HALDIMAND COUNTY

Report ITS-01-2019 Change of Internet Service Provider

For Consideration by Council in Committee on May 28, 2019

OBJECTIVE:

To obtain Council approval to single source the installation, implementation and on-going service of internet service provision for Haldimand County's "core" wide area network sites.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report ITS-01-2019 Change of Internet Service Provider be received;

2. AND THAT the requirements outlined in Clause 4.03 h. Sole and Single Sourcing of Haldimand County Procurement Policy 2013-02, be utilized to allow for the installation, implementation and on-going service of Internet Service Provision for Haldimand County's "core" wide area network sites with Metro Loop for a five year contract;

3. AND THAT the request to enter into a five year contract with Metro Loop, to provide Internet and intranet services for "core" locations be approved;

4. AND THAT the revised budgets as outlined in Report ITS-01-2019 be approved.

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Respectfully submitted: Mark Merritt, CPA, CA, General Manager of Financial & Data Services

Approved: Donald G. Boyle, Chief Administrative Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Rogers is the current internet service provider (ISP) used to provide connectivity to Haldimand County's "core" sites via fibre and wireless line-of-sight connections, creating the wide area network (WAN).

Recent outages have shown that Rogers will not be able to provide a viable long term solution for two of the County's "core" sites that use wireless line-of-sight connectivity – Kohler Yard and Selkirk Library.

As Rogers will not be able to provide a solution for the wireless "core" sites, staff have been seeking alternatives and have met with another local solution provider, Metro Loop. Metro Loop is able to provide the County with a long term solution encompassing all of the "core" WAN sites including the wireless sites of Kohler and Selkirk.

Staff recommend entering into a five year contract with Metro Loop to provide the ISP services for the "core" WAN sites.

BACKGROUND:

A WAN is essential to allow connectivity to various County offices and work sites, enabling staff to utilize corporate software applications, email, VoIP (voice over internet protocol) and other technologies; and the ability to continue to provide Internet access to library visitors.

Haldimand County entered into a contract with Hamilton Mountain Cablevision in 2004 for intranet and Internet connectivity for a seven year term. The scope of work in the contract required Mountain Cablevision to provide internet services to the "core" WAN sites that now include: Dunnville Multipurpose, Grandview Lodge, Cayuga Administration, Haldimand Emergency Services Headquarters, Kohler Office, HCCC (also providing connectivity to the Caledonia Satellite Office), Hagersville Satellite Office, Jarvis Library and Selkirk Library. The core WAN sites included the two library branches as they served as a point of presence in those towns – a key site used to connect other sites to. Each of the core sites use fibre with the exception of the Kohler Yard and Selkirk Library which utilize wireless line-of-sight connections due their rural location.

Over the term of the contract, Mountain Cablevision was purchased by Shaw, who was then purchased by Rogers. During this transition of ownership, the original contract terms and conditions were met by the each of the new providers. In 2012, the contract was extended with Shaw for an additional five years. Since 2017, the services have continued with the original pricing terms and conditions, but without a contract in place.

Kohler Office has recently experienced two outages totalling approximately four days of lost connectivity where staff were unable to access computer systems, email, and unable to utilize the phone system. Rogers was able to restore connectivity by repairing faulty cables connected to the equipment on the tower. As Rogers was troubleshooting the outage, they made it clear that they no longer provide this type of service and would repair only if they could – as their current wireless service is considered one of "their best effort products". If total failure was to happen, they have no viable alternate connectivity solution to provide the required bandwidth.

With the recent Kohler wireless connectivity outage and further discussions with Rogers re: a fibre connection at the new Central Administration Building, Rogers confirmed they no longer utilize the fibre connectivity methodologies of the former Mountain Cablevision. Additionally, Rogers no longer provides wireless line-of-sight connectivity nor have a viable replacement solution to address the connectivity requirements for Kohler Yard and Selkirk Library. Rogers also confirmed that if they were to install a fibre connection at the new admin building, all "core" sites would have to be upgraded at a cost. This is not a viable solution.

Staff have been seeking alternatives and have met with another local solution provider, Metro Loop. Metro Loop has provided staff with a plan that provides a solution encompassing the "core" sites including Kohler Yard and Selkirk Library, as well as provisioning for the transition to the new building.

ANALYSIS:

As connectivity is a requirement for library visitors to access internet services (i.e. community hubs) and for staff to allow them to use their computers to access corporate applications, email, telephone, etc., a replacement is required.

Metro Loop is able to provide a viable long-term solution for the County's WAN needs. For the Kohler and Selkirk sites, Metro Loop will install wireless equipment on County's structures. For the other "core" sites, they will provide fibre connectivity. All "core" sites will be connected in a way that will provide the County intranet and internet services at higher speeds than what Rogers is able to provide; and stability in the service continuity.

Procurement Policy 2013-02 permits Single Source purchasing, meaning that there is more than one vendor able to supply a service, but the purchase is made without a competitive bid. Upon review of the marketplace for internet service providers, the selection of vendors with the ability to provide the level of ISP services required by the County (i.e. continuity of service to avoid disruptions, bandwidth, provision of rural service, etc.) is limited. Haldimand could proceed with entering into contracts with

multiple vendors to provide these services; however, this would not be cost effective, the risk of effectively managing these services becomes complex and creates inefficiencies of staff resources.

FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Staff have estimated that the total one-time capital costs required to have Metro Loop provide high-speed connectivity, to the "core" sites (including the wireless sites of Kohler and Selkirk) deemed mandatory installations, is $254,000 (plus applicable taxes). The one time capital costs include the wireless equipment for Kohler and Selkirk as well as the installation of additional infrastructure between Metro Loop's existing network and the service addresses noted to connect all "core" sites.

	Current Approved Budget	Proposed Revised Budget (including non-rebateable taxes)
Expenditure:		
Kohler wireless	$0	$2,200
Selkirk wireless	$0	$2,200
Additional infrastructure required (installation / implementation)	$0	$255,600
Total Expenditures	$0	$260,000
Financing:		
CRR-Information Systems	$0	$260,000
Total Financing	$0	$260,000

These costs are based on contingent on the County entering a five year contract with Metro Loop for the provision of internet and intranet services at the "core" sites.

The on-going monthly operating costs for Internet and intranet services at the "core" sites are estimated to be $6,905 per month, representing an increase of approximately $2,060 per month over the existing contracted services. This service represents a marked increase in bandwidth and throughput (estimated to be 10X faster) as compared to the existing offering from Rogers. Metro Loop's monthly operating costs also includes a 24/7 service level agreement (SLA).

Once full fibre services are in place, approximately $450 of these additional costs will no longer be needed. These costs will come into effect once the connections have been changed over – anticipated to be in the Fall of 2019 (just prior to the completion of the Central Administration Building). The updated operating costs will form part of the overall 2019 operating variance. Staff will further review the annual cost impacts, currently estimated at $22,200, for the 2020 Tax Supported Operating Budget.

Metro Loop has standard agreements in place which will be reviewed from a contract and risk management perspective by the Legal and Support Services division prior to execution by the County.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:

A wide area network is essential to allow connectivity to County offices and work sites enabling staff to utilize essential corporate software applications, email, VoIP (voice over internet protocol) and other technologies. Metro Loop is able to provide a viable solution for connectivity to the County's "core" sites

including Kohler and Selkirk which Rogers, the current provider, no longer has a viable solution available.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: Yes

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: Yes

Policy: No

ATTACHMENTS:

None