




MEMORANDUM

Delray Beach Fire-Rescue Department



TO:	Donald Cooper, City Manager	DATE: 12/16/2015
FROM:	 Danielle Connor, Fire Chief	
SUBJECT:	Fire Station #3 Rebuild Operational and Financial Justification	

This analysis is part of an operational and financial justification for the rebuilding and relocation of Fire Station #3. Fire Station #3 is located at 651 W. Linton Boulevard, was originally constructed in 1971 is 44 years old. Fire Station #3 has been refurbished and expanded upon on numerous occasions to meet current standards and to meet expectations in providing the fire and emergency services for our citizens and business partners. Station #3 was expanded from its original size (6,100 square feet) to its current size of 6,430 square feet (3,038 square foot bay floor and 3,392 square foot living quarters) and supports a shift staffing level of five (5) Firefighters. Other renovations have included separate restrooms for female employees, fire sprinkler system installation and most recently in 1993; the bathrooms, kitchen, and day room were expanded as well as construction of an apparatus service room.

Over the past four decades, issues related to plumbing, design, mold, water damage, and rodent infestations have made the living space intermittently uninhabitable. The station was closed temporarily and personnel moved to other locations in 2008 due to extensive rodent infestation and mold. Furthermore, a class action grievance filed by the Collective Bargaining Unit resulted in the reimbursement of all sick time used by any employee who worked at Fire Station #3 during a specified period in 2008. Again, in 2014, an air quality report cited the presence of visible suspect black mold in the Captain's room, the kitchen, and in the air conditioning system. During this timeframe, employees complained of a musty order, headaches, sinus infections, and other occupational-related illnesses. In 2015, an employee entered a Worker's Compensation Claim stating that Fire Station #3 causes a reoccurring illness (termed Environmental Asthma). The employee sought only to avoid duty assignments at Fire Station #3.

Since the original complaint, the department has taken many steps to mitigate the issues and keep the station as clean as possible. For example, we have installed a number of HEPA-portable air conditioning units, replaced the station air conditioning, have been aggressive in rodent control efforts through contractual arrangements, conducted air quality studies, and wrote a Firefighter Assistance Grant (Fire Construction Grant) in 2010 for station replacement/rebuild that was unsuccessful. Additionally, we have recently begun the process of installing a diesel exhaust removal system to assist with the removal of carcinogen-causing emissions within the apparatus bay and the station. The condition of this Station has been a source of controversy and conflict for many years...with funding being the crux of the issue. Unbudgeted repairs totaling \$33,000 were required with the 2008 closure and included HVAC and duct replacement, roof

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repairs, mold and rodent eradication and drywall repairs. This grievance settlement of reinstatement of 885 hours of sick time to affected employees cost an additional \$22,000 to the City of Delray Beach. Due to the age of the building maintenance, costs are expected to increase on an annual basis as well as the potential for additional workers compensation type claims.

Fire Station #3, due to its location within the City's urban core, is the second busiest of all of the City's stations. This location serves the most economically and demographically diverse populations within our multi-cultural and multi-income community. Station #3's response zone includes a range of structures from waterfront condominiums to subsidized living facilities for the elderly and low-to-moderate income residents. Due to this diversity, the types of emergencies that are serviced are also diverse, including, US Interstate Highway vehicle accidents, overdoses at one or more of the area's drug rehabilitation centers, cardiac calls, strokes, injuries related to community crime as well as vehicle and structure fires. In fiscal year 2012/2013, the area comprising of Zone 3 yielded 2,615 emergency service requests. In fiscal year, 2013/2014 Fire Station #3 coverage areas had 2,834 emergency service requests and the most recently completed fiscal year 2014/2015 yielded 2,927 emergency service requests.

As summarized above, the station is woefully inadequate and not sufficient to house our professional firefighting men and women providing them with the appropriate facilities to prepare for and deliver requisite fire and emergency services.

- The building does not meet the operational needs:
 - Operational Deficiencies
 - Not enough space for apparatus and equipment
 - Inadequate training space
 - Inadequate decontamination area
 - Lacks adequate office space for current functions
 - This building must serve as the work and living space for a 24/7 department
 - Infrastructure Deficiencies
 - Fire service professionals agree that the expectancy of a fire station is 40 to 50 years
 - Fire Station #3 is 44 years old
 - Requires hardening for hurricane protection
 - Plumbing system is inadequate (require multiple repairs)
 - Sewage lines are an issue (sewer flies are a constant nuisance)
 - Settlement cracks in the apparatus floor
- The entrance and exit of emergency vehicles into Station #3 or onto Linton Boulevard are an immediate danger to firefighters, residents, and visitors of our community.
 - The Station is located on one of the busiest roadways in the City
 - The station is virtually invisible, with the exception of the emergency traffic signal) to oncoming traffic
 - The station does not possess "drive through" bays for each apparatus
 - Medic 3 must back into the Station from a 6-lane major arterial roadway
 - The backing of apparatus is inherently more dangerous and has resulted in several vehicle crashes throughout the years

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- The traffic pattern when responding to emergencies has become overwhelmingly more convoluted and congested due to the number of new constructed structures
 - Difficulty in gaining access to Linton Boulevard
 - Possible travel time impacts due to increased traffic congestion

Funding was included in the CIP for replacement of this station for fiscal year 15-16 and fiscal year 16-17. My recommendation is that we make this project a priority and move as expeditiously as possible in identifying a parcel and commencing the RFQ process for architectural services. Although replacing Fire Station #3 is an expensive endeavor, it is justified operationally and fiscally. Our employees are our most coveted assets. It is our responsibility to provide them with a safe working environment, albeit on the fire ground or in the fire station. In so doing, our employees will deliver the very best service possible and meet the highest expectation of our citizens.

CC: David Scott, Assistant City Manager
Jack Warner, Chief Financial Officer
Randal Krejcarek, Environmental Services Director
John Morgan, Environmental Services
Victor Williams, Assistant Chief

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