



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Robert Sapien, Jr

**SUBJECT:** FIRE SQUAD COSTING

**DATE:** May 23, 2018

Approved

Date

5-24-18

## BACKGROUND

During the May 10, 2018 Study Session on the 2018-2019 Proposed Operating Budget, the Mayor requested information on the cost of an additional Fire Squad and which stations would most benefit from a new Squad.

The Department currently deploys three Squads, which are two-person response units deployed to respond to low level emergency medical service (EMS) requests. The Squad Pilot Program (Pilot), implemented in July 2012, was enabled by side letter agreement with San José Fire Fighters, IAFF Local 230. Squad deployment has changed over time, including service area refinements, station locations, dispatch procedures, and Squad cross-staffing of Breathing Support Units (BSU), which may be deployed during emergencies to refill firefighter breathing apparatuses. Today, Squads are co-located with high call volume Engine Companies at Fire Stations 3, 5, and 26. These units are dispatched to low level EMS responses in their first due areas, and provide utility support at larger incidents. This current deployment configuration has served to improve engine company availability at the Squad stations and during larger emergencies by providing cross-staffing for BSUs, which would otherwise require that a full engine or truck company be taken out of service.

## ANALYSIS

The Fire Department has 33 Fire Stations staffed with 43 Companies and three Squads to cover over 200 square miles. Though the addition of full companies continues to be a high priority for the Department, including the future addition of a new Engine 37 and the restoration of Truck 3, the Department is confident that additional Squad deployments could improve response time performance and fire protection coverage in other high call volume fire stations. Response areas that would be most effective, and prioritized in the following order, would be at Fire Stations 18 (4430 Monterey Highway), 4 (710 Leigh Avenue), and 10 (511 South Monroe Street).

Costing information for an additional Squad providing 24/7 coverage is provided in the table below.

<b>Table 1</b>					
<b>Estimated Cost for Squad</b>					
<b>Program Components</b>	<b>Personal Service</b>	<b>FTE*</b>	<b>Non-Personal</b>	<b>2018-2019 Costs**</b>	<b>On-going Costs</b>
Firefighter	\$123,957	3.0		\$278,903	\$383,691
Fire Engineer	\$251,640	4.0		\$754,920	\$1,043,876
<b>Total Personal Services</b>				<b>\$1,033,823</b>	<b>\$1,427,567</b>
One Time Personal Protection Equipment			\$61,473	\$61,473	\$3,500
Lucas Chest Compression			\$16,256	\$16,256	\$1,163
LP-15 AED			\$23,144	\$23,144	\$1,469
Vehicle/Apparatus			\$493,155	\$493,155	\$6,000
<b>Total Non-Personal</b>				<b>\$594,028</b>	<b>\$12,132</b>
<b>General Fund Costs</b>				<b>\$1,627,851</b>	<b>\$1,439,699</b>

\* Note that the addition of a Squad requires 7.0 FTE to maintain minimum staffing levels for 24/7 coverage. Given the current makeup of firefighters to fire engineers, the next Squad added would add 3.0 Firefighters and 4.0 Fire Engineers. The subsequent Squad added would be 4.0 Firefighters and 3.0 Fire Engineers. This alternating ratio is required to maintain the appropriate balance between firefighters and fire engineers.

\*\* Assumes an October 1, 2018 start date for the staff.

Where budget limitations prevent funding for new fire stations or additional full engine or truck companies, the Department recommends deployment of Squads to reinforce response capabilities.

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**COORDINATION**

This memorandum has been coordinated with the City Manager's Budget Office.

/s/  
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Acting Fire Chief