



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: CEO  
Department No.: 012  
For Agenda Of: 2/14/2012  
Placement: Departmental  
Estimated Tme: 45 minutes  
Continued Item: No  
If Yes, date from:  
Vote Required: Majority

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TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Director(s) Chandra L. Wallar, County Executive Officer, 568.3400

Contact Info: Dennis Bozanich, Assistant to the CEO, 568-3400

SUBJECT: **Fire Department Deployment Study Results**

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: N/A

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Receive and file the *Fire Service Deployment and Departmental Performance Audit for the County of Santa Barbara* conducted by Citygate Associates, LLC, and
- B. Request that the Fire Chief return to the Board in sixty (60) days with an operational response plan.

**Summary Text:**

The County of Santa Barbara contracted with Citygate Associates (Folsom, CA) to conduct a deployment analysis, performance audit and management analysis of the Santa Barbara County Fire Department. The report, *Fire Service Deployment and Departmental Performance Audit for the County of Santa Barbara*, includes:

- Identifying potential service gaps or duplications,
- Recommending strategies for maximizing current Fire Department operations, and
- Identifying any “best practices” appropriate for the County of Santa Barbara.

## **Background:**

The objective of the audit conducted by Citygate Associates was to identify the current and the desired level of service and then assess the Department's ability to deliver that level of service. The consultant's analysis process utilized a variety of fact gathering and analysis tools, including face to face interviews, Geographic Information Services (GIS) data mapping and application of national criteria to service provided by the Fire Department. The report is broken down into two volumes. Volume 1 contains the narrative portions of the report. Volume 1 has an Executive Summary, Introduction and Background Section, Standards of Response Coverage Analysis Section, Review of Headquarters Program Functions and a Fiscal Impacts Section. Volume 2 contains over 100 GIS maps (countywide and local) created from the County computerized dispatch system's call data. Definitions of the various maps can be found in Volume 1, pages 43 – 47.

The *Fire Service Deployment and Departmental Performance Audit for the County of Santa Barbara* report identifies three main challenges:

- Overall, County fire stations are correctly located with a limited need for new stations, but, as funding allows, adding an additional firefighter on units in high population density areas or where second unit response times are long;
- Management and headquarter staff are barely adequate to meet the needs of a department of this size and in two areas are below best practice, and
- Annual operating costs of maintaining the current level of service are rising faster than the revenue available. Additionally, capital needs (e.g. station renovations or expansion, equipment, etc.) are growing with little or no identified funding sources.

The Standards of Response Coverage Analysis Section provides an in-depth analysis of the County Fire Department's ability to respond to and meet the emergency risks presented in the County. The response analysis used data taken from the 9-1-1 dispatch computers to provide detailed response time and geographic mapping (see Volume Two) of fire, structure fire and emergency medical calls. Additional statistics on the types, day, time and stations responding are provided in graph form in the Standards of Response Coverage Analysis Section of the report.

The Review of Headquarters Program Functions Section provides an analysis of the management and support service programs. This includes an examination of the level of staffing in management, training, information technology, dispatch, safety, inspections and investigations. The analysis conducted for this section includes face to face interviews, reviews of daily logs, response plan reviews and appraisals of the fire prevention and training programs. One area of concern is that safety and training programs are likely functioning below best practice minimums. Overall, the report finds that the Department is well managed but functioning at a reduced level due to the fiscal limitations.

The Fiscal Impacts Section analyzes the Department's expenditure and revenue past, present and future. The consultant forecasts that additional revenue will be need over the next five years just to maintain the current level of service. Beyond the significant challenge of funding the cost of current operations in future years, the section also provides a phased strategy for implementing the operational and capital recommendations contained in the report. The phases contain the consultant's perspective on prioritizing of the operational and capital needs.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

The recommended Board action to receive the report does not require any additional expenditure of funds.

**Attachments:**

Attachment 1 – Fire Service Deployment and Performance Audit – Volume 1 Main Report

Attachment 2 – Fire Service Deployment and Performance Audit – Volume 2 Map Appendix

**Authored by:**

Dennis Bozanich, Assistant to the County Executive Officer

**cc:**

Chief Michael Dyer, Santa Barbara County Fire Chief

Sheriff Bill Brown, Santa Barbara County Sheriff

Takashi Wada, MD, Director, Department of Public Health