



July 7, 2022

Stephen Holyday
Chair, Audit Committee
Deputy Mayor & Councillor, Ward 2-Etobicoke Centre
City of Toronto

Dear Deputy Mayor Holyday,

RE: AU15.5 Toronto Police Service - Audit of 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Point Operations - Better Support for Staff, Improved Information Management and Outcomes

I write to you today in your capacity as the chair of the Audit Committee.

I was concerned to read the Auditor General's report on 911 Public Safety Answering Point ("PSAP") Operations, which was considered by the Toronto Police Services Board (the "Police Board") on June 22, 2022, and her findings that Torontonians are waiting too long for 911 calls to be answered. It is critical that 911 wait times must improve and that the City, working together in partnership with the Police Service, must make every effort to address this issue.

Accordingly, I am supportive of all of the Auditor General's recommendations and of quickly implementing them in order to improve 911 operations and reduce wait times for Torontonians. Simply put, we must find ways to ensure 911 is used for emergencies only and when it is that we use technology and data to answer those emergency calls faster and better.

The Auditor General's work has been thorough and will benefit Torontonians who rely on emergency services. This audit and the resulting recommendations were only made possible thanks to the landmark policing reforms passed in the summer of 2020 by both City Council and the Police Board, respectively, which called for an MOU to be entered into by the Police Board and the Auditor General that would allow her the ability to conduct regular audits of the Police Service.

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I was pleased that Chief Ramer and the Police Service were supportive of all of the recommendations and committed to implementing them (as outlined in their responses at Appendix 1 of the Auditor General's report). I am encouraged that work is already underway to implement them as soon as possible. I note in particular that the Police Service is already:

- Planning to hire 3 new classes of communications operators between Q2 and Q4, 2022, with funds included within the Service's approved 2022 Operating Budget (Recommendation 6, Police Board report);
- Taking a demand-driven approach to staffing requirements (Recommendation 1);
- Reviewing new shift pilot schedules that would address staffing requirements and at the same time address employee wellness (Recommendation 2); and
- Putting in place an action plan by Q3 2022, in partnership with Toronto Fire Services and Toronto Paramedic Services through the 911 Committee, to regularly provide information on timeliness of transferred 911 calls to those other emergency services, as well as other agencies where appropriate, with the view to working together to meet the 911 emergency call service level standards (Recommendation 11).

I was heartened to hear from the President of the Toronto Police Association, who also indicated his support for the Auditor General's findings and agreed with the need to get response times down for the Service's Priority Response Unit.

As a member of the Police Board, I moved a motion that was passed unanimously by my fellow Board members to approve the Auditor General's recommendations and endorse the Police Service's response – a clear sign of the Board's strong support for the Service's work in quickly moving forward to implement the recommendations.

This report now comes to Audit Committee, as several of the recommendations concern City divisions and/or require the City's cooperation and partnership with the Police Service.

Accordingly, I ask that you, as chair of the Audit Committee, strongly consider supporting all of the Auditor General's recommendations as they pertain to the City, including:

- Directing the Toronto Paramedic Services and Toronto Fire Services ("City emergency services") to regularly review, with the Police Service, the information on timelines of transferred 911 calls to those City emergency services, with the view to working together to meet the 911 emergency call service standards – and to meet, when needed, to determine if any changes are needed to established protocols to ensure the safety of Toronto residents;
- Directing City emergency services, in partnership with the Toronto Police Service, to achieve live-time interconnectivity in communication on 911 calls and events and in the implementation of the Next-Generation-911 solution;

- Directing the City Manager, in consultation with the Police Service, Police Board, and City Legal, to include additional considerations to inform the feasibility review of moving 911 operations, including cost/benefit analysis, legislative feasibility, legal risk, governance model, and whether there are other strategies which may be more effective, efficient, and economical to achieving the goals and outcomes of any potential move of 911 operations;
- Directing the City Manager, in collaboration with the Police Service, to undertake public education campaigns (including targeted awareness programs) and ongoing public education initiatives to improve public awareness and understanding on the proper use of 911, the non-emergency line, online police reporting, and other non-police alternative resources, including the promotion of 211 and 311; and
- Directing the City Manager, in collaboration with the Police Service, to consider a shorter number for the Police Service's non-emergency line.

In addition, I ask that you and the Audit committee move a motion on my behalf:

- Directing the Deputy City Manager, Community and Social Services to play both a leading and coordinating role for City divisions in implementing the recommendations directed at the City, and that they engage with the Toronto Police Service to collaborate on recommendations whose implementation will be led by the Police Service, where the Auditor General indicated such collaboration would be necessary; and
- Directing the Deputy City Manager, Community and Social Services to report back on the City's progress at the beginning of the next term (approximately six months' time) and provide regular updates following that to ensure that the recommendations directed at the City are being made.

Torontonians expect that when they call 911 in an emergency, that they will receive the assistance they need as fast as possible. I am confident that the Police Service and the City, working together and in partnership, will be able to reduce wait times and improve safety for all residents.

I thank you and the members of the Audit Committee for your consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,



John Tory
Mayor of Toronto