

Memorandum

TO: City Council

**FROM: Mayor Chuck Reed
Councilmember's Pierluigi Oliverio and Judy Chirco**

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: August 14, 2008

Approved

Chuck Reed

Date

Pierluigi Oliverio

8/14/08

SUBJECT: CITY-WIDE POLICY FOR RELOCATION/CLOSURE AND/OR SELLING FIRE STATIONS; REMOVAL OF STATION 6 FROM BUDGET

RECOMMENDATION

- Direct the Administration to remove the postponed sale of Fire House 6 (in its entirety/including reallocation of staff) from the 2008-2009 Budget and from the 5-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP 2009-2013) forecast.
- Adopt a budget principle that prohibits inclusion of the closure, sale or relocation of a fire station as part of the City Budget without prior assessment, community outreach, and City Council approval on the matter.
- Adopt a city wide outreach policy regarding the closure, sale and/or relocation of Fire Stations in San Jose that will include the following criteria: a). any proposed closure, sale and/or relocation of a fire station will be shared with the Mayor and all Councilmember's via an informational memo (regardless of what council district the fire station in question lies within); b). the informational memo will be listed on the city website and the San Jose Fire Department website; c). the City will have at least two public community evening meetings at least two weeks apart; d). the City will mail notices of the community meetings to all businesses and residences located within the primary service area of the fire station in question; e). agendaize the matter for the Public Safety Committee agenda; f). agendaize for Council consideration at an evening meeting prior to inclusion in any City Budget document.
- Direct the Administration to adopt a method of assessing the impact of proposed fire station closures, relocations, consolidations or new construction by comparing projected service level impacts relative to adopted performance objectives, which at a minimum should include the projected impacts to the assembly or "mustering" of an effective response force, as defined within the Fire Department strategic plan following its adoption by Council. The Council shall be provided the opportunity to review response times and other quantitative data used within the Standards of Response Cover methodology to evaluate service level impacts both within the subject fire station service area and city-wide. The City will follow this policy when considering changes to staffed and planned fire stations within the City of San Jose.

BACKGROUND

On August 5, 2008, the City Council reconsidered placing the Parkland/Proposed Fire House 37 on the November 4, 2008 ballot. No action was taken to repeal previous Council direction, but staff was to return with revisions to the CIP confirming no decision has been made regarding the sale of Fire Station 6 and that the sale is not needed to complete Fire Station 37 because reserve funding will be used to augment the cost. This issue pointed out the need to solidify an extensive outreach and analysis strategy when changes are proposed to a Fire Station or its staffing levels. We have put forth these recommendations to rectify this situation and to establish a policy to be applied city-wide for relocations/closures and/or selling of fire stations in San Jose.

The Fire Department 2000 Strategic Plan was adopted by the City Council in 2001 for use as a planning document and to serve as the foundation in developing a Council policy related to the proposed relocation, closure and addition of fire stations in San Jose. The Strategic Plan identified a series of performance objectives that, if attained, were projected to improve outcomes of victims of cardiac arrest and other time-sensitive medical emergencies along with reducing injury and property loss from fires. Furthermore, the recommendations found within the 2000 Strategic plan laid the ground work for the Measure "O" Bond, which promised to improve response time performance in areas identified within the 2000 Strategic plan as being underserved.

ANALYSIS

Using the Fire Department's 2000 Strategic Plan as a litmus test in which to evaluate proposed changes fire station locations and staffing creates an empirically based framework by which to evaluate service level impacts. Changes in policy related to land use and service level expectations can be compared with existing and future resource levels to support policy development. The use of Standard of Response Cover methodologies for establishing service level objectives provides Council the flexibility to adjust service levels in response to changing service demands and increase accountability.

Following service level objectives were published in the Fire Department's 2000 Strategic Plan to meet the service level objective of confining the fire within a single family detached house structure fire to the room the fire originated in. The value of this objective as presented in the Fire Department's 2000 Strategic Plan rest in the 10 fold increase in loss of life and property when the fire extends or burns into the other portions of the house. Data related to life and property loss was obtained from published authorities, such as the National Fire Protection Association. Thus, the objectives included within the report have supporting empirical data. The specific performance measure were intended as a starting point, prior to the implementation of the Fire Department's records management system (RMS), future updates to the Fire Department's Strategic Plan will rely on outcome data and Council input to adjust the following performance measures. Reliance on Standards of Response Cover methodologies to continually update the Fire Department's Strategic Plan ensures responsiveness to changing conditions. Current services levels published within the 2000 Strategic Plan include:

First Engine on scene:	8:00 total response time for 80% of emergencies
First Truck/USAR on scene:	10:00 total response time for 80% of emergencies
Second Engine on scene:	10:00 total response time for 80% of emergencies
Second Truck/USAR on scene:	15:00 total response time for 80% of emergencies
Third Engine on scene:	13:00 total response time for 80% of emergencies
First Battalion Chief on scene:	13:00 total response time for 80% of emergencies
Assembly of an Effective Response Force:	15:00 total response time for 80% of emergencies (all of the listed resources on scene)

Thus, proposed changes in staffing and fire station locations would be compared to these service level objectives to determine the impacts of proposed changes as described in the first recommendation. In developing these standards the Fire Department considered other standards and best practices recommended by the National Fire Protection Association and the American Heart Association.