

To:	Warden Hicks and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	October 10 th , 2019
Subject / Report No:	ITR-CW-01-19
Title:	Renewal of Bell Mobility Contract
Prepared by:	Jody MacEachern, Senior Manager of Information Technology
Reviewed by:	Kevin Wepler, Director of Corporate Services Mike Alguire, Purchasing Manager
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	Municipality of Meaford, Municipality of Grey Highlands, Town of the Blue Mountains
Status:	Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution CW194-19 October 10, 2019; Endorsed by Council October 24, 2019 per Resolution CC83-19;

Recommendation

1. That report ITR-CW-01-19 be received; and
2. That the County enter into an Agreement with Bell Mobility Inc. to provide an additional three years of mobility services and hardware.

Executive Summary

Grey County's current contract for Mobility and Hardware Services expires in October 2019, with one 1-year extension available. Bell Mobility Inc. proposes a new plan that will reduce expenses paid for data costs, long distance, and MMS (media in text messages).

Staff recommend accepting the new agreement with Bell Mobility Inc. The plan is competitive and comparable with the provincial Vendor of Record (VOR) for mobility services. An extension avoids costly contract buyout options and aligns the County more closely with the timelines of the provincial VOR.

Background and Discussion

As with any modern workforce, Grey County staff rely on mobile devices to excel in their jobs. Mobile phones have improved safety for staff who work offsite, travel, or work alone. They allow for managers and key staff to be reached easily in emergency situations. Further, the increased computational power allows staff to interact with applications in the field, whether for reference, mapping, data collection, etc., greatly improving productivity for work done remotely.

Grey County entered its current contract with Bell Mobility in 2014. The contract was a four-year term, with two optional one-year extensions, ending ultimately in October 2020. The original RFP was scored heavily for improved data plans and cellular coverage in and around Grey County.

The current plan is similar to the provincial vendor of record (VOR) options. The plan allows for unlimited local calling and SMS (texting). Other features for regular cell phones (voice and data) are as follows:

Feature	Cost
Base Plan Rate	\$20.25
Canadian Long Distance	\$0.02/minute
US Long Distance	\$0.15/minute
Canadian MMS (video/picture text)	\$0.50 per mms (incoming / outgoing)
Data ¹	
300 MB – 1 GB	\$14.75
1-GB – 6GB	\$29.75
> 6GB	\$34.75
MMS (media text message)	\$0.50 / text
Roaming	
USA (Phone)	\$1.75 / min
USA (SMS Text)	\$0.75 / text
USA (Data)	\$6 / MB

1. Data is tiered, not cumulative.

The County has 192 cellular phones in use, and uses data plans for 50 locations, including connected road cameras and providing wireless internet for ambulances. Further, three lower tier municipalities receive mobility services under this agreement, including The Municipality of Grey Highlands, The Municipality of Meaford, and The Town of the Blue Mountains.

Under the new agreement, new plans, or existing plans that are renewed when the hardware is replaced, will have some key changes to the feature charges, as follows:

Feature	Cost
Canadian Long Distance	\$0.01/minute
Canadian MMS (video/picture text)	Unlimited

Data	
> 6GB	\$45

If these rates were applied to the existing accounts, the County would save ~20% on average monthly data fees, as well as an average \$270 in MMS fees (multimedia sent by text message).

Staff advise renewing the contract with Bell Mobility. Bell Mobility is offering a cellular plan that is competitive. Their coverage in the County is reasonable. The provincial vendor of record (VOR) for cellular mobility expires in 2020, with extensions available until 2024. Staff feel that the most competitive plans available for cellular coverage will come out of the VOR processes, and renewing this contract puts the county nearly in line with the VOR renewal. Further, changing providers at this point would require a fair amount of staff time to reconfigure phones, change SIM cards in LTE modems, etc, and likely incur significant costs to the County to buyout the existing contracts and hardware from Bell, even if other providers offered incentives to do so.

Legal and Legislated Requirements

None

Financial and Resource Implications

As stated above, renewing the mobility contract with Bell is expected to save costs on the County’s current cellular expenses as accounts move over to the new plan. Changing providers through an RFP process would require staff time to set up new devices, including swapping SIM cards in LTE modems in the field, as well as a considerable expense of buying out existing contracts from Bell Mobility.

Relevant Consultation

Internal IT and Finance staff

External (list)

Appendices and Attachments

[Grey County Procedure A-FIN-001-001, Purchasing Procedures](#)