

Staff Paper #10:

Fire Inspector

ISSUE: ADDITION OF ONE FIRE INSPECTOR II

The Fire Prevention Bureau is currently staffed with three Fire Inspector positions, one less than the 1999/2000 staffing levels. The bureau currently has 1,064 state regulated occupancies that require annual inspections. This is in addition to all new development and tenant improvement inspections; plan reviews, public education presentations and follow-up on citizen complaints. The increased volume of activities coupled with the loss of the fourth Inspector position has forced us to suspend inspections in some hazardous occupancies.

On August 12, 2003, council approved the adoption of the development fee increase with an effective date of October 12, 2003. The Fire Prevention Bureau has projected a revenue increase of approximately \$111,000 based on prior year development actuaries. The increased revenue would allow for an additional staff position with no impact to current budget constraints.

Over the last two years, the bureau has seen a significant increase in special events and public education activities and requests. In addition to these activities is the future construction of the Gallo Performing Arts Center, 12th Street Parking Garage, Memorial Hospital expansion and the new Kaiser facility. Once construction starts on any one of these four projects, the bureau will be forced to further reduce community services and will not be able to maintain current performance standards.

Annual projections are as follows:

Projected Increase in Department Revenue	\$111,000
Fire Inspector II Wages and Benefits	\$50,876
Projected Return to General Fund	\$60,124

CURRENT PRACTICE:

When demand for service exceeds our ability to meet performance standards, an additional inspector is hired. Cost is typically proportional to revenue, in essence paying for itself.

COUNCIL OPTIONS:

OPTION 1:

Hire one additional Fire Inspector II.

Annual projections are as follows:

Projected Increase in Department Revenue	\$111,000
Fire Inspector II Wages and Benefits	\$50,876
Projected Return to General Fund	\$60,124

RAMIFICATIONS:

Hiring the fourth inspector position would allow the Fire Prevention Bureau to effectively distribute current workload assignments. By doing so we will be able to maintain plan check turn around times in 14 days or less (FD-8 H.II.K) and complete more annual inspections to reduce fire hazards in the community (FD-9 H.II.K).

OPTION 2:

Continue current staffing level. Prioritize workload to focus on fee based inspections, followed by special event inspections and our annual inspection program.

RAMIFICATIONS:

Potential degradation of our Annual Fire Prevention Inspection Program. State mandated annual inspections completed bi-annually, and risk of heavy scrutiny in the event of a fire related tragedy.

This page intentionally left blank.