

# Polk County E911

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## STRATEGIC PLAN

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Polk County E911  
Service Board

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Term: 2015-2018

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Adopted: October 28, 2014

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Location:  
1907 Carpenter Ave.  
Des Moines, IA 50314

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## **Methodology**

The E911 Coordinator worked with the PSAP Directors through the E911 Advisory Committee to discuss the most pertinent issues that are facing the Polk County E911 Service Board. These issues have been put into the strategic plan to give the board a focus on what needs to be given priority over the next three years.

## **Our Mission**

The Polk County E911 Service Board is committed to working with the Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP's) to provide superior services to the public in order to protect life, property and to work in partnership with our public safety agencies to enhance the quality of life within Polk County.

*"9-1-1" are the digits that people dial when they need help in an emergency. It is used in life-threatening situations, during medical emergencies, when a crime is in progress, when there is a car accident, or when there is a fire. People know that "9-1-1" means help only in an emergency situation.*

## **Background**

The E911 Service Board Strategic Plan is part of a continuing process to identify and establish direction for growth and development of the E911 Service Board.

According to the Code of Iowa, Chapter 34A, and the Iowa Administrative Code, Section 605, Chapter 10, Polk County must have an E911 Service Board. The E911 Service Board is made up of private and public safety agencies within the Polk County E911 service area.

The E911 Service Board established the E911 Advisory Committee that is made up of a representative from each 911 Public Safety Answering Point within Polk County. Please see Appendix 1 for a map of their locations.

The E911 Coordinator in Polk County is the Secretary of the E911 Service Board and the E911 Advisory Committee and coordinates the activities between each Public Safety Answering Point.

The Polk County E911 Wireline Plan includes background on E911 wireline within Polk County. However, it does not look at the Polk County E911 Service Board's vision and direction.

The Polk County E911 Service Board faces four main challenges-

- Changes in technology including Next Generation 911
- Expanding interoperability beyond the Polk County PSAPs
- Challenges with funding as technology increases and traditional funding sources decrease.
- Insure that all three PSAPS have complete and current continuity of operations plans
- Coordination between surrounding counties

These circumstances demand for the E911 Service Board to have a strategic plan to steer the board in the right direction.

## **Expectations of the E911 Service Board**

### **Responders**

1. To use the E911 surcharge money for projects that maintains and enhances the abilities of the 911 centers within Polk County.
2. To communicate and collaborate with all of the jurisdictions within the Polk County E911 service area in ways that will enhance E911 services.

### **Public**

1. To use the E911 surcharge money in the most effective manner.
2. For the E911 Service Board to keep up with technological changes so that they receive the most effective 911 service.
3. To educate the community on E911.

## **Goals of the E911 Service Board**

- Collaborate with all elements of the public safety system to provide effective services to the community.
- Maintain partnerships to identify and address issues to enhance the level of service for citizens and visitors to our community.
- To fairly and consistently apply emergency communication principles to provide excellence in service to the community.
- Maintain professional standards and stays.
- Continuously plan for future development.

## **Strategic Goals**

### **1. INCREASING TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES**

#### **Background**

There are significant technological changes that are coming for PSAP's across the country. Next Generation 911 is all about receiving data rapidly and on a much larger scale. The PSAP's will need to manage new information sources and alerts that have not been previously utilized.

By the end of 2014 the major carriers will have "text to 911" capabilities. There is currently no mandate for the PSAP's that requires them to have these capabilities. The PSAP's will not have the capability to be able to receive text messages right away but they are working towards that point.

The State E911 Program is currently building out their wireless network which will also change the layout of the 911 system and how it currently operates.

#### **Strategy**

- The PSAP's should reserve the appropriate surcharge funds and apply for the State E911 Carryover Fund to make sure that they keep up with the technological changes. All three PSAP's will continue to apply for the Carryover Fund each year to ensure that they have the appropriate equipment upgrades.
- The E911 Advisory Committee will make sure that they are part of the dialogue regarding the wireless network changes and how it will impact them as a center. Each PSAP within Polk County will request through the E911 Program Manager that they be part of the "text to 911" capability once they have the appropriate equipment in place. The E911 Service Board should set a policy expectation in 2015 that all of the PSAP's within Polk County roll out the "text to 911" capability at the same time.
- The public also plays an important role in 911, as they must understand the purpose of the 911 system of services and the appropriate use of the system. The public is a diverse entity made up of many different ethnicities, languages, expectations, including people with functional communication needs. Ultimately the success of the 911 program relies upon the public in Polk County to know and use 911 appropriately. The E911 Service Board members need to educate their constituents on 911. An educational campaign should take place by the board every April, as April is 911 Education Month.

#### **Priority Level**

High

## 2. INTEROPABILITY

### Background

The Office of Emergency Communications allowed each County to have access to a tool called 'CASM' which allows users to create their own County Tactical Interoperability Communications Plan (TICP). A TICP Group was formed in Polk County that was made up of a representative from each PSAP. All public safety agencies communication information within Polk County is now within the CASM tool.

There are multiple radio systems within Polk County so an interoperability solution is needed within Polk County. However the CASM tool has had many 'bugs' and continues to provide inaccurate information. The CASM tool is also limited as State agencies and surrounding counties have not entered in their radio information into the system.

The main method that is used for interoperability within Polk County is the Metro Interoperability Communications System (MICS). These are the national interoperability channels that are programmed within all public safety radios within Polk County. These channels are used on a regular basis when multiple jurisdictions come together for an incident. There has not been any formal adoption of the national interoperability channels and the MICS system among the jurisdictions to say that these are the channels that will be used during a multi-jurisdictional response or how the system could be best utilized.

### Strategy

- The E911 Service Board will have a resolution that states that all public safety agencies within Polk County should utilize the national interoperability channels (MICS) that are stated on the Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications System Board's statewide minimum interoperability channel plan as an official interoperability solution.
- The resolution will set out policies, procedures, training and job aids that would ensure that all public safety agencies within Polk County are aware of the effectiveness of the interoperability channels and how they should be used. The E911 Service Board will have this program put together by the end of 2015.
- The E911 Advisory Committee will educate surrounding counties on Polk County's approach as a model for their interoperability issues. This will help ensure that when Polk County and surrounding counties work together during a response they will know what interoperability capabilities everyone has adopted.

### Priority Level

High

### **3. CENTRAL IOWA PSAP GROUP**

#### Background

For the past few years there has been a Western and Eastern Iowa PSAP Group. This gives PSAP Directors and Supervisors the opportunity to come together and discuss relevant topics that are impacting the PSAP's.

There has never been a Central Iowa PSAP Group. The Polk County E911 Coordinator recently created such a group so that the counties within the central region could discuss relevant topics and could come together as a region to create a more uniformed approach to 911 communications.

This group will ensure that all of the E911 Service Boards within the participating counties are informed of the same topics so that they can work together in the future. It will also allow for project collaboration.

#### Strategy

- The Central Iowa PSAP Group will meet every other month until the end of 2018.
- Educate the group on the Polk County E911 Service Board Interoperability solution by the beginning of 2016.

#### Priority Level

Medium

#### **4. DECREASING WIRELINE SURCHARGE**

##### Background

The E911 Service Board's budget has two elements: 1) Wireless; 2) Wireline Surcharge.

Wireline funding is expected to decline as fewer people have landline phones in their homes and businesses. There are currently no laws that require telephone companies to submit the wireline surcharge that they collect from the public to the E911 Service Board. It is also difficult to find out exactly how many telephone companies do business within Polk County as many of the companies are registered under large umbrellas with the Iowa Utilities Board. The E911 Service Board needs more authority and a stronger voice in the legislative process.

##### Strategy

- Due to recent legislative changes wireless funding has increased considerably. The current wireless funding projections show that they could dramatically assist with the offset of the ongoing reduction in wireline funding. However the E911 Service Board will keep monitoring the changes in wireline surcharge every month and continue to push at the State level every year the need for telephone companies to report when they do business within Polk County.
- As initiatives such as First Net move forward it will become necessary to identify additional sources of funding, perhaps from the Federal level.

##### Priority Level

Medium

## 5. CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN

### Background

Each PSAP currently has their own continuity of operations plans but there is not a formal Continuity of Operations plan that bridges all of the PSAPs in Polk County. With the growing reliance on technology it is essential that a plan be in place in case a PSAP cannot form its necessary functions. If there is a failure at one of the PSAP's, another PSAP in the county should be able to assist the PSAP that is having problems and be their back-up facility.

There are major changes that are going to be occurring in the next few years regarding Next Generation 911. Once the major upgrades have been implemented within each PSAP a joint continuity of operations plan should be written.

### Strategy

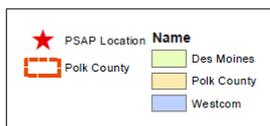
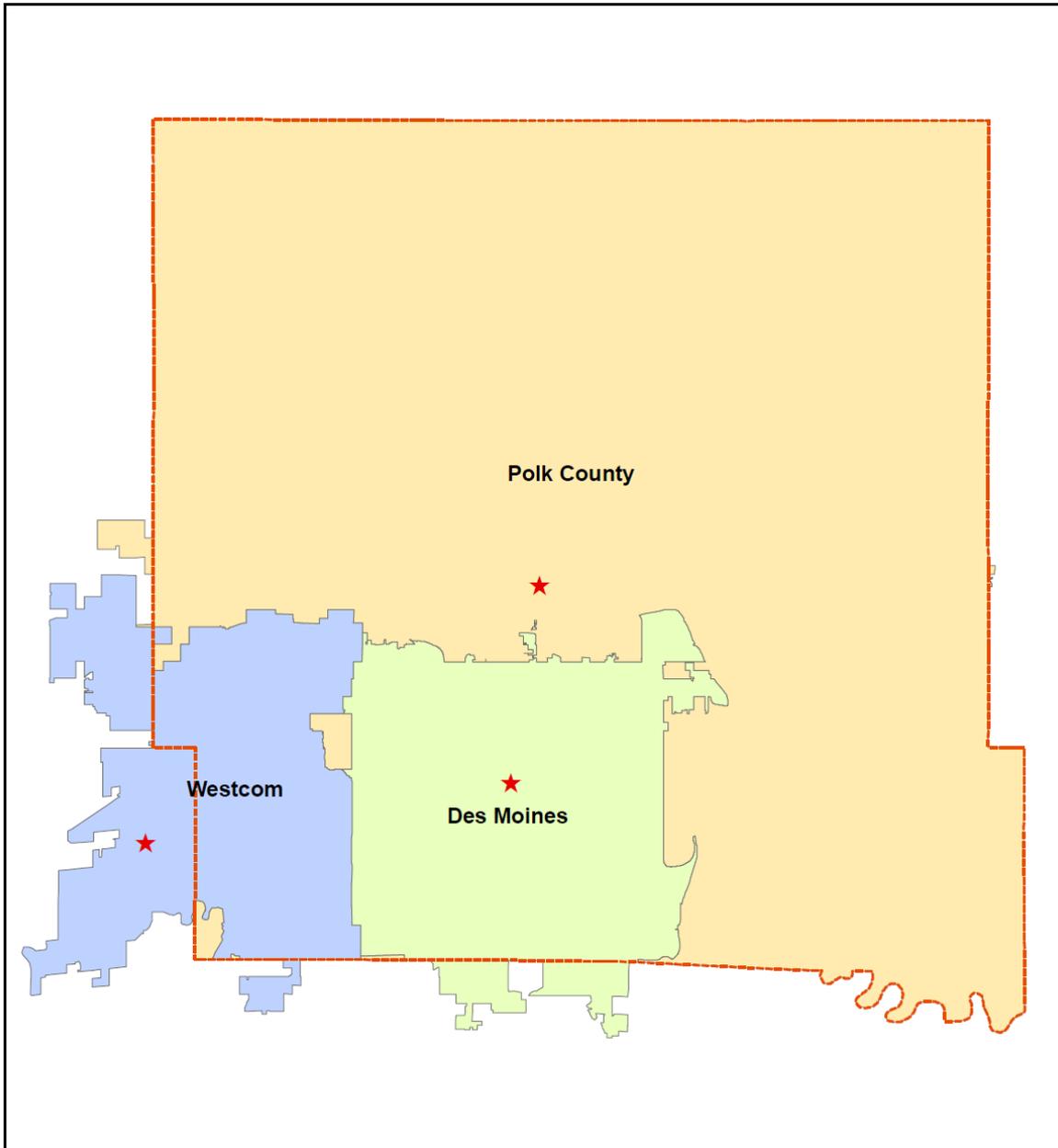
- The E911 Service Board should set a policy expectation of the PSAP's to create a joint Continuity of Operations Plan. A Continuity of Operations Plan between the PSAP's should be completed by 2018.

### Priority Level

Medium

**Attachment 1: Polk County PSAP Locations**

## Polk County PSAP Locations



12/20/2011