

**Eastside Regional Public Safety Communications Center Initiative:
July 2005 Update to Staff**

For Immediate Communication with Dispatch Center Staff and
Interested Police, Fire and EMS Employees

What is the Eastside Regional Public Safety Communications Center Initiative?

This project was initiated last year by 5 cities (Kirkland, Mercer Island, Bellevue, Medina, Clyde Hill) and the Woodinville Fire and Life Safety District to explore the potential for a regional approach to police, fire and EMS 9-1-1 call answering and dispatch in East King County. An initial study completed in June 2004 found that there was considerable common ground among the jurisdictions regarding the benefits and challenges of pursuing the idea.

A second phase of work is underway regarding the possible creation (not sooner than 2008) of a new, joint agency to oversee and operate a regionalized police/fire/EMS dispatch center in East King County. There are now thirteen (13) jurisdictions participating in the project:

- City of Bellevue
- City of Clyde Hill
- City of Kirkland
- City of Medina
- City of Mercer Island
- City of Bothell
- City of Issaquah
- City of Redmond Fire
- Woodinville Fire and Life Safety District
- Shoreline Fire District
- Northshore Fire District
- Eastside Fire and Rescue
- Fall City Fire District 27

In the last month, two additional City public safety agencies have joined (they are included in the list above): the City of Bothell—both police and fire departments are now participating, and the Redmond Fire Department has also joined the effort. Additional jurisdictions are welcome to participate.

Why are we exploring the option of a regional dispatch center?

The benefits of regionalized dispatch, depending on how it is structured, could include:

- Increased efficiencies and economies scale

Reduced costs overall
Improved funding opportunities
Higher levels of service
Greater “voice and vote” for those agencies receiving dispatch service in operating, financial and governance decisions

What would the new agency look like and when would it be created?

If implemented, the project would involve the consolidation of some of the multiple independent public safety dispatch operations now operating in East King County. Whether the project proceeds to implementation, who would be involved, how it would happen, when it would happen, and where it would happen are all issues that are not yet decided. All these issues are being examined in this current phase II work, which will be completed in 2005. If the project does proceed to implementation, the consolidation of dispatch agencies is not anticipated to begin before 2008 at the earliest.

What has happened on the project in the last month?

The Steering Committee met again on June 17. The initial membership and meeting dates for four subcommittees was confirmed. The four subcommittees that will be working over the summer to develop further detailed proposals for the Steering Committee to review are:

- Governance and Finance subcommittee (Chair: Chief Marcus Kragness, Shoreline Fire District)
- Law Enforcement Dispatch subcommittee (Chair: Deputy Chief Greg Edwards, Kirkland Police Department)
- Fire/EMS Dispatch subcommittee (Chair: Chief Tim Fuller, Redmond Fire Department)
- Technology/Facilities/Operations subcommittee (Chair: Brenda Cooper, Kirkland Information Technology Director)

As of mid-July, all subcommittees have met once.

At its June 17 meeting, the Steering Committee reviewed how some other regionalized public safety agencies are structured, to generally inform the group of the scope of issues that will need to be addressed in developing a proposed governance model. The group will continue to look at additional models in future meetings.

Also at the June 17 meeting, the consultant team identified four issues that should be resolved sooner rather than later in the project (*no decision* on these items has been made), including: inclusion or exclusion of records management services in the scope of the new agency; including subscribers as well as owners in the new agency; the degree of separation of the fire, EMS and police dispatch functions; other functions

that should be included in the agency, if any. It was agreed that before further discussion the feasibility or desirability of incorporating 800 MHz radio system ownership and maintenance into the new agency, this issue needs to be discussed by the Eastside Public Safety Communications Board (EPSCA).

The meeting concluded with an hour-long small group exercise to discuss issues of mission, operations, governance and finance. Surveys will be completed by each jurisdiction on these subjects to help inform the work of the subcommittees.

The next Steering Committee meeting is July 15.

Meetings have been scheduled to inform the King County Sheriff Department and Washington State Patrol about the project.

For further information, see the project website at <http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us/depart/cmo/eastsidedispatch.htm> .

The contact person for _(insert jurisdiction name) is ___(Name)_____(phone number).

Additional regular communications will be forthcoming, approximately monthly, to keep you informed about the progress of the study effort.