

Date: July 6, 2020

To: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager *TBM*

From: Xavier Espino, Fire Chief *XE*

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Fire Station 9 Relocation**

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In memorandums dated August 20, 2019, August 30, 2019, and January 27, 2020, staff provided the City Council with information regarding the relocation of apparatus and personnel from Fire Station 9, located at 3917 Long Beach Boulevard. Given concerns over water penetration into areas inhabited by Fire Department personnel, the history of active mold in the station, illnesses reported by crew members, and the extent of required repairs, Engine 9 was moved to Fire Station 16 (2890 East Wardlow Road), while Rescue 9 was moved to Fire Station 13 (2475 Adriatic Avenue). These apparatuses, and their respective crews, have been operating out of these locations since June 18, 2019. Fire Station 9 is an integral component of the City's service delivery model and the relocation of these resources from Station 9 has impacted the Fire Department's ability to provide optimal response times within its service area which includes Bixby Knolls, North Long Beach, and neighborhoods on the Westside.

Staff is currently conducting analysis on potential sites for the permanent location of Fire Station 9. Analysis includes layout and facility design, as well as the structural integrity essential for the facility. The Fire Department requires a property that will accommodate construction of a fire station large enough to house up to eight personnel and multiple apparatus bays for the engine, rescue, and additional units, in the case of temporary apparatus moves and/or potential future growth. Additionally, the ideal location would be on a major corridor to allow for more efficient response to emergencies, while minimizing the impact on the surrounding neighborhood. Discussions with property owners are ongoing, and once a replacement site has been determined, an item will be brought to the City Council for consideration.

When Station 9 was closed, staff identified the former Station 9 site as a feasible possible location for a temporary station. Use of this site would require demolition of the existing structure, and the installation of temporary trailers on the site while a permanent location was identified and constructed. This approach required preparation of an EIR to analyze the impacts of demolition of the potentially historic Fire Station structure, and City staff began that work in September 2019. A Draft EIR is now complete and will be released to the public the week of July 6, 2020, to begin the public comment period. It is expected that the review and appeal process for the EIR will take several additional months, and it would then take several months to demolish the building and install the temporary trailers on the site.

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Concurrent with the search for a permanent location staff was diligently analyzing the options for a temporary location that would allow for Engine 9 and Rescue 9 to be brought back to a single location within the Fire Station 9 service area. This effort continues because of the need for better temporary accommodations for Fire Station 9 services and personnel as the temporary trailers at Fire Station 16 are insufficient for longer-term habitation. Further, given the significant amount of time needed to make the Fire Station 9 site useable as a temporary station as was initially planned, staff explored other options for a temporary station location. As staff began to consider alternative sites, the former Boeing (now Goodman) Fitness Center at 2019 East Wardlow became available and offers several benefits that make this location a viable option. These factors included that the site is available for occupancy in the near term and can be quickly converted to a temporary fire station relative to the wait times associated with demolition and installation of trailers at Fire Station 9; the existing facilities do not require substantial up front investment and represent a savings over the purchase of rental trailers for the Fire Station 9 site; and finally, the Goodman location is expected to improve response times by one and one-half ( $1^{1/2}$ ) minutes for the engine, and two and one-half ( $2^{1/2}$ ) minutes for rescue within the Station 9 service area while the work on a permanent station continues.

Further details on the Goodman property and the lease terms are scheduled to be brought to the City Council for consideration on July 14, 2020. If you have any questions, please contact me at (562) 570-2509.

CC: CHARLES PARKIN, CITY ATTORNEY  
DOUGLAS P. HAUBERT, CITY PROSECUTOR  
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY AUDITOR  
LINDA F. TATUM, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER  
KEVIN JACKSON, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER  
TERESA CHANDLER, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER  
REBECCA G. GARNER, ADMINISTRATIVE DEPUTY CITY MANAGER