



**Contra
Costa
County**

To: Contra Costa County Fire Protection District Board of Directors
 From: Jeff Carman, Chief, Contra Costa County Fire Protection District
 Date: September 18, 2018

Subject: Fire District Funding for New Development

RECOMMENDATION(S):

ACCEPT a report from the Fire Chief regarding the financial risks that new development poses to the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Report only. No fiscal impact.

BACKGROUND:

The Great Recession was an example of how vulnerable the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (District) is to fluctuations in assessed property values and resulting property tax revenues. During the recession, seven fire companies were closed, reducing District-wide staffing by nearly 25%. Although the economy has improved since the recession, the District still struggles with financial challenges, and not all of our closed fire stations have been reopened.

The District has implemented a variety of initiatives to reduce call volume, coordinate resources as efficiently as possible, and diversify the revenue stream to stabilize provision of emergency services.

☒ APPROVE

☐ OTHER

☒ RECOMMENDATION OF CNTY
ADMINISTRATOR

☐ RECOMMENDATION OF BOARD
COMMITTEE

Action of Board On: **09/18/2018** ☒ APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED ☐ OTHER

Clerks Notes:

VOTE OF SUPERVISORS

AYE: Candace Andersen, Director
 Diane Burgis, Director
 Karen Mitchoff, Director

ABSENT: John Gioia, Director
 Federal D. Glover,
 Director

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: September 18, 2018

David Twa, County Administrator and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

Contact: Jeff Carman,
 925-941-3300 x1200

By: June McHuen, Deputy

cc:

On average, the District collects 14% of the ad valorem tax in District tax rate areas. Although the District is under-resourced with this portion of the ad valorem tax, the District uses the 14% rate as the

BACKGROUND: (CONT'D)

minimum necessary tax apportionment for all future development to assure our ability to continue providing emergency medical, fire, and rescue services to newly developed areas.

In some of the areas identified for development, the District will receive much less than 14%. This threatens the District's ability to provide adequate levels of fire and emergency medical response services. District staff is working with the various cities we serve to educate them and make them aware of the need for additional revenue above and beyond the property tax revenues that are normally collected for fire services. Unfortunately, there is little the District can do to limit new development when public safety services are under-resourced.

Recently, the Antioch city council approved a residential development that could add up to 4,000 dwellings in the southern part of the city and included no additional revenue for the District despite written and verbal communications advising them that the District would not be able to provide adequate fire and emergency medical service in the absence of additional revenue. Planning for new developments must include consideration for funding of public safety infrastructure. Without this critical consideration, we risk creating areas that are significantly under-resourced, such as exists in the East Contra Costa Fire Protection District.

The District will continue to work collaboratively with the cities it serves in an effort to reach agreements when these issues arise. In the absence of agreements with the cities, the District will pursue agreements with the developers to assure that adequate funding is secured prior to development. The District is also working with other fire districts in the State to see what measures they have taken to prevent this situation from occurring in their jurisdictions.

Lastly, the District may come before the Board in the future to seek approval to create "service zones" as defined by The Fire Protection District Law of 1987 (HS&C §13800, et seq.) to impose additional fees where property tax revenues fall short of the minimum needed to support fire services.

In the meantime, I ask that each of you reach out to your respective cities and urge them to work with the District to assure there is adequate funding in their future development areas and to avoid the challenging situation that has been created in other areas of the County.