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NOV 1 2013  
City Manager's Office

# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Larry Esquivel

**SUBJECT:** SOUTH SAN JOSE POLICE  
SUBSTATION

**DATE:** October 31, 2013

Approved

Date

11/1/13

## INFORMATION

In the 2013-2014 Adopted Budget, the City Council approved funding for the Phase I opening of the South San José Police Substation effective January 2014. The opening of the Substation is, however, included on the \$20 Million General Fund Contingency Plan that was developed as part of the 2013-2014 Adopted Budget to address uncertainty related to the outcome of litigation associated with the elimination of the Supplemental Retiree Benefit Reserve (SRBR) and the implementation of the lowest cost healthcare plan changes.

## BACKGROUND

The Substation was built to house patrol, pre-processing, records, investigations, and various other units. In order to phase-in the General Fund operating impact, the opening of the Substation is planned in stages. Phase I of the Plan, as included in the 2013-2014 Adopted Operating Budget, moves the southern patrol division, some non-patrols units and includes funding for 14.0 positions and \$2.3 million in the General Fund for three departments, Police, Public Works, and Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS). The \$2.3 million is in addition to the \$3.2 million one-time funds from various capital funds and law enforcement grants for furniture, fixtures and equipment and a portion of the alternate emergency communications center, bringing the total resources to open the facility to \$5.5 million.

## Move In Plans

The Substation was intended to provide public access to police services in the southern part of the City, to increase efficiencies for southern patrols and allow expansion of the Department to address service demand impacts as the City continues to grow. The Department has worked with the City Manager's Office, the Budget Office and the Public Works Department to develop a plan that allows the City to open the facility with the highest gain in efficiencies at the lowest cost. In order to open the facility, additional work must be completed to ensure the building is functioning properly, as well as furnish and equip the building, as necessary. Funding is currently allocated in 2013-2014, as noted above, to address these needs. The Department anticipates this work will be completed by January 2014, but will hold off on any perishable items until a move-in date is determined.

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Because the opening of the Police Substation is included on the \$20 Million General Fund Contingency Plan, legal decisions regarding the elimination of the Supplemental Retiree Benefit Reserve (SRBR) and the implementation of the lowest cost healthcare plan changes are necessary before the facility can be opened. Since the decision on the need for the contingency plan will not be announced before the new calendar year, substation plans cannot be finalized and the move-in date will be delayed.

However, even if the contingency was lifted, the Department does not recommend moving into the Substation this fiscal year. The Department has historically been centralized, and, while efficiencies are expected by opening the Substation, there is concern about potential impacts of decentralizing with the current low filled staffing levels. The Department has 1,109 budgeted sworn staff and currently has only 988 street-ready officers. This includes 70 sworn staff on leave or modified duty and not available for Patrol. There are an additional 39 officers currently in the Field Training Program and expected to be street-ready in January 2014, and 53 recruits recently started the academy. However, based on current trends, approximately 10% of recruits hired do not graduate and another 10% or more do not pass field training. In addition, the Department has averaged 2 to 3 retirements and 5 to 6 resignations monthly.

Given the current staffing challenges, the Department continues to adjust the organizational structure in order to maintain services levels with the available workforce, dedicating a significant portion of the command staff resources to ensuring the most effective delivery of services. At this time, it is recommended that the added challenge of deploying Patrol from two locations be postponed until the Department's staffing is more stable and the Department is able to manage such a change in deployment. The completion and activation of the alternative Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) located at the Substation is, however, recommended this fiscal year. This alternative PSAP is a back-up for the 9-1-1 Communications Center in an emergency. One of the most crucial elements of a disaster plan is to have an adequate alternative PSAP to ensure emergency calls are handled with minimal disruption. The current alternate PSAP facility has significant physical limitations that hinder staff and the equipment is no longer adequate to meet the needs of the community and operate as a fully functioning alternative PSAP.

As part of the upcoming 2014-2015 budget process, the Administration will re-evaluate the operational impacts and efficiencies to determine when the appropriate time is to move into the facility.

/s/

Larry Esquivel  
Acting Chief of Police

LE/LP