There may soon be a change in ambulance service in the City of Rochester and the potential new provider is not really all that new.

Rural/Metro has served as Rochester's ambulance company since 1988. It broke into the market as National Ambulance replacing Monroe Ambulance as the city's emergency medical service provider.

A committee that includes police, fire and 911 officials recently recommended to Mayor Robert Duffy that a change be made back to Monroe.

The mayor would not go into specifics but said he was sold on the idea after meeting with the committee.

“They looked at everything, capacity, response times, they went through technology and in the end they felt very strongly about this recommendation,” Duffy said. “And I don't mind saying I was surprised when I first heard it.”

Duffy says the committee did not speak negatively about Rural/Metro, but it was more the strength of Monroe and the fact it's remained a competitive player in the 20 years since losing the city contract.

Monroe officials say the company has grown in the last 20 years. It has 22 rigs with eight more arriving next week. Another seven are due by September.

“We tend to be the first to do any new procedure that's out there, any new equipment, we have the top of the line equipment, we have the top paramedics in the area,” Monroe's Tom Coyle explained. “So anything anybody else in the area can do Monroe can do better.”

Monroe has 160 paramedics and EMTs on staff. It will have to hire more if awarded the city contract, and Rural/Metro employees would be invited to apply.

“We're definitely going to be hiring people,” Coyle said. “We'll follow our normal hiring procedures on hiring people and they're more than welcome to fill out applications.”

Rural/Metro says it will not give up on retaining the city contract. In a statement, spokesman John Halldow said “We are going to be working with the city and city council to further our two decade long relationship providing the highest quality emergency medical services to the citizen's of Rochester.”

Mayor Duffy says he expects council to accept and approve his recommendation for change. If approved, the new contract with Monroe Ambulance will go into effect October 1st.