



Fire Service Delivery Study

Sebastopol, California

matrix 
consulting group

Study Objectives

- ◆ To conduct a study of the current fire service delivery in the City of Sebastopol to include:
 - Retention of the VFD with conversion to 24/7 staffing model
 - Consolidation of the SVFD with Gold Ridge FPD
- ◆ The following benefits were desired from the study
 - Increased efficiency
 - Improved effectiveness
 - Enhanced services, supervision and training
 - Cost avoidance
 - Coordination and planning of consolidation
 - Improvement to current ISO rating
 - Enhancements to improve future state and federal grant funding

Study Approaches

- ◆ Interviews with City personnel, VFD members, community members and GRFPD leadership
- ◆ Data collected from the City, VFD and GRFPD for analysis
- ◆ Interim deliverables reviewed by the City to ensure they were factual
- ◆ Development of a draft, reviewed by the City and final report after additional information and edits were developed

Key Service Delivery Findings

- ◆ Sebastopol VFD responds to approximately 1,000 calls annually
- ◆ The hours between 9:00 am and 7:00 pm are the busiest for calls
- ◆ Call demand is heaviest along SR 12 and SR 116
- ◆ Mutual Aid is required from Gold Ridge FPD and/or Graton FPD to develop an effective response force on structure fires.
- ◆ Travel time to emergency calls is excellent at 3:16 for 90% of emergency calls
- ◆ Turnout time, however, is long at 5:47 seconds for 90% of emergency calls since 2019
- ◆ Apparatus is aging and needs replacement

Options for the City

- ◆ Status Quo – Keeping VFD as it is currently operated
- ◆ Enhanced Status Quo – Adding staffing to improve service delivery and response reliability during peak hours
- ◆ Combination – Staffing a 24/7 Fire Department, supplemented with volunteer firefighters
- ◆ Consolidation with the Gold Ridge Fire Protection District

Status Quo

- ◆ Heavily reliant on volunteer firefighters
- ◆ Volunteers have limited availability in daytime hours
- ◆ Recruiting and retaining volunteers has been problematic locally and nationally
- ◆ System results in longer than desirable turnout times
- ◆ Station improvements and vehicle replacement issues remain

Enhanced Status Quo / Combination

- ◆ 24-hour staffing with stipend employees would require a minimum of 47 active volunteers to ensure compliance with FLSA requirements
- ◆ 16-hour staffing with stipend employees would require a minimum of 32 active volunteers to ensure compliance with FLSA requirements
- ◆ 24-hour staffing using a combination of 2 career and 1 volunteer daily will require hiring 6 career personnel and a having a minimum of 6 volunteers to fill the stipend position

Enhanced Status Quo Budget

Line Item	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
24-hour stipend	\$1,879,420	\$1,978,469	\$2,090,974	\$2,219,114
16-hour stipend	\$1,694,305	\$1,793,354	\$1,905,859	\$2,033,999
Combination	\$2,083,510	\$2,242,483	\$2,420,161	\$2,619,213
Existing VFD	\$1,448,296	\$1,596,925	\$1,760,806	\$1,941,506

Advantages and Challenges

- ◆ Advantages and Challenges of Enhanced Status Quo / Combination

Advantages	Challenges
City maintains local control	Requires remodel of existing fire station
City determines desired staffing, performance and capital replacement timelines	Requires recruitment of additional volunteers, fire chief and full-time personnel
Support functions continue to be provided by the City	Voter approval required for any tax measure to fund the system.
Total response time improved during staffed times	Special election cost \$30,000

Consolidation

- ◆ 24-hour staffing with a career Captain, Engineer and stipend volunteers daily
- ◆ Chief and Battalion Chief available for emergency response, management and recovery
- ◆ Administrative support services provided by the District
- ◆ Gold Ridge provides normal apparatus and facility maintenance
- ◆ City responsible for improvements and capital expenditures exceeding \$15,000, including apparatus
- ◆ Governance provided by seven-member Board of Directors

Consolidation Cost Projections

Line Item	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Parcel Tax Revenue	\$1,124,437	\$1,137,978	\$1,151,682	\$1,165,552
Sebastopol Contribution	\$1,251,656	\$1,252,717	\$1,253,778	\$1,254,481
Total Revenue	\$2,376,093	\$2,390,695	\$2,045,461	\$2,420,392
Projected Expenditures	\$1,616,289	\$1,681,732	\$1,752,699	\$1,829,744
Projected Surplus	\$759,805	\$708,963	\$652,762	\$590,649

Advantages and Challenges

◆ Advantages and Challenges of Consolidation

Advantages	Challenges
Enhanced volunteer staffing	Loss of local control outside Board representation
District is responsible for staffing and administration	LAFCO approval required prior to annexation
Voter approval not required to implement parcel tax	Requires remodel of station for 24-hour staffing
All support functions become responsibility of the District	
Total response times improve as station is staffed 24/7	

Cost Projection Comparison

Line Item	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Status Quo	\$1,448,296	\$1,596,925	\$1,760,806	\$1,941,506
24-hour Stipend Staff	\$1,879,420	\$1,978,469	\$2,090,974	\$2,219,114
16-hour Stipend Staff	\$1,694,305	\$1,793,354	\$1,905,859	\$2,033,999
24-hour Career and Stipend	\$2,083,510	\$2,242,483	\$2,420,161	\$2,619,213
Consolidation	\$2,376,093	\$2,390,695	\$2,045,461	\$2,420,392

Recommended Approach

- ◆ Phase 1 – Contract with Gold Ridge for administrative oversight
- ◆ Phase 2 – Implement 16-hour staffing plan
- ◆ Phase 3 – Develop required LAFCO documentation for approval for annexation into the GRFPD
- ◆ Phase 4 – Begin renovation of fire station to house personnel on 24-hour shifts while going through LAFCO approval
- ◆ Finalize consolidation and implement 24-hour staffing once LAFCO approval is achieved

Questions / Discussion
