

To: Safety and Facilities Services Committee

From: Adam Grant, Commissioner,  
Safety and Facilities Services Department

Report Number: SF-25-15

Date of Report: March 12, 2025

Date of Meeting: March 17, 2025

Subject: Communication Relocation Project

Ward: All Wards

File: 03-05

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## **1.0 Purpose**

The purpose of this Report is to provide information on the completed relocation of the Oshawa Fire Services Communications Centre from Fire Hall 1 to the third floor of the City of Oshawa's Consolidated Operations Depot. This relocation enhances operational efficiency, accommodates technological advancements, and supports the well-being of Communications staff while ensuring an improved emergency response capacity for residents.

## **2.0 Recommendation**

That the Safety and Facilities Services Committee recommend to City Council:

That Report SF-25-15 dated March 12, 2025, concerning the Communication Relocation Project be received for information.

## **3.0 Input From Other Sources**

- Fire Services
- Information Technology Services
- Facilities Management Services

## 4.0 Analysis

For over 20 years, the Oshawa Fire Services Communications Centre has operated from the second floor of Fire Hall 1. However, as the Region of Durham has grown, along with the consolidation of Ajax and Pickering dispatch services, it became evident that a more modern and accessible facility was necessary. The new Communications Centre addresses these needs while also accommodating future growth and technological advancements.

### 4.1 Rationale for Relocation

The decision to relocate the Communications Centre to the Consolidated Operations Depot was driven by several factors, including:

- **Regional Growth:** Increased emergency call volumes necessitated an expanded facility to ensure continued efficiency in dispatch services.
- **Consolidation of Dispatch Services:** The integration of Ajax and Pickering dispatch required additional space and upgraded technology to effectively manage regional communications.
- **Accessibility Improvements:** The new location enhances accessibility for staff, addressing previous concerns associated with the Fire Hall 1 facility.
- **Technological Advancements:** The transition to a state-of-the-art Centre of Excellence ensures that Oshawa Fire Services remains at the forefront of emergency communications.

### 4.2 Project Timeline and Implementation

With the support of Mayor Carter and City Council, a project manager was assigned in 2023, and draft plans were developed. Work commenced in May 2024 and was successfully completed in December 2024.

### 4.3 Features of the New Communications Centre

The new facility is designed to support the demanding needs of a 24/7 emergency call centre, offering both functional and wellness enhancements for staff, including:

1. **State-Of-The-Art Sit/Stand Bramic Desks:** These desks allow communicators the flexibility to either sit or stand while taking calls, helping to mitigate health concerns associated with prolonged sitting.
2. **Ergonomic 24-Hour Chairs:** Easy to clean chairs with adjustable lumbar support, headrest with neck cushion, and a steel footrest provide comfort and durability for long shifts.
  - **Curved Monitor Arrays:** Designed to enhance visibility while reducing neck strain, improving efficiency in call handling.
3. **Advanced Telephony System:** Utilizing Internet Protocol (IP) technology, this system enables seamless transmission of voice calls, text messages, photos, and videos through a digital network, significantly enhancing emergency communication capabilities.

4. **Additional Digital Enhancements:** The centre will feature digital mapping, a digital Senior Officer on call board, and real-time call status screens to further improve operational efficiency.
  - **Dedicated Support Spaces:** The facility includes an office for the Chief Communications Officer, a locker/change room, and a break room to support staff well-being.
  - **Mental and Physical Well-being:** A small on-site gym is available for staff, recognizing the importance of physical activity in managing workplace stress.

#### 4.4 Impact on Emergency Response

The upgraded Communications Centre significantly enhances Oshawa Fire Services' ability to manage emergency calls efficiently. Residents of Oshawa and Durham Region will benefit from a professional call centre that ensures rapid and effective deployment of emergency resources. The improved infrastructure and technology will streamline response times and optimize dispatch operations.

### 5.0 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications related to this Report.

### 6.0 Relationship to the Oshawa Strategic Plan

This report responds to the Oshawa Strategic Plan Priority Area "Care: Safe and Sustainable Environment" with the goal to enhance emergency preparedness and response, including preparing for potential climate emergencies and significant weather events.



Stephen Barkwell, Fire Chief,  
Fire Services



Adam Grant, Commissioner,  
Safety and Facilities Services Department