

CAMPAIGN DOCUMENT / PUBLIC-INTEREST OP-ED

911 by SMS and AI City Hall

How Vancouver can become safer, faster, and more helpful without replacing human judgment.

Prepared for Great Scott for Mayor of Vancouver | DrainTheSwamp.ca | June 2026

Suggested website placement: AI City Hall; Public Safety; 911bySMS.ca project card.

The city service problem

Residents should not need a lawyer, an advocate, or a full day off work to navigate City Hall. Permits, tickets, bylaw questions, benefit access, housing pathways, FOI requests, public-input summaries, and emergency navigation all suffer from the same design problem: the system speaks government before it speaks human.

AI can help, but only if it is governed properly. The goal is not to replace public servants, police, dispatchers, social workers, or elected officials. The goal is to make the first layer of government easier to understand, easier to audit, and faster to use.

911bySMS.ca as a public-safety pilot

911bySMS.ca is a proposed silent emergency text triage platform for people who need urgent help but cannot safely speak. It is not a replacement for 9-1-1. It is a controlled, human-supervised pilot concept where AI supports pre-assessment, structured questioning, risk summarization, and escalation, while final dispatch and closure decisions remain with authorized personnel.

- AI may assist, summarize, and escalate.
- AI must not independently deny, close, or downgrade an emergency request.
- AI must not say police are coming unless a human confirms dispatch.
- AI must ask one short question at a time and prioritize location, immediate danger, callback safety, and service type.
- Every decision must be logged for audit and quality assurance.

AI City Hall services

Service	How AI helps	Human safeguard
Permits and licensing	Explains requirements, checks forms, flags missing items.	Staff approval remains human.
Parking and bylaw disputes	Summarizes facts and available options.	Decision-maker retains authority.
Benefit and shelter navigation	Guides residents through eligibility and documents.	Human service referral for vulnerable cases.

Council public input	Summarizes submissions before votes.	Public record remains accessible and auditable.
FOI and records	Helps draft narrower, clearer requests.	Statutory officer handles disclosure.

Governance rules

- AI must be advisory for high-impact decisions.
- Residents must be told when AI is being used.
- Appeals and human review must be easy.
- Prompts, decision rules, error rates, and audit logs must be available to oversight bodies.
- The city must measure whether AI reduces wait times, errors, repeated calls, and staff burden.

Helpful AI government is not a robot mayor. It is a front desk that finally works.

Campaign framing

This is one of the strongest Great Scott themes because it pairs outsider ambition with practical service delivery. The promise is not science fiction. The promise is a city where residents can ask a question in plain language and get a useful path forward, with human accountability still in charge.

Source and verification note

Based on the existing 911bySMS rollout proposal, which describes a silent emergency text triage pilot, human-supervised AI, escalation rules, audit logs, and a public disclaimer that the platform is not yet connected to 9-1-1 dispatch.

Authorized by Scott Gilbert, Financial Agent for Scott Gilbert. Contact: scottgilbertvan@gmail.com. Campaign contributions and expenses will be reported as required under B.C. local election campaign financing law.