TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL
FROM: CITY MANAGER DEPARTMENT: POLICE
DATE: FEBRUARY 20, 2007 CMR:142:07
SUBJECT: SILICON VALLEY REGIONAL INTEROPERABILITY PROJECT STATUS (SVRIP) UPDATE

This report is for informational purposes only, to provide background for the Council study session.

BACKGROUND

Public safety operations require effective command, control, coordination, communication, and sharing of information from criminal justice and public safety agencies, as well as public utilities, transportation companies and, in some instances, even private industry. Hundreds of incidents that require coordinated responses occur every day throughout Santa Clara County. High-profile incidents, such as plane crashes, earthquakes or large-scale structure fires, test the ability of public safety service organizations to mount well-coordinated responses. In an era where technology can easily bring news, current events, and entertainment to communities, many first responders cannot communicate with each other during routine operations let alone during emergencies.

In 1998, eighteen Santa Clara County jurisdictions, representing some thirty law enforcement, fire and emergency medical services agencies partnered together to enhance inter-agency coordination and communication between their public safety agencies. These agencies are required to communicate and exchange information (data) in a variety of methods.

In 2001, this collaboration solidified under a formal governance structure and a Joint Funding Agreement was executed by governing bodies from the Cities of Palo Alto (June 21, 2001 CMR: 245:01), Mountain View, Sunnyvale, Santa Clara, Campbell, Morgan Hill, Milpitas, Gilroy, Monte Sereno, Los Altos, San Jose, Saratoga, the Towns of Los Altos Hills and Los Gatos, San Jose State University, the California Department of Forestry (South County Fire District) and the Santa Clara Valley Water District and the Silicon Valley Regional Interoperability Project (SVRIP) was established. An Executive Steering Committee was established to serve as an oversight committee for the project. The JFA has twice been amended, first in 2003, and again in 2004 (September 20, 2004 CMR:419:04).

In 2006, at the direction of the Santa Clara County/Cities Managers’ Association, the SVRIP enhanced the Executive Steering Committee by appointing a Chair, Vice-Chair and Project
Manager, as well as adding a second City Manager and the Sheriff to its Committee. Palo Alto Police Technical Services Coordinator Sheryl Contois serves as Vice-Chair and is the only member of the SVRIP Executive Steering Committee that has been with the Project since it first began in 1998.

In addition, the City Managers directed the SVRIP Steering Committee to develop and present annual Project Workplans highlighting the Project’s accomplishments over the proceeding fiscal year and identifying goals for the upcoming year. These workplans were adopted by the Steering Committee and presented to the City Managers’ Association membership.

**DISCUSSION**

The SVRIP focused on leveraging existing communications systems, rather than concentrating efforts on acquiring new hardware and software. The approach will engineer technological solutions using existing infrastructure and ensure these technologies can be deployed as long-term solutions to interoperability. The SVRIP is strengthening the longevity of its interoperability solutions by engineering processes that build on existing, off-the-shelf technologies and are based on industry standards. To accomplish these goals, the SVRIP hired an experienced systems integrator, Northrop Grumman, to design and engineer these solutions.

Guided by these principles, the roadmap to interoperability for the SVRIP consists of five independent, but inter-related and complimentary projects:

1. Bay Area Mutual Aid Communications Systems (BayMACS) – a voice channel that enables multiple disciplines (local, state and federal personnel) from surrounding jurisdictions to communicate with each other.
2. Emergency Communications (E-Comm) regional microwave network – a 19 site digital microwave system that will not only serve as an “information highway” for interoperability solutions in Santa Clara County, but will interconnect with a Bay Area wide microwave network that will create a robust communication path for the 10 Bay Area Counties.
3. Regional Interoperability Information Broker (RIIB) – an Information Broker that will interconnect and serve as a translator between 13 disparate Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) systems and approximately 27 Records Management Systems (RMS) to expedite the dispatch of emergency personnel to the scene of an emergency, track and monitor assets and resources, and share time-sensitive information between the various first responder agencies.
4. Voice over Internet Protocol (IP) based technology – an extension of existing radio channels, interconnecting voice communications into unlimited talk-groups that allow police and fire personnel (or non-public safety personnel) to connect and communicate with other agencies on-demand.
5. Secure Broadband – using licensed spectrum to provide the means and bandwidth to sharing video, photos or other time-sensitive information that require high-speeds and secure pathways.
Two of the five projects are funded and either complete or under construction (BayMACS and E-Comm). Pilot demonstration projects are underway or have been completed on the other projects. A small secure broadband pilot using educational band spectrum licensed and operated by San Jose State University helped to demonstrate the value and importance of this type of technology to the region. A short-term demonstration project using Voice over IP technology was put in place last year connecting the public safety agencies in the Cities of Sunnyvale and Santa Clara. The bid specifications are complete for that project and will be released in the coming weeks. Finally, and of great significance, the data interoperability pilot project interconnecting Fire CAD systems from San Jose (as the largest agency), Milpitas (having the newest in CAD systems) and Santa Clara County Communications (using a CAD system designed and built in-house) is currently underway. This important pilot will be operational in late February, and will reduce valuable seconds and minutes on the dispatch of fire responders and dramatically improve the delivery of fire and medical services to its communities.

Currently, discussions are underway with federal homeland security officials regarding funding for a pilot project of the Records Management portion of the data interoperability project. If funding is successfully secured, this pilot could be underway in the coming months.

Independent Technical Assessment/Validation – Each of the five projects have been validated by the DHS through its Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program (ICTAP). This federal agency has provided an independent technical assessment of the interoperability design solutions recommended and architected by Northrop Grumman and has endorsed the approach. ICTAP engineering and operational expertise is provided at no-cost to local Urban Areas by the Department of Homeland Security.

Palo Alto staff, as well as staff from the SVRIP Steering Committee and its subcommittees actively participate in not only San Jose’s UASI process (as part of the 2004 and 2005 grant programs), but work actively within the Bay Area UASI Interoperability Working Group, in statewide interoperability outreach through the California Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (CALSIEC), as well as the Capital-Bay Area regional working group, bringing together interoperability projects from the Bay Area, Sacramento and regions up through the I-80 corridor to Lake Tahoe. This collaboration and cooperation ensures that interoperability strategies implemented throughout the region and state will compliment each other and are compatible.

RESOURCE IMPACT

In early 2004, the City of San Jose became a Metropolitan Statistical Area through the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) federal program, receiving an allocation of additional Department of Homeland Security funds, in 2004 and 2005. As part of the 2005 UASI grant program, the San Jose Urban Area was required to file a Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP). The plan outlines the governance, technology and operational procedures for addressing tactical
interoperable communications in the region. The region was also required to exercise the TICP and have it evaluated by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Palo Alto staff took the lead and brought together representatives from various agencies to develop the TICP. The Plan was submitted to DHS in March 2006 and exercised in September 2006. The San Jose UA was rated as having advanced implementation in the area of Governance and Standard Operating Procedures, ranking one of nine Urban Area’s in both of these areas (out of a 77 Urban Areas) in the country. The San Jose UA TICP has been adopted by the Santa Clara County Police and Fire Chief’s and will be incorporated into existing emergency plans utilized throughout the region.

In 2006, Congress combined the Oakland, San Francisco and San Jose Urban Areas into one-larger Bay Area Super Urban Area (Bay Area SUASI). In the first year as a Super UASI, the region received nearly $16 million in federal funds through the Urban Area program and was recently identified as a Tier 1 (highest-risk region) enabling it to compete for upwards of $440 million in the 2007 allocation of UASI funding for Tier 1 areas.

Palo Alto Police and Fire Department personnel continue to actively participate in various regional Working Groups that manage homeland security related activities and programs that directly benefit from SUASI federal funds – including Interoperable Communications. For 2007 funding, the SVRIP submitted nearly $6 million in funding requests for consideration to the Bay Area SUASI Approval Authority in furtherance of its interoperability objectives. The Bay Area SUASI Approval Authority is the governing body that oversees the Bay Area’s SUASI program and is supported by a SUASI Management Team staffed by agency personnel with federal dollars.

Other Federal Funding – To date, in addition to UASI funding, the SVRIP has leveraged funds from the State of California Office of Homeland Security, the Office of Domestic Preparedness, and the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office), bringing in more than $14 million to keep the project moving forward. In addition, SVRIP Steering Committee staff are currently working to garner support that could bring an additional $51 million in federal dollars into the SVRIP to continue the build-out of its five projects.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

City of Palo Alto participation in the SVRIP is consistent with existing City policy.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REQUIRED**

Any environmental impact under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) will be determined in subsequent phases of the project.