

Fire Services: \$18,800,000 (One-time), \$10,000,000 (First-year), and \$13,500,000 (On-going)

Reopening and Staffing Fire Stations

Currently East County Fire/Station 54– Build/Reopen and Staff Fire Station (via annexation)

Fire Station 54, located in downtown Brentwood (739 1st Street), has been closed since 2014 as a result of funding constraints and the aging facility being functionally obsolete and unsafe for occupancy. The reopening of this station would restore fire, EMS, and rescue services to a large area of Brentwood as well as supporting the surrounding communities. Funds are needed to demolish the abandoned fire station, design, and rebuild a new fire station on the existing site, procure the necessary fire apparatus for the station, and then transition to support on-going operational and staffing costs into the future.

The station will be staffed by three personnel per shift, with one of these being a paramedic, enhancing emergency medical response capability to the level of advanced life support. Response times would be significantly reduced within Brentwood and the ability to provide the minimum number of firefighters at the scene of a structure fire would be improved. While the annexation with the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District will provide the reopening of two stations within the Brentwood and Oakley areas (Stations 51 and 55 respectively), this third station (Station 54) requires Measure X funds to become a reality for construction and staffing.

Ongoing funding would support salaries and benefits for the personnel assigned to the station, as well as providing for overtime staffing costs, facility operations and utilities, supplies, equipment, and consideration for future apparatus replacement. Station 54, along with Stations 51 and Station 55 to be staffed as part of the annexation, would eliminate the current fire service deficiencies in the East Contra Costa Fire District response area.

Funding of \$12.2 million one-time and \$3.5 million annually recurring:

- Demolition of existing building (\$1 million estimate)
- Design, construction of new fire station (\$10 million estimate)
- Purchase of one Type 1 Engine and one wildland engine (\$1.2 million estimate)
- Normal ongoing operations, staffing, apparatus and equipment replacement (\$3.5 million)

Currently East County Fire/Station 51– Construction of Fire Station 51 (via annexation)

Fire Station 51, located at the corner of Empire Avenue and Amber Lane in Brentwood, is needed to provide appropriate coverage and capacity for fire, EMS, and rescue services within the City of Brentwood and to support surrounding communities. The City of Brentwood and East Contra Costa Fire District have been working collaboratively for several years on this project. Currently this fire station is in the design phase and with dedicated funding can begin construction in FY 2022/2023. The fire station would provide for the housing and operations of a typical station, as well as additional capacity for fire prevention and other administrative public facing services. The administrative capacity of the facility would provide a more convenient and decentralized service ability and reduce the need for contractors or members of the public to travel from east county areas to the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District headquarters in Concord for new construction plan review, permit applications, and other associated services.

The City of Brentwood has committed \$7 million through development impact fees to support the project, and there is a possibility of \$1 million to \$3 million in federal earmark funding. The total cost of design and construction is estimated at \$15 million, based on Contra Costa County Fire Protection District's experience with constructing fire stations in the past few years.

The staffing and operational costs for Fire Station 51 will be supported through the annexation and were incorporated into the annexation feasibility and fiscal analysis. Measure X funds are not needed to support staffing and on-going operational costs. Personnel and apparatus can be temporarily housed and operated out of Fire Station 52 until Fire Station 51 is constructed.

Funding of \$5 million one-time to support the construction of Fire Station 51.

Contra Costa County Fire – Purchase Apparatus and Staff Fire Station 81

Adequate staffing for fire, EMS, and rescue services throughout the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District ("Con Fire") remains below acceptable levels. Con Fire has two remaining stations closed as a result of the Great Recession. Fire Station 4 in unincorporated Walnut Creek (700 Hawthorne Drive) is planned to be reopened with the district's FY 2022-23 budget. The second station, Fire Station 12 (1240 Shell Avenue) in unincorporated Martinez, is located very close to Fire Station 14 (521 Jones Street) in downtown Martinez. The call volume for Fire Station 12 does not support reopening this station, as fire station 14 can handle the call volume in this area.

The area served by Station 81 in downtown Antioch (315 West Tenth Street) is underserved and impacted by very high call volume. Data provided by planning and deployment software consistently identifies the next available resource to be staffed should be a second unit at Station 81 to serve downtown Antioch and the surrounding communities. Fire station 81 does not require any facility upgrades or construction to accommodate this project. Funding requested will be used to procure the necessary apparatus (\$1.6 million in FY 2021-22) and then on-going funding (\$3.5 million) would support salaries and benefits for the additional personnel assigned to the station, as well as providing for overtime staffing costs, facility operations and utilities, supplies, equipment, and consideration for future apparatus replacement. Expanding this station will ensure a restoration of needed fire, EMS, and rescue capacity in one of the busiest and underserved communities, while also providing operational support for the entirety of the district's eastern service areas of Antioch, Pittsburg, Oakley, and Bay Point beginning in FY 2022-23.

Funding of \$1.6 million one-time and \$3.5 million annually recurring:

- Procurement of one (1) ladder truck \$1.6 million)
- Normal ongoing operations, staffing, apparatus and equipment replacement (\$3.5 million)

Pinole Fire Department/Reopen Fire Station 74 (alternative consolidation - contract with Con Fire)

Fire Station 74 (3700 Pinole Valley Road, Pinole) is the last remaining closed fire station in the cooperative "Battalion 7" service area of West County. Emergency response activity in Battalion 7 is currently served by the combined efforts of the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (3 units), Rodeo-Hercules Fire Protection District (2 units), and the City of Pinole Fire Department (1 unit) through a written automatic aid agreement. Through discussions with the Pinole Fire Chief, City Manager, and with support from the City Council, the City of Pinole is interested in contracting with Con Fire for fire services. Services provided by Con Fire would be through a contract for services.

Proposed funds of \$2 million annually would bridge the funding gap to provide ongoing financial support to reopen Fire Station 74 and operate both fire stations, Fire Station 73 (880 Tennent Avenue) and Fire Station 74, within the City of Pinole. Fire Station 74 would be staffed by three personnel on each shift, with at least one of those being a paramedic to provide advanced life support emergency medical service. The continued consolidation of the Battalion 7 service area is important to provide consistent fire, EMS, and rescue services in what is now an imperfect model of three separate agencies serving a large population of West County. Funding from Measure X would ensure the currently underserved communities in and around Pinole would benefit from more stable staffing and levels of emergency services provided by Con Fire through a contract for service.

Funding of \$2 million annually recurring:

- Funding to allow the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District to provide for fire services to staff and operate Fire Station 73 and reopen and staff Fire Station 74. Agreement to contract for services would be required for funding to be made available.)

Fire/Wildland Mitigation Fuel Reduction:

Contra Costa County Fire (hand crew program)

The wildland fire risk and threat are real and apparent throughout Contra Costa County and directly impacts multiple communities. An annual allocation of \$2.5 million would provide funding for the staffing and equipment necessary to provide a year-round hand crew program consisting of 14 personnel 7 days per week from May through October and 14 personnel 5 days per week from November through April.

This funding will provide personnel and equipment necessary to conduct fuel reduction programs, hazard abatement work, roadway clearance for evacuation routes, brush removal, prescribed burns, and other related fuel mitigation work during non-peak fire season (fall/winter). The crew would be assigned to work projects daily with some projects being single day commitments and others being large scale projects spanning several weeks or longer. The crew would likely engage on projects that included the cooperation and combined efforts of city and county public works agencies, who themselves would not be able to carry out and complete the work without the assistance of the Con Fire hand crew. Early efforts and pilot projects with city and County public works departments have yielded success on small projects throughout the County.

The project work would not be limited to the Contra Costa County Fire service area and would be performed where needed within the County, with priority to those projects in high and very high fire hazard severity zones.

Additionally, this funding would permit the use of the hand crew as a primary fire response asset to the entire County during the peak fire season to assist in fire suppression and wildland fire mitigation efforts. As a unique resource within our County, the hand crew can provide valuable support to wildfire response and mitigation efforts often leading to reduced commitment times of engine companies on vegetation fire responses. The staffing of this hand crew on a year-round basis will position the District to better take advantage of and leverage potential fuel reduction grant funds.

Contra Costa County Fire (fuels reduction projects)

There is a need for continuous work in reducing the risk of wildfire throughout Contra Costa County. An annual allocation of \$2 million would provide funding for larger fuel reduction projects across the county, hiring of specialized contractors and consultants, forestry personnel, rental of specialized equipment, and other costs associated with completing larger, more complex projects. There are existing identified projects that were not selected to receive grant funding from the state and, therefore do not have the financial support to be completed. Funds from this program would be used to initiate and complete projects where no other source of funding is available.

In many grant-funded projects, only partial funding may be provided. Similar to projects such as the North Orinda Shaded Fuel Break and other CalFire coordinated projects, this funding would position the District well for leveraging other funds and grants available through CalFire and other state programs to provide complete funding or to maximize what funding is available.

Funds can be used to design and carry-out vegetation management programs for evacuation routes throughout the county and focusing larger projects to align with the high and very high fire hazard severity zones.

There is a potential for a portion of this funding to be used for individual property owner grants for low-income families to perform hazard abatement and provide defensible space on their properties. Such a program would continue the strong coordination and collaboration with other local groups such as the Diablo Fire Safe Council.

Funds for fuel reduction programs would be managed by Contra Costa County Fire but used for projects throughout the county, including in other jurisdictions such as the San Ramon Valley FPD, El Cerrito-Kensington FD, Moraga-Orinda FPD and others.

Recommendation:

The County Administrator's recommendation is to fully fund these important safety programs at a total one-time cost of \$18,800,000, a first year allocation of \$10,000,000, and annual allocation of \$13,500,000.

- Station 54– Build/Reopen and Staff Fire Station (via annexation) - \$12.2 million one-time and \$3.5 million annually
- Station 51– Construction of Fire Station 51 (via annexation) - \$5 million one-time
- Station 81 – Purchase Apparatus and Staff Fire Station - \$1.6 million one-time and \$3.5 million annually
- Pinole Fire Department/Reopen Fire Station 74 - \$2 million annually
- Contra Costa County Fire (hand crew program) - \$2.5 million annually
- Contra Costa County Fire (fuels reduction projects) - \$2 million annually