
MENLO PARK FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

STAFF REPORT

To: Board of Directors
From: Office of the Fire Chief

Meeting Date: March 3, 2016
Prepared By: H. Schapelhouman

**ITEM: CONSIDER AND DISCUSS THE FIRE CHIEFS DEPLOYMENT PLAN FOR
2016 – 2026 FOR THE MENLO PARK FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Board of Directors accepts the report as presented.
2. That the Board of Directors consider and discuss this information

BACKGROUND

On August 16, 2011, the Fire Board adopted Primary Emergency Response Routes for the Fire District to better address community traffic mitigation and emergency response issues from the broader perspective of community impact and public safety.

On August 19, 2014, the Fire Chief discussed with the Board, proposals to potentially modify major roadways like El Camino Real and Middlefield Road that were being discussed by the Town of Atherton, City of Menlo Park, and San Mateo County. Primary Emergency Response Routes were once again reviewed.

On September 26, 2013, the Fire Board accepted the Insurance Services Organization (ISO) updated Public Protection Classification report that upgraded our community insurance rating from a Class 3, to a Class 2 Fire Agency.

There are many elements to an ISO review, but from a deployment perspective, it focused on staffing, station locations, apparatus capability, equipment and evaluating if the District had an “effective fire force”.

In September of 2014, the Fire District completed a yearlong upgrade and expansion to its Traffic Pre-Emption System that consisted of eight existing traffic signals, fourteen new traffic signals and upgrades to fourteen pieces of emergency equipment. This system allows responding emergency fire equipment to turn red traffic signals to green, 400 feet in advance of the signal using GPS technology.

On December 15, 2015, The Fire Board authorized the expenditure of funds to upgrade eleven traffic signals on El Camino Real for Pre-Emption.

On June 16, 2015, the Fire Board received an updated Standards of Cover (SOC) Assessment that consisted of fifteen findings and two major recommendations from an independent third party consultant, Citygate Associates. The overall opinion of the Fire Districts emergency services was listed in Volume 1.2 of the Executive Summary which stated “The District today is currently meeting its needs through the use of partnerships with its neighbors in the automatic aid countywide response system. The District’s deployment system meets the District’s current demands, “but is becoming strained, especially east of Highway 101, and needs adjustment soon moving forward as growth occurs.””

On September 15, 2015, the Fire Board adopted Resolution No. 1818, which addressed time based emergency unit performance standards with a goal of all first response units arriving on the scene of an emergency 90% of the time, within seven minutes or multiple units in eleven minutes.

On January 19, 2016, the Fire Board received a presentation from the Fire Chief that reviewed deployment numbers and historical incident trends for 2015, 2014, 2010, 1985 and 1955. Essentially, 60 years of data and information.

On February 16, 2016, the Fire Board approved the Emergency Services and Fire Protection Impact Fee Waiver/Credit Policy and Study that has since been distributed to the local jurisdictions we serve.

DISCUSSION

All of these creative and pro-active measures were put into place to address, or support, the Fire District’s critical primary mission which is: **“To protect and preserve life, property and the environment, from the impacts of fire, disaster, injury and illness”**.

These measures and Board resolutions, along with other mitigation methods not listed, have been implemented to maintain, improve or compliment the **District’s current deployment model** of: seven Fire Stations, seven Advanced Life Support (ALS) Paramedic Fire Engines, one Ladder Truck and one Battalion Chief, with a minimum daily staffing of 25/26 personnel for the last 20 years.

The Fire District’s resident and commuter population will continue to grow. The District is experiencing, new and re-development of properties that were never imagined even a few years ago. There are current proposals for that trend to continue. We have seen traffic congestion worsen and the number of calls for emergency services have increased, undoubtedly with new construction and redevelopment the traffic congestion problem will worsen.

In fulfilling our mission, the Fire District’s most significant and current challenge is to maintain **“response times and delivering an effective fire force”**. Essentially, we must consider action in order to maintain acceptable response times and have enough personnel and units to deliver an effective force. Best practice dictates that the District deploy and maintain coverage in order to be available to respond to multiple, simultaneous emergencies, or larger more complex incidents, with enough personnel so as to not compromise their capabilities and safety, or our ability to properly and quickly serve the public.

In order to mitigate emergencies and satisfactorily address customer outcomes and expectations, we will be using the following strategies and methodology:

1. Implement an Impact Fee or Benefit Assessment for applicable new development, or re-development, based upon a “fair share” contribution by developers for apparatus, equipment and facility improvements. **This request has been sent to our constituent jurisdictions for discussion, adoption, inclusion and approval.**
2. Using call data, prescriptive studies and other information to determine where deployment can be improved in the immediate future and for up to the next ten years.
3. Using call data, prescriptive studies and the experience of staff to determine response configuration and deployment changes in the immediate future and for the next ten years.

As outlined by the *Standards of Cover Report*, “in order to save life and property, critical to our emergency operations and in service to the community, there are three general outcomes based upon time:

- a. Provide equitable response times to all similar risk neighborhoods
- b. Provide for the depth of response when multiple incidents occur
- c. Provide for a concentration of response forces in the core for high risk venues”

My presentation on Thursday, March 3, 2016, will address items 2, 3 and a, b and c, by incrementally adding additional staffing, the purchase of new fire equipment and the re-alignment of deployment based upon capability, flexibility, need, actual/projected growth, call volume and service trends.

Specifically – Deployment Action Plan 2016 - 2026

1. Coordinate with the local jurisdictions on implementation of new development impact fees
2. 2. Immediately purchase a new/used combination engine/truck, or quint, to replace the current reserve truck which is 26 years old
3. Dedicate and open the new Fire Station 2 in East Palo Alto – Complete by April/May 2016
4. Add a fourth firefighter to Station 2 daily, when it opens - April/May 2016 – Daily staffing 27
5. Break ground on a new Fire Station 6 in Menlo Park – May/June 2016 – Complete by June 2018
6. Hire up to three firefighter laterals by June 2016 – Current staffing is 78 - budgeted for 84
7. Test and promote three new Captains – By June 2016 (Budgeted - Currently down 3)
8. Hire up to nine entry level firefighters and/or firefighter paramedics - by September 2016 – Fiscal 16/17
9. Order a new smaller rescue/squad for Station 2 - By December 2016 - Delivery by 2017
10. Order a new fire engine, tiller ladder truck and heavy rescue – By December 2016 – Delivery by 17/18
11. Modify the Truck Bay at Fire Station 4 to accommodate a Quint – By December 2016
12. Test deployment configurations – squad/engine and truck/quint – Starting January 2017
13. Add a fifth firefighter/paramedic to Station 2 daily - January 2017 – Daily staffing 28
14. Begin the Fire Service Accreditation process – July 2017
15. Hire from three to six entry level firefighters and/or firefighter/paramedics – By September 2017
16. Dedicate Truck 2 and potentially finalize Quint 3,4 or 6 – In 2018
17. Test second Battalion concept – Starting 2017/18 – Station locations and responsibilities – Daily staffing 29
18. Order two new fire engines, quint and a water tender – Fiscal 17/18 – Delivery by 2018

Deployment Plan for 2016-2026
March 3, 2016

19. Request that ISO update their review and rating – January 2018
20. Hire from three to six entry level firefighters and/or firefighter/paramedics – By September 2018
21. Break ground on a new Fire Station 1 in Menlo Park – June 2018 – Completed by June 2020
22. Test Engine 2/Truck 2 and Engine 77/Squad 77 concept – In 2018/19
23. September 2020
24. Break ground on a new Fire Station 77 in Menlo Park – June 2020 – Completed by June 2022
25. Break ground on a new Fire Station 4 in the County – June 2022 – Completed by June 2024
26. Add a fourth firefighter to Station 4 or quint– June 2024 – Daily staffing 30
27. Test a truck and Engine model – June 2025 – Potential daily staffing 33
28. Re-evaluate, update the Standards of Cover – January 2026

FACILITIES		
Dedicate F.S. #2	East Palo Alto	April/May 2016
Break Ground F.S. #6	Menlo Park	May/June 2016 completion June 2018
Modify Truck Bay F.S. #4	Menlo Park	December 2016
Break Ground new F.S. #1	Menlo Park	June 2018 completion June 2020
Break Ground new F.S. #77	Menlo Park	June 2020 completion June 2022
Break Ground new F.S. #4	Menlo Park	June 2022 completion June 2024

PERSONNEL		
Personnel Recommendations	Tentative Dates	Fiscal impact
Add 4 th F/F F.S. #2	April/May 2016	
Hire 3 Lateral F/F	June 2016	Current FTE 78 – Budgeted 84
Test/Promote 3 Captains	June 2016	
Hire 9 Entry F/F	Sept 2016	Fiscal 2016-17
5 th F/F Medic F.S. #2	January 2017	
Hire 3 – 6 Entry F/F	Sept 2017	
Test/Evaluate 2 nd BC	2017-18	

APPARATUS		
Apparatus	Timing	Use
Combination Engine/Truck	Immediately	Replace current
Rescue/Squad	Order by December 2016, delivery 2017	F.S. #2
New Engine, Tiller Truck, Heavy Rescue	December 2016, delivery 2017-18	Replace existing, Truck to F.S.#2
Dedicate Truck #2 finalize Quint	2018	Quint F.S. 3, 4 or 6
Two engines, Quint & Water Tender	Fiscal 2016-17, delivery Sept 2018	Replacement

TEST/EVALUATION/VALIDATION		
Squad/Engine – Truck/Quint	January 2017	Evaluate w/ respect to coverage/deployment
Engine2/Truck2 – Engine 77/Squad 77	2018-2019	Evaluate w/ respect to coverage/deployment
Engine/Truck Model	June 2015 daily staffing to 33	Evaluate w/ respect to coverage/deployment
I.S.O	January 2018	Request update/review
Standard of Cover	January 2016	Request update/review

FISCAL IMPACT

The Board specifically asked that this report NOT be a “recommendation”, but rather a **definitive action plan**. To that end, staff will include personnel costing models into the 2016/17 budget process for your review and approval.

In addition, based upon the purchase of a number of new fire apparatus and equipment, the resultant cost, impact on existing reserve fleet and a purchasing policy, staff must seek approval from the Fire Board and actual costs are not currently included in this report.

Finally, fire station construction and projected costs, timing and expenditures for design and priority will all need to be updated, adjusted and aligned dependent on funding.

SUMMARY

Utilizing historical District data and our history of fire service experience and a number of source documents/studies:

- the draft General Plan information from the Cities of East Palo Alto and Menlo Park
- the updated Emergency Services and Fire Nexus Impact Fee Study
- current emergency incident information and reflecting on data spanning over 60 years
- traffic congestion and information from the Standards of Cover report and its recommendations
- construction projects that are currently funded and underway and proposed projects

We have done our best to layout a specific ten year action plan. This plan addresses coverage, deployment, staffing, unit and station configuration and aspects of maintaining an effective fire force that prioritizes response times and the overall ability of the Fire District to provide effective emergency services to the community.

A power point presentation will be used to highlight these important points and will be loaded onto the District’s web-site after the Fire Board presentation.