Land Ambulance Dispatch business case at a cost of \$40,000.00 USD, before taxes, which equates to \$54,420.20 CAD.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC FOCUS:

This report aligns with the following Strategic Focus, Goals, or Objectives:

Strategic Focus	Goals	Objectives
Cultivating Community Vitality	Advance a diverse, healthy, and engaged community across Middlesex County	Promote and support community wellness Innovate social and community services
Connecting Through Infrastructure	Ensure communities are built on a sustainable foundation that is connected and thriving	Use County infrastructure in an innovative way to provide a seamless service experience for residents
Promoting Service Excellence	Innovate and transform municipal service delivery	Anticipate and align municipal service delivery to emerging needs and expectations

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the hiring of Fitch & Associates for the provision of Land Ambulance Dispatch consulting services at the cost of \$40,000.00 USD (\$54,420.20 CAD), before taxes, be approved and that the Chief of Middlesex-London Paramedic Services be authorized to execute all agreements and other documents necessary to implement this award on confirmation that such agreements and other documents be in a form satisfactory to the County Solicitor and Chief Administrative Officer.