SUBJECT: Implementation of 3-1-1 in Halton Region (FCS07020) (City Wide)

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City of Hamilton consent to the enhanced routing of 3-1-1 calls as requested by the Regional Municipality of Halton in the Campbellville, Hunter, Waterdown and Freelton exchanges.

Joseph L. Rinaldo
General Manager
Finance and Corporate Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Halton Region is planning to implement 3-1-1 and is asking for the consent of the City of Hamilton to the enhanced routing proposed in their initiative, copy attached as Appendix A.

As part of their initiative, Halton Region are proposing to implement enhanced routing of 3-1-1 calls, in order to ensure that callers from Halton will reach Halton 3-1-1, and that callers from shared exchanges, if they call 3-1-1, will not receive the Halton Regional service. As there are 4 exchanges that cross the Hamilton-Halton boundary, Halton has requested the consent of the City of Hamilton to the enhanced routing option for these four exchanges (Campbellville, Hunter, Waterdown and Freelton).

As the enhanced routing being planned by Halton as part of their implementation of 3-1-1 is consistent with the provision of good customer service, and would be consistent with the direction staff in Hamilton would recommend should 3-1-1 be implemented in Hamilton, it is recommended that the City of Hamilton consent to the enhanced routing of 3-1-1 calls by Halton Region.
BACKGROUND:

In November, 2004, the CRTC approved the use of 3-1-1 as a three digit telephone number for access to municipal non-emergency services in Canada. The implementation of this number would allow residents in a municipality to access non-emergency services by dialling 3-1-1 within the municipal boundaries.

The decision of the CRTC in approving the use of 3-1-1 for these purposes in Canada provided that telephone companies could be required to implement enhanced routing, at the municipality’s request, and at their cost. Enhanced routing would ensure that callers would reach the correct 3-1-1 centre even if their phone number came from an exchange that is shared between two municipalities. Halton Region, in their implementation of 3-1-1, have chosen to implement enhanced routing, and have asked for the consent of the City of Hamilton to the enhanced routing in the 4 exchanges that are shared with Hamilton, being the Campbellville, Hunter, Waterdown and Freelton exchanges.

In order to implement 3-1-1 in Halton, they have had to determine whether or not to implement enhanced routing, to ensure that the service is available to all of their constituents and to ensure they do not receive calls from residents of other municipalities, such as Hamilton, where there are shared telephone exchanges. They have decided to implement enhanced routing in the shared exchanges with Hamilton, and are asking for Hamilton’s consent to the enhanced routing. The implication for Hamilton is that Hamilton would also have to implement enhanced routing in these exchanges should we decide to implement 3-1-1 in the future.

ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:

It is important to recognize that the implementation of 3-1-1 in Halton is being done to facilitate easy access for Halton Regional residents to non-emergency municipal services, something which the City of Hamilton would not object to. The implementation of 3-1-1 does not negatively impact on our residents, or create any direct costs for the City of Hamilton.

There would be long term implications and cost implications if Hamilton were to also implement a 3-1-1 service, as we would be required to pay the costs for enhanced routing in these four exchanges. As a principle of service, should Hamilton want to implement 3-1-1 services at some time in the future, staff would also want to include enhanced routing to ensure that our residents would reach the City of Hamilton with their service request, and not have to be re-directed from another municipality. Costs would have to be considered as well, but as a service principle, the Halton approach would be the preferred approach, and therefore, the Halton request for consent is recommended.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:

The alternative to consenting to enhanced routing would be to object to enhanced routing, and to be prepared to make the appropriate representations to the CRTC to support the objection. Should enhanced routing not take place, callers from shared exchanges calling 3-1-1 would reach Halton Region for accessing local municipal services.
services, and would have to be re-directed. This would be both frustrating for the callers and possibly unmanageable from a call load point of view.

FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no financial implications to the City of Hamilton directly as a result of consenting to this request from the Regional Municipality of Halton.

Should Halton proceed with enhanced routing, and at some time in the future, the City of Hamilton were to implement 3-1-1, the financial implications to the City of Hamilton directly related to enhanced routing are estimated to be approximately, $17,000 per year, based on an estimated number of calls from the enhanced routing areas. The decision by Halton to implement enhanced routing with their 3-1-1 service, means that Hamilton would be required to implement enhanced routing in those four exchanges should 3-1-1 be implemented in Hamilton.

POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:

There are no City of Hamilton policies which affect this proposal.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION:

Not applicable.

CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:

By evaluating the “Triple Bottom Line”, (community, environment, economic implications) we can make choices that create value across all three bottom lines, moving us closer to our vision for a sustainable community, and Provincial interests.

Community Well-Being is enhanced. □ Yes  ☑ No

There are no direct impacts on community well-being of this proposal.

Environmental Well-Being is enhanced. □ Yes  ☑ No

There are no impacts on the environment with respect to this proposal.

Economic Well-Being is enhanced. □ Yes  ☑ No

There are no direct impacts on the economy as a result of this proposal.

Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines? □ Yes  ☑ No

Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants? □ Yes  ☑ No

There are no staff impacts as a result of this initiative.
Dear Verna:

Re: 311 Halton Implementation

As you are aware, in November 2004, the Canadian Radio and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) approved the use of 311 dialling for telephone access to non-emergency municipal services (Decision 2004-71).

As outlined in the attached 311 ‘fact sheet’, dialling 311 allows residents to request a service, carry out transactions or obtain general municipal information. To date, 311 has been implemented in four communities across Canada, specifically Calgary, Gatineau, Windsor, and Ottawa. In addition several other municipalities in Canada, including Halton Region, are currently in the planning stages of implementing 311.

Through Halton’s 311 planning process, it has come to light that there are four telephone exchanges shared between Halton and Hamilton. As outlined by the CRTC, while utilizing ‘basic call routing’ for 311, all calls from households within shared exchanges are directed to only one 311 provider, regardless of the municipality in which the caller resides. As a result, for our four shared exchanges, as the initial provider of 311 services Halton Region would receive 311 calls from Hamilton residents wishing to access Hamilton government services. This situation was anticipated by the CRTC, which provided that municipalities may request ‘enhanced routing’ from telephone service providers in which case 311 calls from households in shared exchanges will be routed to the municipality in which the household resides.

For your information, the below table provides specific information Halton obtained from Bell Canada on the four telephone exchanges that cross Halton Region and Hamilton boundaries.
Appendix A to Report FCS07020 – Implementation of 3-1-1 in Halton Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Telephone Exchange Name</th>
<th>Municipalities Sharing this Exchange</th>
<th># of Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campbellville</td>
<td>Puslinch</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Milton</td>
<td>2312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freelton</td>
<td>Puslinch</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>3243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Milton</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter</td>
<td>Burlington</td>
<td>1189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>54713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterdown</td>
<td>Burlington</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>10541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Milton</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Hamilton Households</td>
<td></td>
<td>68,519</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please be advised that it is Halton’s desire to proceed with 311 planning based on enhanced routing for the above-noted exchanges. You will note that Bell Canada has informed us that if Halton implements enhanced routing in the above-noted shared exchanges, there are no implications to Hamilton unless Hamilton implements a 311 system.

Should Hamilton implement 311, you will note that as outlined by the CRTC decision, there is a cost associated with enhanced routing, specifically $2500 in one-time start up costs, $400 per month in maintenance costs, and $0.08 per 311 call originating in telephone exchanges subject to enhanced routing. If you would like assistance in calculating Hamilton’s approximate cost of enhanced routing for the above-noted exchanges if you implement a 311 service, I would be happy to provide same.

As part of Halton’s application to Bell Canada to effect enhanced routing in the above-noted four shared exchanges, it is necessary to obtain your consent to enhanced routing. To that end, we would appreciate you signing this letter in the space provided below in order to indicate your consent to enhanced routing of 311 calls originating in our shared exchanges.

Should you have any questions about this request or about Halton’s 311 planning process, please feel free to contact me at 905-825-6000 ext 7230 and I would be pleased to discuss this matter with you at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Kate Johnston
Manager, Customer Service Improvement Projects

c.  Jane MacCaskill, Acting CAO, Halton Region
    Carleen Carroll, Director, Community Relations, Halton Region
Verna Radford  
Manager, Customer Contact Centre  
City of Hamilton
311 Fact Sheet

What is 311?
- A convenient, easy to remember telephone number for the public to use to access non-emergency municipal information and services.
- 311 allows residents to request a service, carry out transactions or obtain general municipal information
- Offers customers one point of access to municipal government.
- Examples of services offered by 311 include:
  - Reports of dangerous road conditions, traffic and street light outages, water main breaks, blocked and/or broken sewer mains, stray animals, abandoned vehicles and noise complaints
  - Inquiries regarding garbage and recycling, water quality and safety, public transit schedules, development and building permits, property tax bills, parking tickets and recreation facility schedules
  - Referrals to the mayor’s office
  - Handling general service complaints
  - Access to all police and fire non-emergency services.
- Often linked to work order management systems.
- 311 can be implemented by all Canadian municipalities

Why are Municipalities Implementing 311?
- Simplifies government for the public
- Builds accountability and transparency
- Provides consistent service levels to the public
- Delivers service cost effectively
- Provides valuable information to the municipality
- Supports excellence in service delivery

Origin of 311
- The CRTC is the regulatory body that designates telephone numbers in Canada
- City of Calgary, City of Toronto, City of Montreal, Ville de Gatineau, Halifax Regional Municipality, and Halton Region submitted a joint application to the CRTC in October 2003 to designate the use of the three digit number ‘311’ for handling inquiries on non-emergency municipal services.
- The Canadian Federation of Municipalities provided a letter of endorsement for the application.
- CRTC approved the use of 311 for non-emergency municipal government information and services on November 5, 2004.
- This approval was granted through CRTC decision 2004-71, which outlined the framework in which 311 could be implemented. This decision can be accessed online at www.crtc.gc.ca/archive/ENG/decisions/2004.