



# Fire Reorganization: Sebastopol and Gold Ridge

February 4, 2025



# Bottom Line Up Front

Substantially better services for \$1 million/year less in General Fund than remaining independent.

Requires a parcel tax – whether combined or independent – for high-quality service

Gold Ridge requires parcel tax to be uniform across District

Typical: \$265/year for single family home



# BACKGROUND

- 8 years of discussion and analysis
- April, 2024: Decision to proceed w/Gold Ridge
- July, 2024: Initiated Negotiations
- October, 2024: Adopted resolution affirming decision
- Tonight: Approve application to Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)



# Other Developments Since April

- Combined Gold Ridge and Sebastopol Ad Hoc Committees conducted extensive negotiations
- Citygate compared reorganization and stand-alone options in depth
- COAR Design assessed fire station
- City expanding staffing



# Staffing Comparison: Future Recommended Reorg & Future Stand-alone

## Future Reorganized

- ▶ Shared Fire Chief
- ▶ 3 Shared Battalion Chiefs
- ▶ 1 Fire Prevention Captain
- ▶ 0.25 Admin
- ▶ 3 Fire Captains
- ▶ 3 Fire Engineers
- ▶ 3 Firefighters
- ▶ Pool of 178 volunteers

## Future Stand Alone

- ▶ Fire Chief
- ▶ 2 Battalion Chiefs (40 hours)
  - ▶ Fire Marshall
  - ▶ Training, Fleet, Logistics
- ▶ 1 Admin (in Fire)
- ▶ 0.5-1 Admin (in City Hall)
- ▶ 3 Fire Captains
- ▶ 3 Fire Engineers
- ▶ 3 Firefighters
- ▶ Pool of 30 Volunteers



# Better Response Times at Lower Cost through Economies of Scale

- Shared Fire Chief
- 3 Shared Battalion Chiefs – Provide 24/7/365 Coverage
- Lower admin staff costs
- Greater depth in Captains, Engineers, and Firefighters improves coverage and reduces overtime

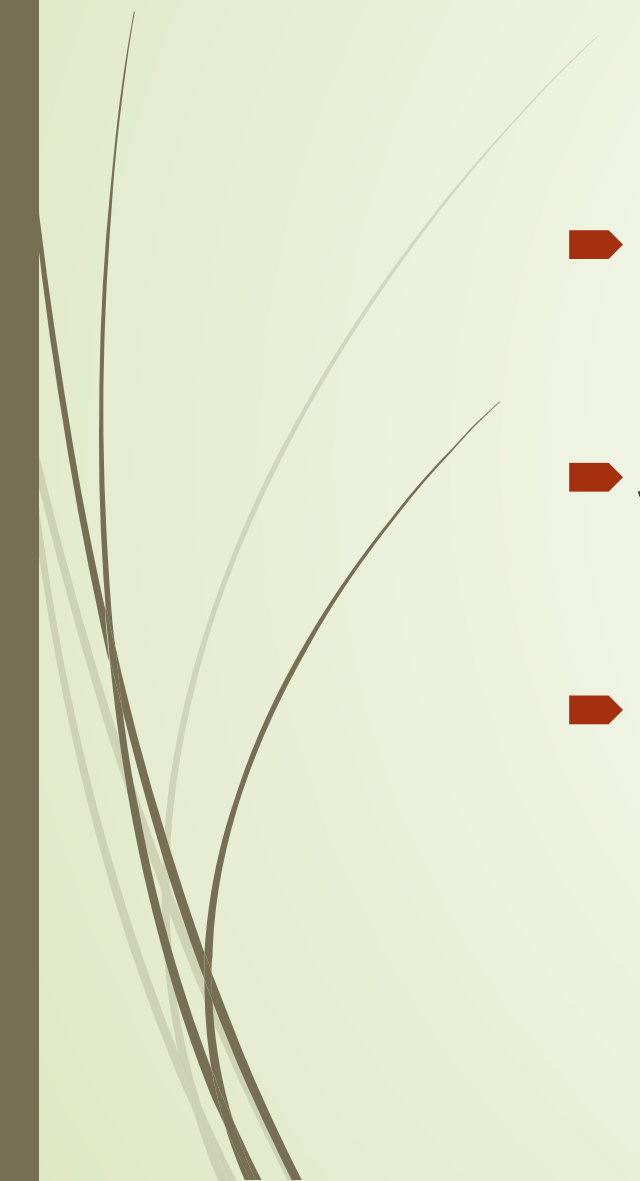


# Apparatus (engines and trucks)

- All Sebastopol Fire Trucks/Engines will transfer as-is to Gold Ridge
- Gold Ridge and Sebastopol to split remaining payments on new Fire Engine
  - \$240,000 each
- In long run, will likely need to purchase fewer engines and trucks because of economies of scale



# Fire Station: Assessed by COAR

- Need additional space
  - 50 years
  - Needs substantial investment
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# Fire Station Ownership

- Gold Ridge to assume ownership and full responsibility
- Can sell station and property if used for a replacement station in Sebastopol City Limits
- Ownership reverts to City if not used as Fire Station
- No plans to sell the property



# Current Fire Finances: Two Major Revenue Sources

- ▶ City General Fund: \$1.55M
  - ▶ Meets Measure H Maintenance of Effort Requirement of 10-11% of GF
- ▶ Measure H: \$1.1M annually
- ▶ No Parcel Tax for Fire



# With Reorganization: Three Major Revenue Sources

- City General Fund: \$1.1 M (instead of \$1.5M)
  - No Maintenance of Effort Requirement
  - Annual escalator tied to CPI
  - Minimum: 2%
  - Maximum: 5%
- Measure H: \$1.1M annually to Gold Ridge
- Fire Parcel Tax: \$1.1M annually to Gold Ridge
  - \$265 for typical single family home

# Cost and Revenue Comparison

Fiscal Element	Gold Ridge Budget for Sebastopol Fire Service Post Annexation	Sebastopol Standalone Fire Services Cost FY 25/26
<b>Revenues</b>		
Fire Direct Fees/Charges for Services	\$40,000	\$40,000
Measure H	\$1,080,000	\$1,080,000
City Parcel Tax	\$1,111,058	\$1,111,058
City Net General Fund Contribution	<b>\$1,205,191</b>	<b>\$2,188,267</b>
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$3,436,249</b>	<b>\$4,419,325</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>		
Total Salaries/Benefits	\$2,435,989	\$3,047,422
Total Other Operating Costs	\$450,260	\$476,050
Total Capital Outlay	-	\$59,210
Total Debt Service	\$550,000	\$686,643
Total Contribution to Reserves	-	\$150,000
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$3,436,249</b>	<b>\$4,419,325</b>
<b>Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

# Local Identity: Stations, Engines, Pins






# NEXT STEPS

- Submit application to LAFCO
- LAFCO Hearing: March 5
- If approved: LAFCO issues notice re: protest period
- City/Gold Ridge to conduct public education
- LAFCO protest hearing: May 7
  - If < 25% of voters or property owners file protest, reorganization is approved
  - If > 25% file protest, special election occurs in November
- No later than July 1: Reorganization takes effect (if no protest election)



# Comments from Ad Hoc Committee





# Similar to County – Gold Ridge Reorg

## County

- ▶ Regular Property Tax: \$537K
- ▶ County General Fund: \$4.3M
- ▶ Measure H: \$4.1M
- ▶ Supplemental Parcel Tax: \$600K

## City

- ▶ Regular Property Tax: \$0
- ▶ General Fund: \$1.1M
- ▶ Measure H: \$1.1M
- ▶ Supplemental Parcel Tax: \$1.1M