

Santa Clara LAFCO Begins its Countywide Fire Service Review



Technical Advisory Committee

A TAC has been established to serve as a liaison between LAFCO and the affected agencies during the service review process. The TAC will meet periodically to receive updates and provide expertise and advice on the project. TAC meeting dates and agenda packets are available on the LAFCO website. TAC membership includes:

Appointed by LAFCO
 Yoriko Kishimoto, LAFCO Commissioner
 Susan Vicklund Wilson, LAFCO Commissioner

Appointed by County Fire Chiefs Assn.
 Chief Tony Bowden, CCFD
 Chief Ruben Torres, City of Santa Clara
 Chief Jim Wyatt, City of Gilroy

Appointed by County/Cities Managers' Assn.
 Carl Cahill, Los Altos Hills Town Manager
 James Lindsay, Saratoga Town Manager
 Christina Turner, Morgan Hill Town Manager
 Ed Shikada, Palo Alto Town Manager & Alternate

Service Review Focus Issues

The study will review and/or provide an analysis of options for addressing the following current and emerging issues identified by LAFCO:

- Options for funding and providing fire service and emergency medical services to the underserved areas of the County
- Regional models for more efficiently providing fire service and EMS countywide
- Frequency of use, benefits/burdens of mutual aid and automatic aid on individual agencies and the countywide fire service and EMS system
- Climate change and the increased risk of wildfires
- Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) in Santa Clara County and agencies' plans/programs to prevent or reduce fire risks in the WUI and strengthen their community's resilience to withstand and recover from wildfires
- Interagency communication and coordination for fire prevention planning and suppression along shared borders, and on private/public lands and rights of way
- Best practices for roles and oversight of volunteer fire companies
- Extent to which private fire protection service is used in the county and whether it conflicts with public providers
- New provision in state law that requires LAFCO to consider fire risks and the location of very high fire hazard zones when reviewing proposals [GC §56668(q)]
- Applicability of new law requiring LAFCO to review certain fire service contracts: GC §56134 requires LAFCO approval of a fire protection contract that provides new or extended fire protection services outside a public agency's

Santa Clara LAFCO's **Countywide Fire Service Review** will involve a comprehensive review of fire service and emergency medical service (EMS) provision in Santa Clara County. This Countywide Fire Service Review is part of LAFCO's third round of service reviews. LAFCO has previously conducted two Countywide Fire Service Reviews, one in 2004 and another in 2010.

LAFCO's Service Review Responsibilities

The Countywide Fire Service Review will provide an overview of all the agencies that provide fire service and/or emergency medical services in the County, evaluate the provision of these services, and recommend actions to promote efficient service delivery. State law mandates that LAFCO's service review include an analysis and written statement of determinations regarding:

- Growth and population projections for the affected area
- Location and characteristics of any

disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence

- Present and planned capacity of public facilities, adequacy of public services, and infrastructure needs or deficiencies including infrastructure needs or deficiencies related to structural fire protection in any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence
- Financial ability of agencies to provide services
- Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities
- Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies

The service review will include recommendations for any changes to fire district spheres of influence, as necessary.

Agencies that will be Studied

FIRE DISTRICTS

Los Altos Hills County Fire District
 Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District (CCFD)
 Saratoga Fire Protection District
 South Santa Clara County Fire Protection District

CITY FIRE DEPARTMENTS

City of Gilroy Fire Department
 City of Milpitas Fire Department
 City of Mountain View Fire Department
 City of Palo Alto Fire Department
 City of Santa Clara Fire Department
 City of San Jose Fire Department
 City of Sunnyvale Fire Department

CITIES THAT CONTRACT FOR FIRE SERVICES

City of Campbell (contracts with CCFD)
 City of Los Altos (contracts with CCFD)
 City of Morgan Hill (contracts with CAL FIRE)

OTHER PROVIDERS

CA Dept. of Forestry & Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)
 County of Santa Clara (EMS, Office of Emergency Services, Communications)
 NASA Ames Fire Department
 Casa Loma Volunteer Fire Association
 Spring Valley Volunteer Fire Department
 Stevens Creek Volunteer Fire Company
 Uvas Volunteer Fire Department
 Santa Clara County FireSafe Council

jurisdictional boundaries and meets either of the following thresholds: (1) transfers responsibility for providing services in more than 25 percent of the area within the jurisdictional boundaries of any public agency affected by the contract; or (2) changes the employment status of more than 25 percent of the employees of any public agency affected by the contract.

Intended Use of the Service Review Report

The Service Review Report will serve as an information resource for LAFCO, local agencies, and the public on fire service and EMS in Santa Clara County. Service providers may use the Report to pursue service delivery changes or to further assess the options identified in the Report for providing more efficient services. LAFCO may use the information in the Report, when reviewing future proposals for jurisdictional boundary changes. LAFCO, local agencies or the public may use the Report, together with additional analysis where necessary, to pursue changes in governance, and/or changes in jurisdictional boundaries or spheres of influence.

Service Review Key Steps & Timeline

LAFCO starts project, establishes TAC, selects consultant	March - April 2021
Consultant collects data from service providers	May - June
Public outreach and engagement through webpage, community workshops and survey	June - July
Service providers validate data compiled by consultant	July
Consultant prepares findings, and Draft Service Review Report	July - November
LAFCO releases Draft Report for public review and comment	December 2021
Community workshops on Draft Report	January 2022
LAFCO public hearing on Draft Report	February
LAFCO releases Revised Draft Report for public review/comment	Late February
LAFCO public hearing to adopt Final Report	April
Publication of Adopted Final Report	April 2022

Data Collection Begins Soon

LAFCO's consultant for the Fire Service Review, the **Center for Public Safety Management (CPSM)** will begin contacting service providers soon to start data collection and to set up interviews.

How to get involved?

Public engagement and outreach are very important to Santa Clara LAFCO. LAFCO will make every effort to engage the public and local communities in the Countywide Fire Service Review. A project webpage that will contain comprehensive information on the Service Review is under development and will be available soon on the LAFCO website. Throughout the Service Review process there will be many opportunities for the public to engage and provide input on the study through timely community workshops, an online community survey and multiple public meetings. Stay tuned for more information!

Are you signed up to receive updates?

We encourage you to [sign-up here](#) to receive email updates and notices from LAFCO on this Service Review.

Questions?

Contact LAFCO staff at: LAFCO@ceo.sccgov.org

Thank You!

Santa Clara LAFCO thanks all the participants for their cooperation and involvement in this important study.



Local Agency Formation Commission of Santa Clara County

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