



VENTURA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Dustin Gardner, Fire Chief
2400 Conejo Spectrum Street, Thousand Oaks, CA 91320-1445

Website: VCFD.org
Twitter: [@VCFD](https://twitter.com/VCFD)
Facebook: [@VenturaCountyFire](https://facebook.com/VenturaCountyFire)
Instagram: [@VenturaCountyFire](https://instagram.com/VenturaCountyFire)

Contact: **Dustin Gardner**
Fire Chief
Phone: **(805) 389-9710**
Email: dustin.gardner@ventura.org

December 10, 2024

Board of Directors
Ventura County Fire Protection District
800 S. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

SUBJECT:

Approval of, and Authorization for the Fire Chief or Designee to Sign, an Agreement with the City of Los Angeles for the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) to Provide Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services to the Bell Canyon Community, from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2029; and Ratification of Authorization for LAFD to Provide Services Pending Approval of Agreement.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Approval of, and authorization for the Fire Chief or designee to sign, the attached agreement (Agreement) (Exhibit 1) between the Ventura County Fire Protection District (Fire District) and the City of Los Angeles (City) for the City's Fire Department (LAFD) to provide fire protection and emergency medical services (EMS) to the Bell Canyon community, from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2029.
2. Ratification of the Fire Chief's authorization for LAFD to continue providing fire protection and EMS under the agreement pending your Board's approval of the Agreement.

REASON FOR RATIFICATION:

On June 30, 2024, the five-year agreement between the Fire District and LAFD for fire protection and EMS to the Bell Canyon community expired. The agencies have been negotiating a new five-year agreement but last-minute adjustments to the Agreement prevented the Fire District from bringing this item before your Board prior to the expiration of the preceding five-year agreement. In order to provide uninterrupted fire protection and EMS to the Bell Canyon community, the Fire Chief approved the continuation of these services to the

Bell Canyon community from July 1, 2024, and is before your Board seeking ratification of the authorization to provide these services pending your Board’s approval of the Agreement.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Mandatory: No
Source of Funding: Fire District
Funding Match Required: None
Impact on Other Departments: None

<u>Summary of Revenue and Costs:</u>	<u>FY 2024-25</u>	<u>FY 2025-26</u>
Revenue:	\$ 0	\$ 0
Costs:		
Direct	\$ 416,000	\$ 424,000
Indirect-Agency/Dept.	0	0
Indirect-County CAP	0	0
Total Costs	\$ 416,000	\$ 424,000
Net Cost:	\$ 416,000	\$ 424,000

Current FY 2024-25 Budget Projection for the Fire District - BU 2701				
	Adopted Budget	Adjusted Budget	Projected Budget	Estimated Savings/(Deficit)
Appropriations	27,266,763	28,310,481	28,310,481	-
Revenue	26,534,973	26,534,973	26,534,973	-
Net Cost	731,790	1,775,508	1,775,508	-

Sufficient appropriations have been included in the FY24-25 Adjusted Budget to cover the cost of this service agreement.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

This item supports the County's Strategic Plan priority of providing Healthy, Safe, and Resilient Communities. The Agreement will help the Fire District strengthen its firefighting resources at the Bell Canyon community, improving our readiness and response capabilities.

DISCUSSION:

On December 4, 1979, the Fire District and the City entered into an agreement (Exhibit 2) for LAFD to provide "initial action" fire protection and EMS (collectively, “fire services”) to the Bell

Canyon community, which is located within the Fire District's jurisdiction in the County of Ventura and is adjacent to the City.

Prior to entering into the agreement in 1979, the Fire District determined its responders were required to travel 9.5 miles, and at times through the jurisdiction of the City and the County of Los Angeles, to respond to a request for help in Bell Canyon. The Fire District also determined that the travel distance was excessive and that the best way to provide fire services to Bell Canyon was to contract with the City for LAFD to provide the initial response to all requests for help from within Bell Canyon. LAFD's closest fire station is located approximately 3.1 miles from Bell Canyon. In the time since the original agreement, the geographic challenge to the Fire District's ability to immediately respond to requests for help in Bell Canyon continues to be present.

The 1979 agreement was succeeded by a subsequent 2009 agreement (Exhibit 3), amendments thereto (Exhibits 4, 5), and the 2019 agreement (Exhibit 6). On June 30, 2024, the 2019 agreement for fire services with the City, as amended, expired. In order to provide uninterrupted fire services to the Bell Canyon community, the Fire Chief approved the continuation of those services from July 1, 2024, pending your Board's approval of the Agreement. Therefore, the Fire District now asks your Board to approve the Agreement with the City so that LAFD can continue to provide fire services to Bell Canyon through June 30, 2029. Pursuant to the Agreement, the Fire District will also meet with LAFD on a regular basis to confer about, as well as address, any operational issues that may arise during the effective dates of the Agreement.

The annual cost for LAFD to provide fire services to the community has varied greatly. The contract is based on LAFD's actual cost of services provided. Over the last five years, the average cost per year was \$341,335, with a lowest-cost year of \$233,484 and a highest-cost year of \$407,125. Adding a projected two-percent increase per year to the highest cost year, the Fire District estimates that no more than \$450,000 per year will be required to fund fire services through June 30, 2029, for a total estimated cost of \$2,162,000.

This letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, the Auditor-Controller's Office, and County Counsel. If you have any questions, please contact me at (805), or Assistant Fire Chief Chuck Scherrei at (805) 910-0238.



Dustin Gardner
Fire Chief

DG/CS/MF:dm

- Exhibit 1 – Bell Canyon Agreement, 2024-2029
- Exhibit 2 – Bell Canyon Agreement, 1979
- Exhibit 3 – Bell Canyon Agreement, 2008-2013
- Exhibit 4 – Bell Canyon First Amendment

Exhibit 5 – Bell Canyon Second Amendment
Exhibit 6 - Bell Canyon Agreement, 2019-2024