



CITY OF  
SANTA ROSA

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May 3, 2004

Jacob Bayless, Foreperson  
Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury  
PO Box 5109  
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

#1799  
**GRAND JURY**

Dear Mr. Bayless,

Enclosed you will find the Santa Rosa City Council responses to the Preliminary Sonoma County Grand Jury Interim Report, *Santa Rosa Fire Station Deployment*, dated February 20, 2004.

SHARON WRIGHT  
Mayor

JANE BENDER  
Vice Mayor

BOB BLANCHARD  
JANET CONDRON  
MICHAEL F. MARTINI  
NOREEN M. EVANS  
STEVE RABINOWITSH  
Councilmembers

I want to thank the Grand Jury for their community involvement and detailed work on this project. We have responded to each request and have made several interim steps to address the concerns raised in the report. This will not be an easy or quick fix and will require resources and funding to accomplish the objectives.

It is our intent to follow up with an additional update in one year.

Please contact me if you have any additional questions or require clarification to our responses.

Sincerely,

SHARON WRIGHT  
Mayor

SW/sks

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April 6, 2004

Jacob Bayless, Foreperson  
Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury  
PO Box 5109  
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Dear Mr. Bayless,

Enclosed you will find the Santa Rosa City Council responses to the Preliminary Sonoma County Grand Jury Interim Report, *Santa Rosa Fire Station Deployment*, dated February 20, 2004.

I want to thank the Grand Jury for their community involvement and detailed work on this project. We have responded to each request and have made several interim steps to address the concerns raised in the report. This will not be an easy or quick fix and will require resources and funding to accomplish the objectives.

It is our intent to follow up with an additional update in one year.

Please contact me if you have any additional questions or require clarification to our responses.

Sincerely,

Sharon Wright, Mayor  
City of Santa Rosa  
100 Santa Rosa Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA. 95404

**CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY**

**“Santa Rosa Fire Station Deployment”**

**April 6, 2004**

The Santa Rosa Fire Department is currently managed by Interim Fire Chief Ronny J. Coleman. Mr. Coleman has a diverse management background. He has extensive experience with the development of Fire Department deployment plans and served as the Fire Chief of the Fullerton and San Clemente Fire Departments as well as the State Fire Marshal and Chief Deputy Director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. Chief Coleman has evaluated the Santa Rosa Fire Department and has instituted actions relative to deployment plans.

The City of Santa Rosa is in the final phase in the recruitment of a new Fire Chief. Once hired, the new Chief will be assigned the task of evaluating and validating existing deployment plans and response standards along with the implementation of an action plan with a designated goal setting process. The new Fire Chief will also be asked to evaluate interim measures that might be feasible until the new stations can be built given the City's budget constraints.

With this in mind, we have responded to these findings and recommendations in a manner that will allow the new Fire Chief to plan for the future of the Fire Department. We would like to update the Sonoma County Grand Jury on our plan's progress in one year.

**Findings**

**F6.** The City authorized the *Santa Rosa Fire Station Location & Deployment Study – Final Report* that was completed by an outside consultant and provided to the City Council in Study Session on March 26, 2002. *In order to meet the City's established goals for emergency response times, the study recommended that various fire stations be relocated and that three new stations be constructed.* All of these projects are currently in the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), but to date have not been funded. Those recommendations were as follows (also see the map attached as exhibit A):

- Fire Station 5 on Parker Hill Road should be moved from its present location to the vicinity of Fountain Grove Parkway and Parker Hill Road.

- Fire Station 6 on Calistoga Road should be moved from its present location to Middle Rincon Road.
- Fire Station 8 on Burbank Avenue should be moved from its present location to the vicinity of Sebastopol Road and Timothy Road.
- A new fire station should be constructed in the vicinity of Mendocino Avenue and Steele Lane.
- A new fire station should be constructed in the vicinity of Northpoint Parkway and Kingfisher Way.
- A new fire station should be constructed in the vicinity of Kawana Springs Road and Franz Kafka Avenue.

**F7.** Impact fees have been and are continuing to be collected to fund the construction of fire stations in Southwest and Southeast Santa Rosa. The relocation of fire stations, however, is not being funded by the impact fees collected.

**F8.** During the ten-year period ending 2002, the population in the Southwest area grew at three times the rate of the City of Santa Rosa [62.4% vs. 20.9%]. Response time in that area is among the longest in the City because the majority of the growth has taken place in the outer boundaries of Fire Station 8, which serves that area. The following tables compare the number of emergency calls and response times over a six-year period for Station 8 to Santa Rosa citywide:

Station 8 (SW Area)				Santa Rosa (City Wide)			
	4 min. or less (Goal is 80%)	5 min. or less (Goal is 90%)	6 min. or less (Goal is 100%)		4 min. or less (Goal is 80%)	5 min. or less (Goal is 90%)	6 min. or less (Goal is 100%)
2002	414 (27%)	819 (54%)	1263 (83%)	2002	3880 (32%)	7490 (62%)	10432 (86%)
1997	393 (29%)	724 (53%)	1035 (75%)	1997	3271 (33%)	5903 (60%)	8120 (83%)

**City Response (Findings F6, F7 and F8)**

The Santa Rosa Fire Department has researched options for the implementation of the resources identified in the Deployment Plan. Several preliminary actions have already taken place:

- 1) Impact fee funding for the design of the Southwest and Southeast fire stations has been requested and adequate funding identified within those two impact fee fund

accounts. The request has been included in the City's 2004-2005 Capital Improvement Program budget request.

Available funding for projects funded by these revenue sources is based on current year revenue estimates and unallocated reserves in each fund. Based on this analysis, the available SWADIF and SEADIF funding for the 2004-05 fiscal year is approximately \$749,000 and \$494,000. The Fire Department has requested \$300,000 for the design of the Southwest fire station and \$150,000 for the design of the Southeast fire station. We expect the designs to be completed within fiscal year 2004-2005. Additional funding will be requested for the construction phase during the following fiscal years.

Since the 1995-96 fiscal year, revenue from the Southwest Area Development Impact Fee (SWADIF) totaled approximately \$14.1 million and revenue from the Southeast Area Development Impact Fee (SEADIF) totaled approximately \$727,000. These funds have been mainly used for improvements to the transportation infrastructure within these areas as detailed in the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). A major impact to fire response times has been traffic congestion, which is improved when the transportation system infrastructure is upgraded.

The identification of the Tiger Salamander in the Southwest portions of the City has had an impact on construction activity. We are experiencing a slowing of the development impact revenue as a result.

The Southeast Area Development Impact Fee Study identified a 63% cost sharing from impact fees while the Southwest Area Impact Fee will fund 100% of the design and construction cost of the Southwest fire station.

There are currently no funds collected in the Capital Facilities Fee (CFF) for new or relocated fire stations. If the current General Plan update adding the deployment recommendations for the new and relocated fire stations is approved by Council, the projects would then be included in the Capital Facility Fee Program.

The City Council will address the requests during their June 2004 budget hearings for the 2004-2005 budget.

- 2) The findings of the **Santa Rosa Fire Station Location & Deployment Study – Final Report** were submitted to and approved by the Santa Rosa Planning Commission on February 24, 2004 for inclusion into the City's General Plan. The item will now come to the City Council for approval. If approved, the project costs will be included in the Capital Facility Fee during the next fee update scheduled later this year. This change will allow the plan's implementation costs to be funded through the City's Capital Facility Fee account.

- 3) The Santa Rosa Fire Department has reviewed and identified impacts on all new projects including Annexations, Environmental Impact Reviews (EIR's) and Development Applications. The result is that fire protection impacts from projects are being addressed early in the review process. As an example, a developer submitting an annexation in the Northwest area of the City has proposed the establishment of a Community Facilities District to fund ongoing impact costs, including police and firefighters, to serve the development.

Development impact fees can only be used for infrastructure and do not address the issue of annual maintenance and ongoing personnel costs. The existing property tax structure does not provide adequate funding for annual maintenance and personnel costs required to serve a development. Operational costs exceed \$1.5 million per year for personnel, equipment and required resources.

- 4) The Fire Department has begun utilizing GIS software to complete detailed analysis of response time, call volume, call type and impacts of growth on the current and planned fire station and unit deployment plans on an ongoing basis.
- 5) The Department has completed a Design Ideas and Concept Report in an effort to identify a generic fire station design that may be used for future fire station additions. The report will be used to develop specifications for fire station construction.
- 6) The Fire Department is in an active search for Federal, State and Local funding opportunities to acquire resources. We have obtained two grants for equipment in the past from Homeland Security "FIRE" Grants. In addition, we have received a substantial amount of Weapons of Mass Destruction equipment through grant awards.
- 7) Current work at the State and local level regarding public safety funding and resource needs may present new options for funding in the future.
- 8) We are actively pursuing a fire station site in the vicinity of Mendocino Avenue and Chanate Road for a new fire station. Once a location is identified we will request funds for the land acquisition.
- 9) We have identified a potential fire station site adjacent to an existing Utility Department water tank site in the vicinity of Fountaingrove Parkway and Parker Hill Road. If the site proves to be adequate we will request that the Council administratively reserve the site for the construction of a fire station. Funding for the acquisition would then be requested in the budget.
- 10) We are researching deployment alternatives such as the relocation of a fire engine, a temporary fire station and other alternatives that may allow us to make an effective impact on deployment within a shortened time period.

## **Recommendations**

### **Recommendation (R1)**

The City Council must provide the funding in FY 2004-2005 for designing and constructing the new and relocated fire stations in the Southwest Area of Santa Rosa as recommended in the *Santa Rosa Fire Station Location & Deployment Study – Final Report* in order to bring the response times in line with the established goals of the City.

### **City Response (R1)**

The City Council will review the request for the design of the Southwest fire station during the June 2004 budget hearings. Impact fees have been identified to support the design phase for the fire station. At this time the City does not have funds available for construction or staffing of the proposed new facilities or to relocate existing facilities. The City will explore other possible funding sources for these purposes as discussed below.

The relocation of the existing Fire Station 8, located on Burbank Avenue, to the vicinity of Sebastopol Road and Timothy Road is not included in the Southwest or Capital Facility Fee plan. As noted in the response to findings, this relocation is included in a request to add the new and relocated stations to the General Plan and ultimately the Capital Facility and Southwest Area Plan Impact Fee Reports. The City Council will review the request later this year.

The City also anticipates that the City Council will consider placing on the November ballot an initiative for a sales tax increase to cover public safety costs such as the costs for new facilities. At this stage, the City cannot predict whether the measure will be success or the revenue that will be generated

### **Recommendation (R2)**

The City Council must promptly establish a timetable for designing and constructing the new fire stations to be located in the vicinity of Mendocino Avenue and Steele Lane, Kawana Springs Road and Franz Kafka Avenue, and the relocation of Fire Stations 5 and 6.

### **City Response (R2)**

At this time, the City is unable to provide any realistic time schedule for construction of the new fire stations because it is unable to predict how soon the funds will be available to fund the cost which has substantially increased from the initial cost estimates. As

noted in the beginning of the response, the City of Santa Rosa is in the final phase in the recruitment of a new Fire Chief. The new Fire Chief will be assigned the task of evaluating and validating existing deployment plans and response standards along with the implementation of an action plan with a designated goal setting process. The new Chief will also be assigned to evaluate possible interim measures that might be adopted until construction can be completed.

### **Recommendation (R3)**

As a guide, the City Council must clearly define *standards of response coverage* in the form of a policy statement by the end of FY 2004-2005. As a guide, the City should use the self assessment program as outlined by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International, Inc. in their document *Creating and Evaluating Standards of Response Coverage for Fire Departments*.

### **City Response (R3)**

As noted in the report, the City currently has response standards adopted as part of the General Plan. The new Fire Chief will be charged with the task of evaluating and validating existing deployment plans and response standards. The "Standards of Cover" concept includes an annual review process that will evaluate all factors required for system enhancements.

The deployment plan will become a component of a Fire Department strategic plan and will be used as a living document to shape the future growth of the Santa Rosa Fire Department.

### **Recommendation (R4)**

As soon as possible and as often as necessary, the Roseland Fire Protection District Board of Directors should proactively represent the needs and concerns of the citizens served by the District to the City Council regarding less than adequate emergency response times and any further delays in constructing the new and relocated fire stations.

### **City Response (R4)**

It is the Santa Rosa Fire Department's responsibility, as the contractor for the Roseland Fire Protection District, to have dialogue with the Roseland Board of Directors on this issue. This item will be added to agendas for discussion at upcoming Board Meetings.