



# CONTRA COSTA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

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## Fire District Facilities Fees Findings Report

### **Background**

Pursuant to Chapter 818-2, Fire Protection Facilities, of the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, this findings report is submitted to support a determination that the fire protection facilities of the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (Fire District) are overextended per Section 818-2.412. To mitigate this overextended condition, an increase in the existing Fire Protection Facilities Fee (Fee) is necessary. The Fee will apply to all new construction within the unincorporated areas of the Fire District service area.

In September 2016, the Fire District contracted with Willdan Financial Services (Willdan) to review the existing Fire District Facilities Fees and determine if an adjustment to the fees was warranted. Willdan researched and produced a report, dated July 25, 2017, that assesses the projected population and development growth within the Fire District service area. This research and the resulting report show that an increase in the fee is necessary to respond to the overextended condition of the Fire District. This Findings Report is a summary of the Willdan report. Portions of this Findings Report are paraphrased or quoted from the Willdan report and the entire report is incorporated by attachment (*Attachment A*).

### **Overview**

The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District provides fire protection services to the cities of Antioch, Clayton, Concord, Lafayette, Martinez, Pittsburg, Pleasant Hill, San Pablo, Walnut Creek, and other unincorporated areas of Contra Costa County. The Fire District service area is over 310 square miles with an estimated service population of 730,100 (the number of residents and employees within the service area). Most of the service population of the Fire District is in the cities of Concord, Walnut Creek, Antioch, and Pittsburg and the immediately surrounding unincorporated area.

Fire District facilities consist of twenty-six staffed fire stations located within the Fire District service area. The stations typically house one fire engine (Type 1) or ladder truck and one wildland fire unit (Type 3), with other more specialized and reserve apparatus located throughout the Fire District. Each staffed station engine company consists of one captain, one engineer, and one firefighter. Additional personnel of the Fire District are chief officers, inspectors, education specialists, and other support personnel.

### **Description**

The entire Fire District, as shown in the attached map (*page 8*), is submitted as the service area to be covered under the overextended determination of this findings report. The legal description of the Fire District (and service area) is as shown on the County

Assessor's map for the Fire District. The entire Fire District is proposed as the overextended service area because most or all of the facilities of the Fire District may be engaged to handle major structural fires and other emergency incidents. Apparatus are dispatched based on the requirements of the incident and not necessarily on a geographical basis. The Fire District responds to incidents with the best-suited available resources regardless of city boundaries.

## **Findings**

The Fire District has experienced population growth over the past several years, and more growth is projected in the future. The existing (2014) service population for the Fire District service area is approximately 730,100. Estimates in the Association of Bay Area Governments' (ABAG) Plan Bay Area (2013) of new development project an increase in the service population by 162,100 to a projected service population of 892,200 by the year 2040. This will result in a substantial impact on the fire protection facilities operated by the Fire District.

The Fire District serves all structures including homes, businesses, schools, hospitals, and other miscellaneous structures in its service area. Demand for the Fire District's services and associated facilities is measured by its service population, or the number of residents and workers within its service area. Service population reasonably represents the need for fire facilities because people requesting medical assistance generate the most calls for service. Structural fire suppression is the second most important mission of the Fire District after the protection of life. Therefore, the size and location of its service population determine the need for the Fire District's fire protection services and associated facilities.

The Fire District's inventory of existing fire facilities was used as the basis for calculating existing facility standards. These standards are used as a baseline for determining new development's fair share obligation for expanded facilities as growth occurs in the Fire District.

Fire facility standards can also be expressed in a number of other ways. For example, fire districts may strive to maintain certain response time standards. Others consider standards in terms of driving distance from stations. These types of standards are used to determine the best location of fire station sites. Standards may be expressed in terms of types and amounts of facilities per service population. The calculations of these standards are helpful in illustrating that new development is not being asked to provide proportionally more facilities than those from which existing development currently derives benefit.

The Fire District currently has twenty-six stations to accommodate the existing service population of approximately 730,100. This situation makes for a ratio of one fire station per 28,080 persons in the service population. To maintain the existing station-to-population ratio, the projected growth would require the construction of more than five stations by the year 2040. The Fire District expects to maintain service levels through a number of strategies. These service strategies include relocating stations to improve service response times, constructing new fire stations, and possibly adding engine companies to existing stations. Since the Fire District already has an extensive service network, the system may be enhanced in

targeted, efficient, and incremental steps. The Fire District's anticipated response to growth in the service population addressed in this findings report only considers development and fees within the existing service boundaries. Annexation or expansion of the Fire District service area outside of existing boundaries will make additional facilities necessary.

Fire Protection Facilities: As stated in the overview, the typical apparatus configuration for each station consists of one engine or ladder truck and one wildland fire unit. The apparatus dispatched to a particular incident depends upon the nature of the call for service (medical, fire, automobile accident, etc.) Additional supporting equipment (such as water tenders, breathing support unit, heavy rescue unit) is dispatched from the Fire District as required.

The standard operating procedures for the Fire District are to provide the most appropriate initial response to the incident. For example, a medical call would generally dispatch a single apparatus; a residential fire or small commercial fire would dispatch five units (two ladder trucks and three engines) along with two battalion chiefs; an automobile accident with entrapment would dispatch a fire engine, ladder truck or rescue, and battalion chief. Depending on the incident and initial assessment, the Fire District will dispatch the appropriate resources to the scene. Fire District operating procedures cover all types of anticipated incidents.

As indicated in the operating procedures, an incident such as a residential fire would require an initial response from at least five different fire companies to supply the apparatus required. As a result, planning for fire station locations must take into consideration, not only the time required for the "first-due engine" to travel to the incident, but also the time required for the response from subsequent stations which may be assigned.

The existing stations enable reasonable response times to locations within the Fire District service area. However, several station locations have become obsolete or inefficient because of "in-fill" and expanding urban areas. Rather than construct a new station, the relocation of an existing station to a location may better serve the public. The planned relocation of stations 70, 86, and 9, are examples of this strategy.

Call Volume: A review of Fire District call volume from 2009 through 2018 showed that the Fire District has seen a 44% increase in the number of calls for service. This is an indicator that the increase in population of the county has increased the volume of calls to the Fire District. In 2009, the Fire District responded to a total of 48,750 calls for service. As with most fire departments today, the largest number of responses (approximately 75%) involved medical emergency calls, of which there were 40,243. The number of medical emergency calls increased to 54,187 in 2018. It is obvious that new development and construction can be expected to generate additional calls for Fire District emergency service.

Other Factors: As the increase in population and density within the developing urban portions of the Fire District can be expected to increase Fire District calls for service, run times can also be expected to increase due to greater congestion of the existing city

streets and rural roads. The relocation and new construction of stations will help offset this impact to service delivery.

No particular new impact upon existing geographical conditions is anticipated to result from new development, at least as these conditions would affect the Fire District. The possible exception would be congestion of the existing rural roads, which are narrow or otherwise difficult to negotiate because of existing geographical conditions.

Municipal water is expected to be provided to new developments and homes within the Fire District. No significant additional impact of new development upon the Fire District's water needs is anticipated.

### Costs

The table below (Willdan report, **Table 7**) identifies the Fire District's preliminarily planned facilities. These facilities were identified by the Fire District in its Capital Improvement Plan as facilities needed to serve new development. Currently the Fire District anticipates the relocation and construction of several stations necessary to serve development as it occurs in the County. The County also anticipates purchasing several apparatus and various special equipment. Further, the Fire District plans to procure property for a regional training center, and to construct an emergency responder complex. In total, the District has identified \$66.6 million in planned fire protection facilities.

**Table 7: Planned Fire Facilities**

	Amount		Unit Cost	Total Cost
Rebuild Station 16	3,880	sq. ft.	\$ 1,343	\$ 5,212,000
Relocate and Construct Station 70	12,855	sq. ft.	864	11,108,000
Relocate and Construct Station 86	11,000	sq. ft.	720	7,923,750
Relocate and Construct Station 9	11,000	sq. ft.	720	7,923,750
Construct Station 89	11,000	sq. ft.	720	7,923,750
Type 1 Engine including Equipment	1	Engine	806,600	806,600
Type 3 Engine including Equipment	1	Engine	480,500	480,500
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):	9	PPE	6,500	58,500
Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA):	8	SCBA	5,000	40,000
Procure Property for Regional Training Center	n/a			125,000
Emergency Responder Complex				25,000,000
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$ 66,601,850</b>

Note: Costs rounded to the nearest hundred.

Source: CCCFPD Five-Year CIP (FY 15/16 through FY 19/20).

## Fees

The Fire District currently imposes an impact fee of \$591 per single-family dwelling unit, \$285 per multi-family dwelling unit, and \$376, \$329, and \$219 per 1,000 square feet for office, commercial, and industrial development, respectively, in the unincorporated areas of the Fire District service area and within the cities of Antioch and Pittsburg.

The fire facilities impact fees calculated in this report are based on a system facilities standard approach. The system facilities standard approach calculates the level of investment that will be achieved in the Fire District once all planned facilities are built and the service population has increased. This per capita facilities standard is calculated by dividing the total investment in existing and planned facilities by the service population at the planning horizon, and is displayed in the table below (Willdan report, **Table 8**).

**Table 8: Fire Protection Facilities System Standard**

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Value of Existing Facility Inventory	[A]	\$ 226,912,080
Value of Planned Facilities	[B]	<u>66,601,850</u>
Total System Value (2040)	[C = A + B]	\$ 293,513,930
Future Service Population (2040)	[D]	<u>892,200</u>
Facility Standard per Resident	[E = C / D]	\$ 329
Facility Standard per Worker <sup>1</sup>	[F = E x 0.69]	227

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<sup>1</sup> Based on a per capita demand factor of 0.69 per worker relative to a resident.

Sources: Tables 1, 6 and 7; Willdan Financial Services.

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The projected impact fee revenue from new development within the Fire District is shown in the table below (Willdan report, **Table 9**). The bottom line of Table 9 shows that to complete future facilities as currently planned, there is a need for \$13.3 million in revenue from non-fee funded sources. To complete the planned facilities and increase the facilities system standard, the District will need to identify an additional \$13.3 million in funding.

**Table 9: Projected Impact Fee Revenue - System Standard**

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Total Cost of Planned Facilities	[A]	\$ 66,601,850
Facilities Value per Capita	[B]	\$ 329
Service Population Growth (2014 - 2040)	[C]	<u>162,100</u>
Total Projected Fire Facilities Impact Fee Revenue	[D = B x C]	\$ 53,330,900
Non-Impact Fee Revenue Needed	[E = A - D]	\$ 13,270,950

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Sources: Tables 1, 7 and 8; Willdan Financial Services.

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**Alternative Funding Sources:** The Fire District recognizes that non-fee revenues will be needed to fund a portion of the planned facility costs. The Fire District has already begun taking steps to develop alternative revenue sources to fund fire facilities. In particular, the Fire District is investigating establishing a community facilities district (CFD). Other sources of revenue include, but are not limited to, General Fund revenue, special taxes, grants, and assessment districts. General Fund revenue is derived from the Fire District's share of the constitutionally imposed one percent property tax rate. Any new or increased special tax would require two-thirds voter approval. Any new or increased assessment would require a majority property owner approval. Any new or increased property-related charge or fee would require a majority voter approval.

**Fee Schedule**

The table below (Willdan report, **Table 10**) shows the maximum justified fire protection facilities fee schedule. The cost per capita is converted to a fee per unit of new development based on dwelling unit and employment densities (persons per dwelling unit or employees per 1,000 square feet of nonresidential building space) provided by the US Census, 2011-2015 American Community Survey. The total fee includes a two percent (2%) administrative charge to fund costs that include a standard overhead charge applied for legal, accounting, and administrative support, and fee program administrative costs including revenue collection, revenue and cost accounting, mandated public reporting, and fee justification analyses.

The Fire District anticipates that two percent of the base fee adequately covers the cost of fee program administration. The Fire District will review and recommend changes to the administrative charge during comprehensive impact fee updates to ensure that revenue generated from the charge sufficiently covers, but does not exceed, the administrative costs associated with the fee program.

**Table 10: Fire Protection Facilities Fee - System Standard**

Land Use	A	B	C = A x B		D = C x 0.02	E = C + D	F = E / 1,000
	Cost Per Capita	Density	Base Fee <sup>1</sup>	Admin Charge <sup>1,2</sup>	Total Fee <sup>1</sup>	Fee per Sq. Ft.	
<i>Residential</i>							
Single Family	\$ 329	2.89	\$ 951	\$ 19	\$ 970		
Multi-family	329	1.37	451	9	460		
<i>Nonresidential</i>							
Commercial	\$ 227	2.86	\$ 649	\$ 13	\$ 662	\$ 0.66	
Office	227	2.50	568	11	579	0.58	
Industrial	227	1.67	379	8	387	0.39	

<sup>1</sup> Fee per dwelling unit, per 1,000 square feet of nonresidential, or per room for hotel.

<sup>2</sup> Administrative charge of 2.0 percent for (1) legal, accounting, and other administrative support and (2) impact fee program administrative costs including revenue collection, revenue and cost accounting, mandated public reporting, and fee justification analyses.

Sources: Tables 2 and 8.

## **Fee Implementation**

The fire facilities impact fee would be collected at the time of building permit issuance. Because the Fire District does not have the statutory authority to adopt a fee, it must rely on the City Councils or County Board of Supervisors for the authority within each respective jurisdiction. In implementing the fee, the Fire District, in cooperation with the County and cities, will:

- Seek to acquire the necessary property for new stations through purchase or dedication and maintain an updated five-year capital improvement plan indicating fire facility system standards and the types of facilities anticipated to accommodate growth;
- Identify funding sources to complement impact fee revenues to fully fund planned facilities;
- Maintain an annual Capital Improvement Program budget, or another accounting mechanism, to indicate where fees are being expended to accommodate growth;
- Maintain records on use of the administrative charge to justify the amount; and
- Comply with the annual and five-year reporting requirements of Government Code Sections 66001 and 66006.

## **County General Plan and Fire District Capital Improvement Plan**

The construction of new fire stations and the relocation or enlargement of existing fire stations is necessary to mitigate the anticipated overextension caused by new development and increase in the service population within the Fire District service area. Requiring the cost of these facilities to be covered by fees collected from builders of new development within the overextended service area (the entire Fire District) is consistent with the provisions of the County General Plan, including Chapters 4 (Growth Management Element), 6 (Housing Element), and 7 (Public Facilities/Services Element). Each of these Elements identify as a critical performance standard that new development provide their fair share of the cost of infrastructure, public facilities, and services. Section 7.10 of the General Plan specifically discusses the goals and policies related to fire protection facilities.

The Fire District 5-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) FY 15/16-19/20 identified several new and replacement station projects, the purchase of new fire apparatus and light vehicles, as well as various other capital projects. Since implementation of the CIP (FY 15/16-19/20), the Fire District has accomplished the following capital projects:

- Completed (August 2019) the process of replacing Fire Station 16 (Lafayette) with the construction of a new station at the existing station location.
- Initiated construction process for relocating and building a new Fire Station 70 (San Pablo).
- Initiated CEQA and planning/design for replacement Fire Station 9 (Pacheco) and Fire Station 86 (Bay Point/Pittsburg).
- Completed implementation of recommended energy conservation measures throughout the District, including installation of solar panels and arrays, as well as the replacement of outdated HVAC equipment.
- Initiated planning/design for the expansion and modernization of the Contra Costa Regional Fire Communications Center.

- Upgraded and installed numerous emergency power generator systems at fire stations.
- Since adoption of the Fire District 5-year plan, the District has spent approximately \$2 million per year on new fire apparatus and light vehicles.

The CIP was last updated in October 2018.

The Fire District will continue to procure fire apparatus and to acquire, improve, and construct fire stations using the fees collected through this ordinance.

### Fire Protection Districts in Contra Costa County

