



Stanislaus County Fire Authority Business Plan

Fiscal Year 2024

Executive Summary

The Stanislaus County Fire Authority (Fire Authority) is a Joint Powers Agreement established in November 2005 by the fire agencies in Stanislaus County to make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on the expenditure of the Less-Than-Countywide Fire Tax, and to establish a cooperative relationship among the parties to the agreement for the provision of services.

OVERVIEW

Issues of mutual concern to the fire agencies of Stanislaus County were identified and the Fire Authority, through a work-group process, came together for the following purposes:

- Facilitate cooperation among the Fire Agencies and the County related to the allocation and use of the Less-Than-Countywide Fire Tax.
- Provide a forum for discussion and study of countywide issues of mutual interest.
- Identify, inventory, and comprehensively plan for solutions to countywide issues requiring multi-jurisdictional cooperation.
- Facilitate cooperation among the Fire Agencies and the County for specific purposes, interrelated actions, and for the adoption of common policies with respect to issues and problems which are common to the parties.
- Develop countywide plans and policies for growth and development.

The Stanislaus County Fire Authority Board is comprised of an appointed representative from each fire agency listed on page 3. Each individual agency adopted a resolution to approve the Joint Powers Agreement in order to participate, entitling each agency representative to one vote. As outlined in the Joint Powers Agreement, the Stanislaus County Fire Warden's Office is the administering agency. The Fire Authority may designate any representative of a member agency to serve as Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary.

A quorum of at least one-half of the member agencies is required for the Fire Authority to take action. A two-thirds majority of those members present are required to approve all fiscal matters, including the use of the Less-Than-Countywide Fire Tax, but not including expenditures of less than \$500.

FIRE AUTHORITY GOALS

The following goals were adopted and reaffirmed by the Fire Authority membership:

- Ensure an open environment that provides respectful and professional responsiveness to our community and agency partners.
- Adopt integrated, collaborative, and multi-disciplinary planning to ensure that our community and agency partners are served in an equitable, efficient, and effective manner.
- Provide the highest quality of fire, life safety and all risk support service through collaborative community and agency partnerships in the areas of fire prevention, fire investigation, fire communications, administration/support, and training within available

funding.

- Improve the stability and sustainability of revenue sources to support and enhance the fire, life safety and all risk services on a countywide basis.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The strategy of the Stanislaus County Fire Authority is to represent the interests of all member agencies by focusing on organizational goals of both the Fire Authority and individual agencies. The following strategies were reaffirmed by the membership:

- Expand and foster mutually beneficial relationships with internal and external fire agencies.
- Enhance relationships between fire districts, cities, county agencies, and identified stakeholders.
- Achieve a unified voice and strengthen the fire service to meet future challenges.
- Be the spokesperson/organization for fire and emergency services countywide.
- Provide strategic direction, leadership, and influence to coordinate professional standards.
- Initiate and support efforts that assist in funding the fire service.
- Improve financial stability of the existing programs and services.
- Explore financial opportunities.

ACTION PLAN

The action plans are defined to meet the adopted strategies stated above. The following pages outline specific planned service levels based on the priorities and anticipated funding for Fiscal Year 2024.

It is the intent and purpose of the Fire Authority to achieve the most efficient and effective use of the Less-Than-Countywide Fire Tax revenues, and to seek partnerships to advance the ability to provide fire and emergency services in Stanislaus County.

The Fire Authority strives to provide services commensurate with funding levels. As funding levels change, adjustments are made based on available funding and negotiated with the service providers to ensure program stability.

While preparing the annual Business Plan, the Fire Authority engages with the member agencies to identify service priorities, performance expectations and funding allocations for those services identified as critical to the fire agencies in Stanislaus County. Based on available funding, the group then targets achievable, sustainable service levels to support those priorities.

The Fire Authority will continue to hold quarterly meetings for updates on services provided as well as regular sub-committee meetings to address issues specific to each as needed.

Fire Authority Organization

Fiscal Year 2024 Officers

Chair – Chris Parnell, Stanislaus County Sheriff’s Fire Warden

Vice Chair – Jeff Hakola, Patterson Fire Department

Secretary/Clerk of the Board – Kim Mello, Stanislaus County Sheriff’s Fire Warden

Business Plan Sub-Committee

Brooke Freeman, Stanislaus County Sheriff’s Business Manager

Erik Klevmyr, Stanislaus County Sheriff’s Fire Warden

Kevin Wise, City of Modesto Fire Department

Jeff Hakola, Patterson Fire Department

Clint Bray, Stanislaus Consolidated Fire Protection District

Keith Bowen, City of Newman Fire Department

Mike Passalaqua, Woodland Avenue Fire District

The following agencies are signatory to the Joint Powers Agreement:

Burbank Paradise Fire District

Denair Fire Protection District

Keyes Fire District

Mountain View Fire Protection District

City of Oakdale

City of Patterson

Stanislaus Consolidated Fire District

City of Turlock

Westport Fire District

West Stanislaus Fire District

Industrial Fire Protection District

Ceres Fire Protection District

City of Ceres

Hughson Fire District

City of Modesto

City of Newman

Oakdale Fire Protection District

Salida Fire District

Stanislaus County Fire Warden

Turlock Rural Fire District

Woodland Avenue Fire District

Cal Fire – Santa Clara Unit

Cal Fire – Tuolumne Unit

Fire Prevention Services

Expectations

- Continue collaboration and communication between the FPB and fire districts regarding impacts of new development projects.
- Perform plan reviews and inspections.
- Participate in the Stanislaus County Environmental Review Committee and predevelopment meetings.
- Maintain a state mandated inspection program and compliance reporting as required by SB 1205.
- Provide services in support of the County's One-Stop-Shop priority.
- Enhance partnerships with businesses, community groups, and county departments.
- Participate on the County cannabis enforcement team and assist in developing cannabis regulations.
- Assist in target hazard and business inspection programs.
- Evaluate local fire and life safety codes and ordinances as they apply to current and proposed projects.
- Active involvement in the code hearing process to ensure that Stanislaus County Fire agencies may have input in the next code adoption cycle.
- Enhance and expand cooperative vegetation/force clean program with the fire districts.
- Continual training for fire prevention staff to increase knowledge and proficiency.
- Maintain the countywide rural water supply recommendation except for SRA geographical areas.

Goals

- Continue to enhance and expand fire prevention support to fire agencies within Stanislaus County.
- Expand support and customer service through the County's One-Stop-Shop.
- Enhance and expand public education program.

Objectives

- Fill one (1) Fire Prevention Specialist vacancy.
- Communicate with each fire chief (or their designee) to discuss how the FPB can assist fire agencies in providing a fire public education program to citizens of Stanislaus County.
- Develop a meeting schedule with each fire chief (or his/her designee) to discuss issues/concerns or questions as it relates to Stanislaus County Fire Prevention in addition to the RFA meetings.
- Establish a Fire Code Enforcement Task with Stanislaus County Code Enforcement

Fire Communications

Expectations

- Lead the AB109 Communications Project.
- Represent fire agencies and work with SR911 in support of fire service communications.
- Lead the Countywide Communications Advisory Committee (CAC).
- Serve as the SR911 fire service liaison for CAD.
- Represent the fire service in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) map development for Stanislaus County.
- Represent Stanislaus County fire agencies in statewide communications groups including NAPCO, CALSIEC, and Statewide COMT, COML and Capital Bay Planning Area.
- Represent Stanislaus County at FirstNet to ensure all County users' needs are addressed.
- Represent and support the fire agencies as lead of the regional mobile data computer (MDC) project.
- Continue to work towards establishing radio interoperability within Stanislaus County.
- Assist fire agencies with grant writing for their communications needs.
- Provide updated radio frequency loads for specific mobiles and portables as needed.
- Monitor technology trends and recommend system improvements.
- Provide recommendations for standardized radio equipment and IT systems countywide.
- Provide administration and technical support for the regional records management system (RMS).
- Coordinate dispatch center to dispatch center training and communications.
- Manage and support NetMotion and RMS servers for regional systems.
- Support and administer the regional mass-notification system, designed to be utilized for internal and external messaging.
- Provide support and assistance to fire agencies with using FirstWatch.
- Administer accounts and support users of the Phoenix G2 Alerting System.

Goals

- Support and enhance the many systems that provide critical communications capabilities through the Stanislaus County Fire Warden's Office that are identified by the fire agencies within Stanislaus County.
- Seek new opportunities to collaborate and achieve further efficiencies to support infrastructure, radio, MDC, CAD, and specific agency requests.

Objectives

- Establish radio interoperability between Fire and EMS.
- Continue to research and support applications that improve performance and situational awareness.
- Purchase and install station alerting for all volunteer stations.

Fire Investigation Services

Expectations

- Determine origin and cause of fires in compliance with NFPA 921 guidelines.
- Provide documentation and assistance to law enforcement agencies for follow up of criminal fire investigations.
- Provide documentation and assistance to District Attorney's office regarding criminal fire investigations.
- Provide documentation and assistance to private fire investigators and insurance industry representatives regarding civil fire investigations.
- Establish and deliver an effective training program for chief and company officers throughout the County to conduct preliminary fire investigations and initial origin and cause determinations following NFPA 921 guidelines.
- Establish effective lines of communications with partner agencies to promote information sharing.
- Provide training for fire investigation staff to increase their skills and proficiency in the field of fire investigation.
- Provide a quarterly report to the Fire Authority that outlines the number of fires investigated, case status, dollar loss, and number of arrests within the county and cities jurisdiction.
- Facilitate regular meetings for all county fire agencies to discuss issues and concerns related to fire investigations.

Goals

- Provide countywide fire investigation services. Under the leadership of the Modesto Fire Department and District Attorney's Office, this regional program is a partnership with fire and law enforcement.
- Continue financial support of the regional FIU as a contributing partner along with funding from the District Attorney's Office and the City of Modesto.
- Expanding FIU personnel numbers to include a City of Turlock fire investigator.
- Expanding FIU personnel to include several Reserve trained fire investigators from partner agencies.

Objectives

- Continue to identify, select, and train new personnel from partner agencies for succession planning as the seasoned investigators prepare for retirement.
- Adhere to the Fire Investigation Unit Memorandum of Understanding as approved by the participating agencies

Fire Training Program

Expectations

- Work with our regional partners to develop a comprehensive regional training program in support of the fire agencies.
- Enhance and Increase training for Regional California Incident Command Certification System (CICCS).
- Support the Fire Warden's Office in developing an EMR and EMT course.
- Facilitate State Fire Training classes and trainings for Stanislaus County Fire agencies.

Goals

- Create an EMR training program through the Fire Warden's Office.
- Create an EMT program through the Fire Warden's Office.
- Support a standardized, comprehensive Volunteer Fire Training Academy with County Fire Agencies.
- Secure funding to host accredited State Fire Training classes in Stanislaus County.
- Foster and enhance fire agency relationships through standardized fire training.

Objectives

- Develop approved EMT program by 3rd quarter Fiscal Year 2024 to enhance standard of care.
- Increase instructor cache and/or contracting resources to provide CSFM/CICCS courses by July 2024.
- Host large scale County wide trainings including wildland, vehicle extrication, and air operations.
- Contribute funds in the amount of \$325,000 to the City of Ceres to fund a training tower/prop project that will be used for training of firefighters throughout the County.

Community Support

Expectations

- Provide consistent annual funding to the Fire Chaplain program.
- Provide consistent annual funding to support the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

Goals

- Provide support to the Cal OES Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan by assuming the XST Operational Area Coordinator.
- Support the maintenance for specific equipment utilized regionally, such as the mobile air trailer, portable radio caches and the mobile fire command unit.
- Support community education through Fire Prevention and the Community Emergency Response Team.

Objectives

- Develop Standard Operating Procedures by June 2024 for Fire Chaplain program.
- Support the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) for Firefighter rehab.
- Develop a certified Fire Mechanic Program. Support a selected member by sending them to trainings for certification and making his services available throughout the County.
- Provide support to the Central Valley Incident Management Team with personnel and supplies as approved.

Administration and Support Services

Expectations

- Communicate with County CEO staff and Board of Supervisors regarding the goals, priorities, needs and expectations of the Fire Authority.
- Administer the budget within County guidelines.
- Provide administrative support to the Fire Authority with agendas, board reports, minutes, conflict of interest statements, and information updates on the County's website.
- Process all related maintenance contracts and invoices associated with the mobile data computer (MDC) and fire records management system (RMS) programs.
- Assist fire agencies with financial, human resources, legal and administrative issues as requested.
- Continue to seek opportunities to fund regional equipment/needs.
- Communicate with Fire Authority members regarding regional plans and programs.
- Serve as the XST Operational Area Coordinator in support of the Cal OES Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan.
- Administer special projects to support the fire service in Stanislaus County.
- Assist in the administration and coordination of the Stanislaus County Fire Directors' Association.
- Coordinate meetings to address mutual concerns and issues.
- Coordinate regional purchases.
- Seek options to take advantage of regional grants that will support and enhance the fire service within Stanislaus County.
- Develop Fire Administrative Chief program to assist fire agencies.
- Subscribe to LEXIPOL and provide access to Fire Authority.

Goals

- Provide administration and support through the Stanislaus County Fire Warden's Office.
- Provide support to the Cal OES Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan by assuming the XST Operational Area Coordinator.
- Support the maintenance for specific equipment utilized regionally, such as the mobile air trailer, portable radio caches and the mobile fire command unit.
- Continue to develop 2-year budget plans.

Objectives

- Develop 2-year budget and business plan by June 2024.
- Continue to support the Modesto Fire Department for countywide services for Hazardous Materials, Technical Rescue and Special Operations Emergency Response in the amount of \$250,000 annually through a Memorandum of Understanding.

Budget Summary

At the September 7, 2023, Fire Authority meeting, the FA accepted the sub-committees plans to be incorporated into the Recommended Fiscal Year 2024 Business Plan. The County General Fund contribution to the Fire Services Fund supports services including administrative support, maintaining a space at 10th Street Place for the Fire Prevention Bureau in support of the One-Stop-Shop Initiative, and cost allocation charges.

The following item(s) are adjustments to the budget and listed in the business plan as potential allocations from operational budget or fund balance as well as the full County Fire Service Fund budget:

\$325,000	One-time costs for the City of Ceres for a training tower/prop
\$163,412	One-time costs for balance of upgrades to fire alerting system
\$100,000	One-time costs for to purchase a truck for Westport Fire to haul County’s air trailer
\$588,412	Total Adjustments to Base Budget

The Fiscal Year 2024 Recommended Final Business Plan summary and Fund Balance

Category	FY 2023 Final Budget	FY 2023 Actuals	FY 2024 Base Budget	FY 2024 Budget Adjs	FY 2024 Rec Budget
Revenue-LTCW	\$1,742,500	\$2,034,500	\$1,794,775	\$0	\$1,794,775
Fees for Service	\$192,700	\$257,080	\$198,481	\$0	\$198,481
Intergovernmental	\$15,375	\$14,089	\$15,836	\$0	\$15,836
Misc Revenue	\$0	\$180	\$0	\$0	\$0
County Contribution	\$212,988	\$212,988	\$212,988	\$0	\$212,988
Total Revenue	\$2,163,563	\$2,518,837	\$2,222,080	\$0	\$2,222,080
Fire Administration	\$1,028,766	\$1,014,278	\$1,273,369	\$100,000	\$1,373,369
Fire Prevention	\$1,014,136	\$773,748	\$1,080,838	\$0	\$1,080,838
Fire Communications	\$496,289	\$311,742	\$326,348	\$163,412	\$489,760
Fire Investigations	\$476,857	\$493,254	\$526,857	\$0	\$526,857
Fire Training	\$585,000	\$36,396	\$267,800	\$325,000	\$592,800
Fire Community Support	\$50,000	\$40,302	\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000
Total Expenses	\$3,651,048	\$2,669,720	\$3,525,212	\$588,412	\$4,113,624
Revenue less Expenses	(\$1,487,485)	(\$150,883)	(\$1,303,132)	(\$588,412)	(\$1,891,544)

Fund Balance Summary	
Fund Balance 06/30/22	\$3,253,768
Use of Fund Balance FY 2023	(\$150,883)
Fund Balance 06/30/23	\$3,102,885
Estimated Use of Fund Balance FY2024	(\$1,303,132)
Estimated Use of Fund Balance Adjs	(\$588,412)
Estimated Fund Balance 06/30/24	\$1,211,341

AB 8 Allocation

**Stanislaus County Auditor AB
8 Allocation
Contributions by Fire Districts Pre-
Redevelopment
Fiscal Year 2023**

Pending AC's Office – should have 9/15/23 per
Nathan Amarante

Fund Balance Policy

Amended by the Fire Authority
September 1, 2022

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a standard process for the budgeting and expenditure of the Fire Service Fund (FSF), Fund Balance.

2. POLICY

It is the policy of the Fire Authority to provide a standardized process for requesting and expending funds held in the FSF Fund Balance. In addition:

- a) The FSF Fund Balance shall be maintained at a minimum of 25% of the current operating budget to sustain critical services.
- b) Funds in excess of the minimum outlined in Section 2(a) may be divided (per agency contribution formula (AB8 contribution)) from FSF Fund Balance Spending Plan between Volunteer and Paid agencies.

3. PROCESS

- a) The Business Plan Committee will develop a draft FSF Fund Balance Spending Plan (Spending Plan) based on the approved priorities of the Fire Authority.
- b) The Spending Plan will outline the budget for each priority for upcoming fiscal year.
- c) Upon approval of the Fire Authority, the Spending Plan will be forwarded on to the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors for approval and spending authority.