



Fire Reorganization: Sebastopol and Gold Ridge - updated -

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

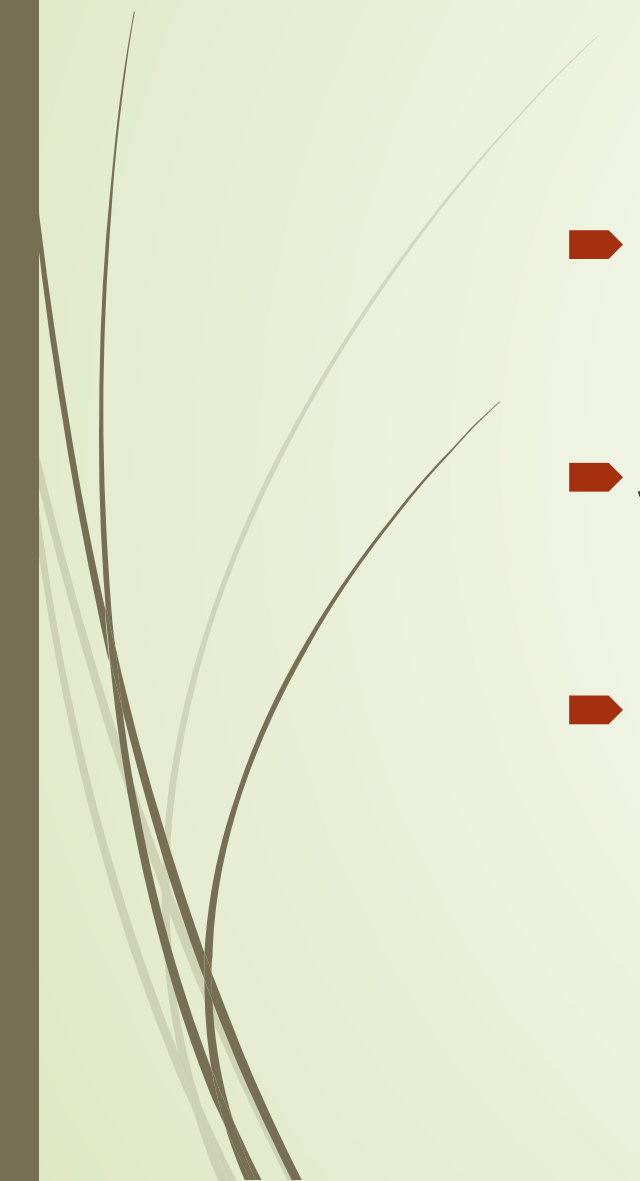


Apparatus (engines and trucks)

- 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
Revenues		
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	\$1,205,191	\$2,188,267
Total Revenues	\$3,436,249	\$4,419,325
Expenditures		
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
Total Expenditures	\$3,436,249	\$4,419,325
Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	\$0	\$0

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)



Gold Ridge Parcel Tax

Discussed in Application (p. 40 of packet)

- 1997 Tax: \$20 per single family dwelling
 - 2008 Measure O: \$45 per improved parcel
 - 2018 Measure E: \$200 per residential parcel
 - TOTAL: \$265
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- July: Board receives report w/tax for each property
 - August: Public Hearing and opportunity for corrections



Proposed Change: Payment Schedule

- From end of September to end of December (p. 23 & 47 of packet)
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Proposed Change: Water Use


(to be added to p. 39 of packet)

- ▶ GRFPD agrees to retain its historic practices for replenishing water in its trucks and engines as they effect City's water supply. GRFPD will not use City supplies as a regular, primary source of water for trucks and engines that primarily serve other areas.



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