



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: FEBRUARY 7, 2017

ITEM NUMBER: NB-2

SUBJECT: AMBULANCE TRANSPORTATION FOR THE CITY OF COSTA MESA

DATE: JANUARY 20, 2017

FROM: DANIEL A. STEFANO, FIRE CHIEF

PRESENTATION BY: DANIEL A. STEFANO, FIRE CHIEF

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: JASON PYLE, DIVISION CHIEF
714-754-5106**

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The Fire Chief recommends that the City Council approve the following recommendations:

1. Receive the updated presentation on the status of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) ambulance transportation for the City of Costa Mesa.
2. Authorize and approve a part-time Emergency Medical Services Coordinator to assist in the coordination of the Fire and Rescue department's EMS ambulance transportation program, including billing and cost recovery.
3. Approve the scheduling of an April study session to discuss the reassessment of the city's EMS ambulance service transportation options.
4. Approve the scheduling within a May City Council meeting to review updated recommendations on the city's EMS ambulance service transportation.

BACKGROUND:

In January of 2016, the Fire Chief and City Manager presented ambulance transportation options for City Council consideration along with a recommendation to pursue a public/private partnership identified ~~Model #4~~ Model #3. The transportation options and recommendations were all grounded on the CMFD Ambulance Feasibility Study (2015) by AP Triton, LLC consultants, which was first introduced at the December 1, 2015 City Council meeting (Attachment 1).

Subsequently, the City Council voted (3-2) to maintain the ambulance service delivery that had been in place for the previous seven years, utilizing a private ambulance provider to transport all emergency patients. Thereafter and as a result, at the June 21, 2016 City Council meeting, a final extension of the ambulance and billing services agreement with Care Ambulance was approved through September 1, 2018. Section 5.3 of the agreement allows the City to terminate the agreement at any time, with or without cause, with written notice to Care Ambulance Service if it is determined that services will not be needed for the entire time period of the extension.

Recently, several members of the City Council have requested to revisit the city's EMS ambulance transportation options and be provided an updated and viable recommendation for consideration.

ANALYSIS:

The CMFD Ambulance Service Feasibility Study is (Attachment 1) was conducted by AP Triton, LLC consultants. It provides an objective review of the four deployment options for patient transport via ambulance vehicles. The consultant's report was first introduced at the December 1, 2015 City Council meeting and made available for City Council and public review immediately thereafter.

Prior to and following the receipt and review of the report, City staff conducted research and met with a range of stakeholders, including, but not limited to: members of the Costa Mesa Pension Oversight and Financial Advisory Committees; Dr. Samuel J. Stratton – Orange County EMS Agency Medical Director, members of the CARE Ambulance management team; members of the Orange County Fire Chiefs; members of the Costa Mesa Firefighters Association Board of Directors; and community members.

The four models identified represented the most viable options available based on the city's fire staffing and within the framework of the Orange County EMS system at the time of the presentation. Inclusive of these or any other model variations would be the approval of the established Orange County Health Care Agency (OCHCA) EMS Ground Ambulance Rates.

Further, with the recent approval from City Council to keep Fire Station #6 open and provide adequate staffing to that end, the Fire and Rescue Department has begun reevaluating the most viable options for consideration.

Moreover, given the nature and extent of services the city provides as it pertains to EMS, the addition of a part-time EMS Coordinator will play an important role to oversee any ambulance transportation program option that is presented and to assist in the coordination of the department's EMS program. The cost of this part-time position would be approximately \$36.67-\$49.14 hourly or \$2,933.60-\$3,931.20 monthly or \$35,203.20-\$47,174.40 annually, without any PERS related costs or benefits.

Additionally, the four ambulance transportation models that were identified are included below as reference points:

- **Model #1 – Current Model**
**Continuation of the existing deployment strategy of sending a fire department apparatus (e.g., an engine or truck) and a rescue ambulance along with a private ambulance to be the transportation component of all Emergency Medical Services calls for service (e.g., ALS & BLS).*
- **Model #2 – Costa Mesa Assumes All Ambulance Transportation; Private Ambulance Company Utilized as Back-Up Only**
** Fire department assumes 100% of ambulance transportation for all emergency ambulance services in the City.*
- **Model #3 – Public / Private Partnership**
** Fire department engages in a partnership with a private contractor and provides ALS ambulance transportation while the private contractor provides BLS transportation and back up support service for ALS transportation.*

- **Model #4 – Hybrid Model / AO Program**
**Fire department assumes 100% of all emergency ambulance transportation services using a new class of employees to staff Rescue Ambulances.*

Based on the aforementioned Fire and Rescue Department changes (e.g., Fire Station #6 and increased staffing), in addition to the evolving EMS environment, it is prudent to reassess, reevaluate, and update the information, as well as looking at other viable options, prior to presenting any current or further recommendations.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

The City Council could decide to direct staff to not pursue further evaluation of making any changes to the current EMS ambulance program model, however, a RFP process for EMS ambulance transportation would have to be initiated for and implemented prior to September 1, 2018.

As another alternative, the City Council could decide to immediately implement one of the models identified without any updated information or infrastructure.

FISCAL REVIEW:

The Finance Department has reviewed this report. It is understood that the consultant's cost recovery projections in the 2015 feasibility study could vary within a reasonable margin above/below the projections identified. As such, the city's Finance Department had previously reviewed that report and confirmed the cost recovery projections appeared reasonable and attainable.

The Finance Department recommends that an updated fiscal review on the EMS ambulance transportation options would be needed prior to the city's Finance Department updating their previous assessment.

The Finance Department has reviewed the salary and benefits costs for the part-time Emergency Services Coordinator and has deemed them to be accurate.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City Attorney's office has reviewed the 201 rights issue with respect to the provision of ambulance services and continues to assist the Fire & Rescue Department in asserting and maintaining these rights. The City Attorney's office had also reviewed the current Ambulance Service Agreement and prepared the previous and final extensions thereof.

CONCLUSION:

Based on the request of several members of the City Council to revisit the city's EMS ambulance transportation options, the Fire Chief recommends approving the identified recommendations included herein:

1. Receive the updated presentation on the status of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) ambulance transportation for the City of Costa Mesa.

2. Authorize and approve a part-time Emergency Medical Services Coordinator to assist in the coordination of the Fire and Rescue department's EMS ambulance transportation program, including billing and cost recovery.
3. Approve the scheduling of an April study session to discuss the reassessment and update of the city's EMS ambulance service transportation options,
4. Approve the scheduling within a May City Council meeting to review updated recommendations on the city's EMS ambulance service transportation which will cost approximately \$9,000.00 and be funded with existing internal resources.

These recommendations remain in line with the ongoing effort to provide the most effective and efficient service to the community, while maintaining the highest quality of patient care, enhancing the City's cost recovery revenue, and providing the most flexible ambulance transportation model to adapt to an evolving EMS landscape.

DANIEL A. STEFANO
Fire Chief

THOMAS R. HATCH
City Manager

STEPHEN DUNIVENT
Interim Finance Director

THOMAS DUARTE
City Attorney

Attachments: [1\) CMFD Ambulance Feasibility Study - 2015](#)