

Fire Chief Canto

Subject: Re: Fire Station Project - Council's Request for Additional Information

Answer to Question 1 and 4

Over time, changes in demographics, land use, and transportation system patterns, have resulted in our stations becoming virtually ineffective with their current design. These facilities were designed for a paid-on-call fire department not the full service all-hazards organization we are today make nearly 6700 incidents a year. Therefore, several of the current resources of the department are no longer meeting the needs of the organization or the community as desired. To meet the current requirements of the community and to plan for future needs and service delivery, the department needs to have all department facilities capable of housing adequate personnel and equipment to allow for efficient and effective around the clock operations.

The largest single issue facing the department with station design is the critical need to renovate older, outdated and antiquated fire stations. These stations due to size, limited construction features, multiple emergency response units, lack of fitness facilities, inadequate office space, lack of sleeping facilities / separate sleeping facilities, and lack of separate men's and women's bathing facilities, have become our primary concerns at several of our station. For example Fire Station No. 4 on Walton Boulevard has an engine, quint, support vehicle, and medic unit running from two tight apparatus bays that do not meet our current needs. Additionally, there are certain apparatus within our fleet that do not fit in this station due to current configuration of the apparatus bays. This limits our ability to reassign apparatus as needed and can affect service delivery to our customers. The quarters of this station are so inadequate that the limited fitness equipment that is available at this station is located in the kitchen area, which does not provide for a sanitary environment. Also this station has no separate men's /women's sleeping or showering facilities. This then requires the on-duty female firefighter to utilize the men's shower area to bathe, and prevents any privacy in the sleeping area.

Paramount to our current efforts as well as the proposed fire station renovations / construction planning is to view the total response jurisdiction. This means looking at the whole city with the understanding that every station must be viewed in its relationship to all adjacent stations and how these relationships equate to total city coverage and service delivery. The intent of staffing resources is to maximize the use of units to get the best first-due response times, and also to provide robust second and third unit response for major emergencies. Some of the department stations are now more than 30 years old with just a single dorm room that was converted from closet or office space, has one restroom and shower facility, and was not designed to support a 24-hour a day operations. These older stations have struggled to keep up with a modern fire department and the services we provide.