

SECTION 6 – FIRE FACILITIES

I. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The following criterion establishes the standards by which the need for an increase in fire fighting personnel, equipment, and facilities are needed. The City shall maintain a standard ratio of 1.5 firefighters per 1,000 residents, and 2 administrative support staff per 27,000 persons. It will be necessary to retire one fire engine every fifteen years and one ambulance every 0-7 years of service depending on the wear and tear it receives in its lifetime. Based on current population and existing equipment, one (1) fire fighting vehicle is needed for every 8,150 people and one (1) ambulance for ever 16,300 people. Fire station construction/need is based on 6,500 square feet per 17,900 population.

II. FACILITY PLANNING AND ADEQUACY ANALYSIS

This analysis provides an inventory of the existing fire station facilities owned by the City of Calexico, the existing and future demand for facilities as well as a projected phasing schedule. The purpose of this analysis is to determine if the existing facilities are adequate and to identify approximately when additional facilities will be needed in order to meet future demand.

A. Inventory of Existing Facilities

Fire protection services for the City of Calexico are provided by the City of Calexico Fire Department. There is currently a main fire station, Station #1, located at 430 East 5th Street and a substation, Station #2, located at 900 Grant Street. Of note is that the above fire stations are located on either side of the Union Pacific railroad tracks. There is currently a proposal to build a new station in vicinity of Meadows Road and Cole Road. (*Figure 8: Existing Fire Stations*).

The City of Calexico provides Fire and Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance services to the community and its visitors. Station #1 houses one (1) 1994 Emergency One quint engine with a 75' ladder, one (1) 1991 Pierce triple combination engine (reserve), two (2) ALS ambulances with a minimum staffing of three (3) for the engine company and two (2) for the on the ambulance. Station #2 houses a 1991 Pierce triple combination fire engine and a 1979 van Pelt triple combination engine (reserve) with a minimum staffing of three assigned at the station.

The Department currently has thirty-three (33) professional firefighters including: one (1) chief, one (1) fire inspector, and one (1) administrative assistant. The Department is also working to develop a program for reserve firefighters. Station 1 has five (5) fire fighters on duty at all times, and an additional four (4) day personnel. Station 2 has three (3) fire fighters on duty at all times. The average

response time from either station is currently five plus minutes, depending on traffic.

B. Adequacy of Existing Facilities

The Fire Department currently provides average response times, from either station, of greater than five minutes, depending on traffic. However, as development continues to take place, these response times may increase due to the potential for simultaneous calls and increased traffic.

Based on the performance standards listed above of 1.5 fire fighters per 1,000 population and a current population estimate of 32,600 the fire department should have at least 49 fire fighters and 2 administrative support staff. This represents a shortfall of 16 fire fighters and 1 administrative person. The current level of staffing does not meet the present population needs as set forth in the set standards, or the *National Fire Prevention Association Standard 1710* requiring a minimum staffing of four (4) firefighters per Engine Company. The reserve program can assist in reaching the desired ratio, but the current situation represents an understaffing of fire department personnel.

Because of the age of the current fleet of four (4) fire engines, all should be replaced excluding the 1994 Emergency One engine. The ambulances will be replaced on a rotating schedule every 7 years. Based on the performance standard of one (1) fire fighting vehicle per 8,150 people, current need is for four (4) vehicles which is met by the existing fleet of aging engines. The existing two (2) ambulances also meet the required demand for ambulance service based on 1 ambulance per 16,300 people.

Based on the performance standard of 6,500 square feet per 17,900 population, an estimated existing population of 32,600, and an estimated 2025-population of 89,500, the existing two stations are adequate and three additional fire stations will be needed during the twenty-year time frame of the Service Area Plan.

C. Future Demand for Facilities

The City is estimated to reach a population of 89,500 by the year 2025. The City projects that another three stations will be needed within the existing Sphere of Influence, with commensurate staffing and equipment. In order to meet this demand, construction of three new fire station facilities within the City's Sphere of Influence will be required. There is currently a proposal to build a new station in vicinity of Meadows Road and Cole Road, which will serve the northeast commercial and residential areas of the City, another station should be built in the eastern portion of the City, and another should be built in the northwestern portion. In addition to the construction of these facilities, plans should be made to relocate Station #2; in doing so, response times should improve. These stations are expected to include two fire truck bays, all necessary housing and office

facilities for fire personnel, as well as office space for police personnel. Each station is expected to be approximately 8,500 square feet with the fire department utilizing approximately 6,500 square feet of the space.

D. Opportunities for Shared Facilities

The Calexico Fire Department is a member of the Imperial Valley Firefighters Strike Force which is responsible to respond to fire emergencies throughout California. The Calexico Fire Department is also a member of the Imperial Valley Hazardous Materials Response Team and is available to respond to hazardous materials emergencies throughout Imperial County. The Calexico Fire Department also has a fire prevention bureau headed by the inspector and administers inspections, occupancy permits, and various safety programs. The Fire Department presently belongs to Imperial Valley Emergency Communications Authority (IVECA) and Radio Community Server (RCS) which have integrated communications in the Imperial Valley and San Diego County; and will soon include Yuma County, AZ.

As discussed in item C, *Future Demand for Facilities*, above, shared fire/police facilities are planned for future stations in Calexico.

E. Phasing

As the City population increases, additional fire department staff can be hired when necessary in order to meet the demand created by future development. *Table 6-A, Demand for Fire Protection Services* estimates the demand for fire facilities and services for the next twenty years in five year increments.

At this time, a master plan for fire protection facilities has not been prepared by the fire department. There is currently a proposal to build a new station in vicinity of Meadows Road and Cole Road. The second projected station to be needed by the City should be located within new development areas west of the All American Canal. The third station location has yet to be determined.

Table 6-A: Demand for Fire Protection Services

Year	Projected Population	Number Of Firefighters		Number Of Administrative Staff	Additional Building Square Footage	Equipment New Or Replacement
		1/1,000	1.5/1,000			
2005	32,600	33	49	2		Replace 3 engines, replace 1 ambulance
2010	41,100	41	62	3		Replace 1 engine, replace 1 ambulance, 1 new engine, 1 new ambulance
2015	53,300	53	80	4	6,500	1 new engine, 2 replacement ambulances
2020	69,000	69	104	5	6,500	3 replacement engines, 2 new engines, replace 1 ambulance, 1 new ambulance
2025	89,500	90	134	7	6,500	Replace 2 engines, 3 new engines, 1 new ambulance, 2 replacement ambulances

Assumptions: Retire one fire engine every fifteen years and one ambulance every 0-7 years of service.

One (1) fire fighting vehicle is needed for every 8,150 people and one (1) ambulance for ever 16,300 people.

III. MITIGATION

Recommendations:

- A. To provide an adequate service level of fire protection for all residents, businesses, and visitors to the City of Calexico, the City shall continually monitor the existing fire department facilities and shall maintain a five minute response time to all areas of the SOI to ensure that adequate fire protection is provided.
- B. Fire protection staffing and facilities shall be expanded commensurably to accommodate the needs of Calexico’s growing population. (GP Policy 4.4.1.10 (a))
- C. The City Council shall assist the Fire Department in maintaining the standard ratio of 1.5 firefighters per 1,000 residents. (GP Policy 4.4.1.10 (h))
- D. The City shall require new development projects to pay fees proportional to their demand for fire services. (GP Policy 4.4.1.10 (b))

- E. The City shall require fire facility sites in subsequent Specific Plans based on community need. (GP Policy 4.4.1.10 (c))
- F. The City Planning Department shall regularly update the fire department on new development so that the fire department may evaluate their ability to support said projects. (GP Policy 4.4.1.10 (d))
- G. Maintain an on-going fire inspection program to reduce the fire hazards associated with older buildings, residences, critical facilities, public assembly facilities, and industry.
- H. The City should consider adopting a sprinkler ordinance in new residential, commercial, and/or industrial development.
- I. With the input of all City departments, periodically review and update the City's Emergency Preparedness Plan.
- J. The City shall enforce Calexico City Ordinance 890 § 1 which imposes development impact fees prior to the issuance of building permits for new development where the City has discretionary authority to ensure that new development pays its "fair share" of expanded or new Fire Protection facilities and services. All fees collected and any interest accrued pursuant to Ordinance 890 § 1 shall be used by the City for the purpose of providing capital facilities and equipment, including station construction, station expansion, and fire apparatus. Until Ordinance 890 § 1 is updated, which is underway, and will be completed upon adoption of this Service Area Plan, conditions of project approval shall address fee shortfalls to assure adequate fire services and facilities funding.
- K. The City shall analyze possible funding sources in addition to a City-wide CFD to fund ongoing staffing needs.
- L. The City shall develop a Fire Services Master Plan upon which future planning and funding can be based.
- M. The City should consider participating in a regional fire district to augment City-provided services.

IV. FINANCING

The current revenue sources for fire protection services include property and sales taxed from the City's general fund, development impact fees, and some grant funding.

A. Per Capita Costs

For the fiscal year 2005-2006, the City of Calexico Adopted Budget shows total expenses for fire services of \$3,255,671. The 2005 population is estimated at 32,600. Therefore, per capita costs for fire services in Calexico are \$99.87.

$$\$3,255,671 \text{ cost} / 32,600 \text{ residents} = \$99.87 \text{ per capita}$$

A cost estimate for future fire facilities and equipment is provided in *Table 6-B, Cost Estimate for Future Fire Protection Services*. These estimates were calculated by utilizing the above per capita costs for services, equipment costs provided by the Calexico Fire Department, a construction cost of \$340 per square foot², and projected needs shown in *Table 6-A*.

B. Future Funding Sources

The City will continue to use the existing funding sources.

All proposed development will be required to comply with provisions of Chapter 3.28 of the 1995 City of Calexico Municipal Code which establishes and implements the City's fire mitigation fee (Ordinance 890 § 1). At the time of this writing, the fees per land use of new development are as follows: \$225 or \$0.19 per square foot whichever is greater for all residential dwelling units; \$225 for the first 5,000 square feet and \$0.19 per square foot thereafter for all commercial buildings; \$225 for the first 4,000 square feet and \$0.19 per square foot thereafter for industrial uses. Land dedicated to the City of Calexico as a condition of a discretionary approval shall be accepted in lieu of direct cash payment. All fees collected and any interest accrued shall be used by the City for the purpose of providing capital facilities and equipment, including station construction, station expansion, and fire apparatus. Until Ordinance 890 § 1 can be updated, conditions of project approval shall address fee shortfalls to assure adequate fire services and facilities funding.

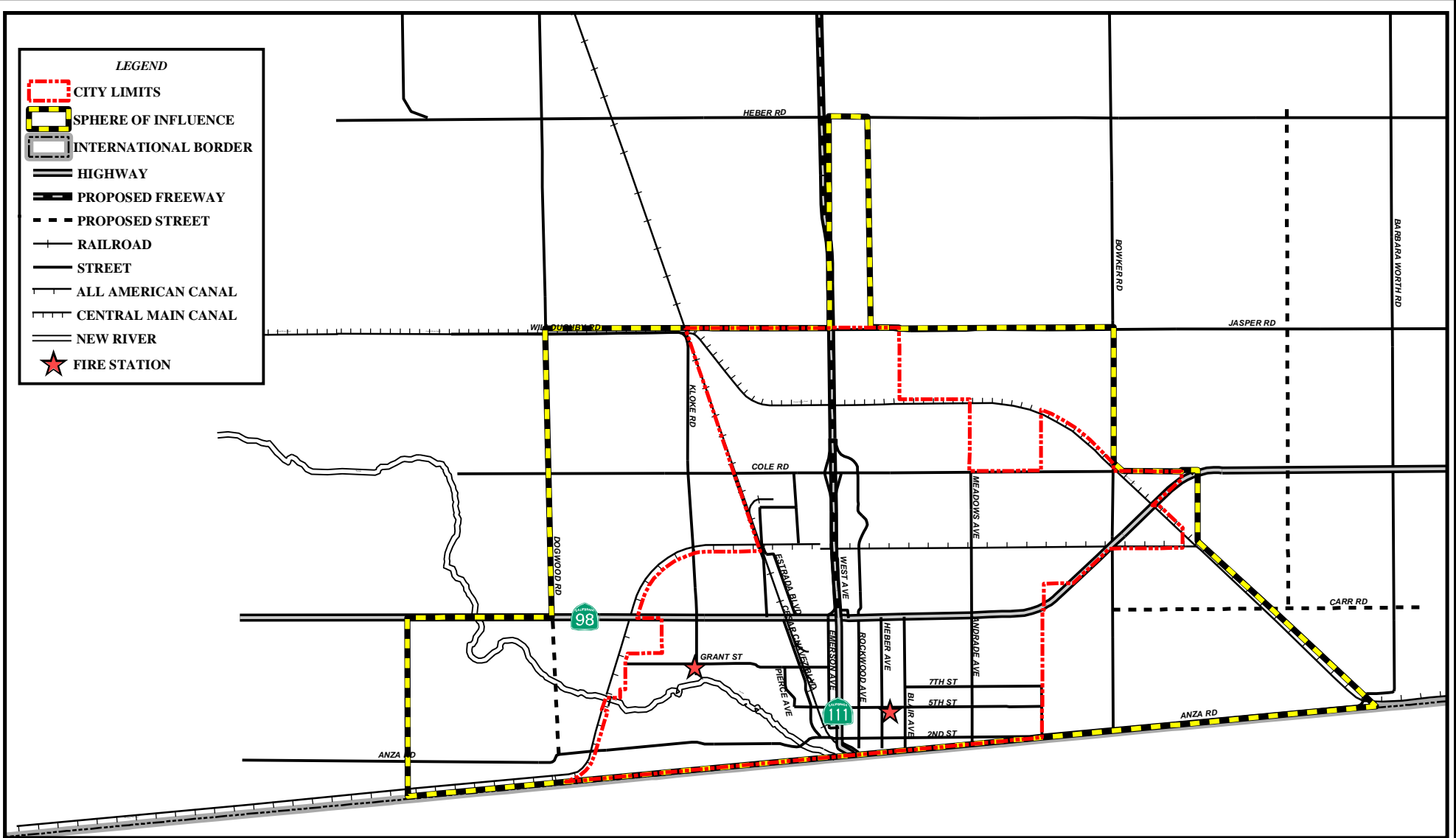
Other possible funding sources include a Fire Suppression Assessment, formation of a Citywide Community Facilities District, Fire Act Grant funds and other grants. Further descriptions of these and other financing mechanisms are provided in *Section 12, Financing*, of this document.

² Based on recent bids for construction of fire stations in Riverside County. (Gary Cinnamon, 1/25/06).

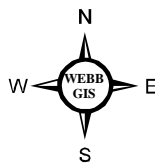
Table 6-B: Cost Estimate for Future Fire Protection Services

Year	Projected Population	Projected Phasing For Construction Of New Fire Facilities	Estimated Construction Costs (Based On \$340/Sf In 2006 Dollars)	Per Capita Cost	Estimated Equipment Costs*
2005	32,600			\$3,255,671	\$1,570,000
2010	41,100			\$4,104,657	\$820,000
2015	53,300	6,500 s.f.	\$2,210,000	\$5,323,071	\$590,000
2020	69,000	6,500 s.f.	\$2,210,000	\$6,891,030	\$2,790,000
2025	89,500	6,500 s.f.	\$2,210,000	\$8,938,365	\$2,220,000

* Assumed \$350,000 per new triple combination engine, \$120,000 per ambulance, \$750,000 per quint.



Source: City of Calexico General Plan, 2006



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Figure 8

Existing Fire Stations