Countywide Fire Service Review Public Review Draft Report
June 2023

Prepared for:

LAFCO of Santa Clara County

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Ground Rules

- AP Triton staff will deliver the full presentation prior to taking questions.

- The slide number is in the lower right corner.

  - Please reference this number when asking questions at the end of the presentation.

- A page reference to the full report is provided in the lower left corner.

  - If you have questions about specific sections of the report, please identify the section / page number.

- The report available online is a draft; some corrections from the posted report have already been incorporated into this presentation.

Countywide Fire Service Review

- The Cortese Knox Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act (CKH Act) mandates that LAFCO conduct service reviews prior to, or in conjunction with, sphere of influence updates

- LAFCO review and update the sphere of influence of each city and special district once every five years, as necessary [Government Code § 56425].

Service Review Determinations - GC 56430

- 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 needs or deficiencies related to sewers, municipal and industrial water, and 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; and

- Any other matter related to effective or efficient service delivery, as required by commission.

Purpose of the Service Review

- Updating spheres of influence;

- Initiating or considering jurisdictional boundary changes;

- Considering other types of LAFCO applications; and

- Providing a resource for further studies.

Process and Methodology

- Technical Advisory Committee

- Outreach through letter and information flyer, public workshops, and survey

- Establishment of Criteria

- Development of Request for Information

- Kick-off Meeting

- Data Discovery

Process and Methodology

- Drafting of Agency Profiles

- LAFCO Staff Review of Agency Profiles

- Agency Review of Profiles

- Cities served by a District review of Profile

- Data Analysis and Service Review Determinations

- Public Review Draft Released

Process and Methodology

- Community Meetings

- LAFCO Hearing

- Final Draft Released

- Adoption of Final Report

Data Limitations

- Lack of Standardization

- Missing Data

- Erroneous Data

- **Recommendation:**

  The Santa Clara County Fire Chiefs should coordinate data standardization among the fire agencies, promote a single CAD system for the County with access for each agency to review their data sets, and all agencies should review the quality of inputs by their personnel.
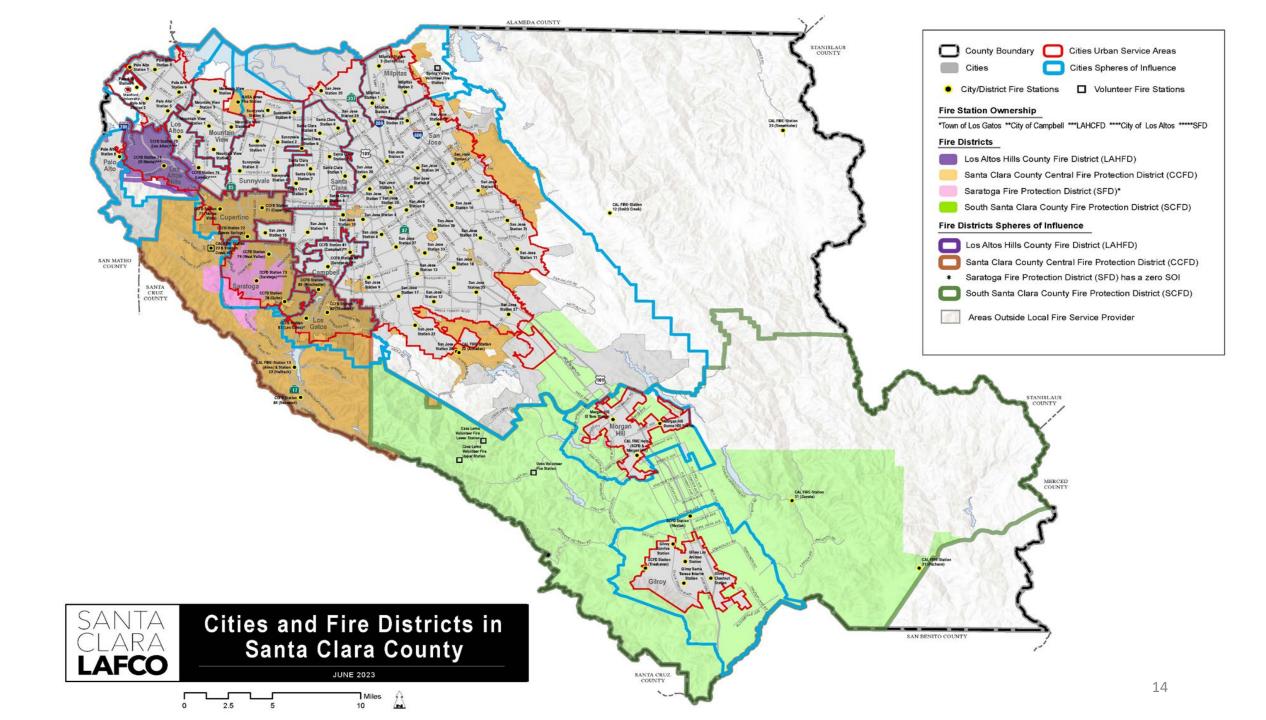
Countywide Overview

Service Providers

- Nine fire and emergency providers.

  - Not including NASA/AMES Fire Department.

- American Medical Response (AMR), formerly Rural/Metro Ambulance, provides emergency medical transport.

  - Palo Alto provides transport for the City of Palo Alto and Stanford University.

- CAL FIRE provides service within lands classified as State Responsibility Areas (SRA).

- Four volunteer associations/departments are operating in areas of the county that are not receiving service from a local provider.

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Services Providers

Service Provider	Area Served
Gilroy Fire Department	City of Gilroy
Milpitas Fire Department	City of Milpitas and unincorporated areas identified as "Zone 1" by contract with CCFD.
Mountain View Fire Department	City of Mountain View and two unincorporated areas inside the city limits.
Palo Alto Fire Department	City of Palo Alto
San José Fire Department	City of San José and unincorporated areas identified as "Zone 1" by contract with CCFD.
Santa Clara City Fire Department	City of Santa Clara
Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District (CCFD)	Cities of Cupertino, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, a portion of Saratoga, and unincorporated lands in western Santa Clara County. Campbell, Los Altos, LAHCFD, and SFD by contract.
Sunnyvale Public Safety Department	City of Sunnyvale
CAL FIRE	City of Morgan Hill and South Santa Clara Fire Protection District by contract. State Responsibility Areas (SRA) inside Santa Clara County.

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Cities and Fire Districts in Santa Clara County

JUNE 2023

Legend:

County Boundary
Cities Urban Service Areas
Cities
Cities Spheres of Influence
● City/District Fire Stations
□ Volunteer Fire Stations

Fire Station Ownership
*Town of Los Gatos **City of Campbell ***LAHCFD ****City of Los Altos *****SFD

Fire Districts
Los Altos Hills County Fire District (LAHFD)
Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District (CCFD)
Saratoga Fire Protection District (SFD)*
South Santa Clara County Fire Protection District (SCFD)

Fire Districts Spheres of Influence
Los Altos Hills County Fire District (LAHFD)
Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District (CCFD)
* Saratoga Fire Protection District (SFD) has a zero SOI
South Santa Clara County Fire Protection District (SCFD)
Areas Outside Local Fire Service Provider

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Services Provided

Service Provider	Fire	ALS	ALS Transport	Tech Rescue	HazMat	Prevention
CCFD	YES	YES	No	Specialist	Specialist	YES
Gilroy FD	YES	YES	BACK UP	No	Operations	YES
Milpitas FD	YES	YES	BACK UP	Operations	Awareness	YES
Morgan Hill (CAL FIRE)	YES	YES	BACK UP	Operations	Operations	YES
Mountain View FD	YES	YES	No	Specialist	Specialist	YES
Palo Alto FD	YES	YES	PRIMARY	Operations	Operations	YES
San José FD	YES	YES	BACK UP	Specialist	Specialist	YES
Santa Clara City FD	YES	YES	BACK UP	Operations	Operations	YES
SCFD (CAL FIRE)	YES	YES	No	Operations	Operations	YES
Sunnyvale Public Safety Dept.	YES	NO	No	Operations	Operations	YES

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Fire Stations

Service Provider	Stations	Greater than 50 Years Old	No Seismic Protection/Unknown	Rated Poor
CCFD (Incl: Campbell, Los Altos, SFD, and LAHCFD)	15	7	8	5
Gilroy	4	1	2	1
Milpitas	4	1	3	1
Morgan Hill	2	0	2	0
Mountain View	5	2	0	2
Palo Alto	7	5	4	1
San José	34	15	18	16
Santa Clara City	9	3	5	3
SCFD	4	2	3	2
Sunnyvale	6	5	5	5
TOTAL	**90**	**41**	**50**	**36**
% of TOTAL		**45.6%**	**55.6%**	**40.0%**

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Staffing

Service Provider	BC	Engines	Trucks	Other	Daily Staffing
CCFD (Including Campbell, Los Altos, SFD, and LAHCFD)	3	12	2	5	66
Gilroy FD	1	4	0	0	11
Milpitas FD	1	4	1	1	19
Morgan Hill (CAL FIRE)	0.5	2	0	1	8
Mountain View FD	1	6	1	0	21
Palo Alto FD	1	5	1	4	27
San José FD	5	34	9	11	190
Santa Clara City FD	2	8	2	2	36
SCFD (CAL FIRE)	0.5	4	0	0	13
Sunnyvale Public Safety Dept.	1	9	3	1	26
TOTAL	**16**	**88**	**19**	**25**	**418**

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Incident Volume and Performance (1)

Service Provider	Ave Annual Call Volume	Incidents per 1,000 Population	90th Percentile Response Time	# of Units Exceeding 10% Utilization	Adopted Standard	Notes
CCFD (Including Campbell, Los Altos, SFD, and LAHCFD)	18,869	67	8:21	1	6:30 min or less/90% of the time (EMS Moderate)	Varied: standards based on call type
Gilroy	5,193	90	10:54	1	7:30 min or less/90% of the time	
Milpitas (Incl. Zone 1 area)	5,328	62	8:39	0	6:50 min or less/90% of the time	No Adopted Standard, NFPA 1710
Morgan Hill	3,458	77	9:56	0	6:50 min or less/90% of the time	No Adopted Standard, NFPA 1710
Mountain View	4,695	64	8:15	0	7:20 min or less/90% of the time	
Palo Alto (Including Stanford)	8,149	107	9:41	3	8:00 min or less/90% of the time	

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Countywide Incident Volume and Performance (2)

Service Provider	Ave Annual Call Volume	Incidents per 1,000 Population	90th Percentile Response Time	# of Units Exceeding 10% Utilization	Adopted Standard	Notes
San José (Including Zone 1 area)	91,070	88	9:41	28	8:00 min or less/ 80% of the time	80% is 8:29 minutes or less
Santa Clara City	9,259	69	8:03	0	7:00 min or less/ 90% of the time	
SCFD	1,250	56	15:24	0	15:00 min or less/ 90% of the time	The standard is presumed
Sunnyvale	8,894	62	8:26	0	7:59 or less	Percentile not identified, separate standards for fire and Hzd
	TOTAL	AVERAGE	AVERAGE	TOTAL		
	156,165	74.2	9:44	33		

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Recommendation

- **Emergency Response Performance:** Gilroy, Mountain View, Santa Clara, and San Jose have adopted performance standards (goals) through their elected officials.

- Palo Alto, Sunnyvale, and CCFD (including SFD and LAHCFD) have published response time goal, however, their elected officials have not adopted the standard.

- Morgan Hill, Milpitas and SCFD have not adopted a response time standard. Organizations should adopt a performance goal and present those to the elected officials for adoption.

- The organizations should consider a baseline standard that defines the expectation of service for the community.

Recommendation

- **Unit Utilization Hours:** San Jose, Palo Alto, Gilroy, and CCFD all have units with UHUs of over 10%.

- These agencies should add additional resources to effectively manage the call volume and improve response time performance.

- Palo Alto's resources exceeding 10% are ambulances, the Engines in those stations are below 10% and would lessen the need for Palo Alto to add additional resources.
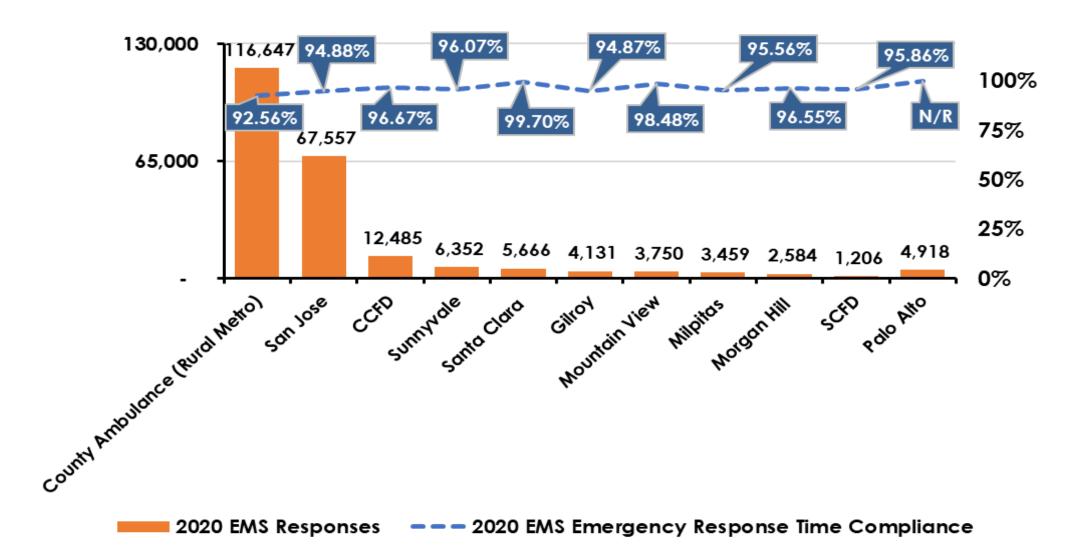
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Recommendation

- **Boundary Drop Response:** AP Triton recommends the fire agencies evaluate opportunities for a boundary drop response for critical incidents (where time significantly matters in the outcome) for the entire county.

- Note: To be more effective, this will require improved interoperability between CAD products for dispatch centers, including the existing agreement between SCFD, Morgan Hill, and Gilroy.

- The Santa Clara Fire Chiefs Association should coordinate this effort.

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Recommendation

- **Station Identifiers:** All agencies have unique unit identifiers; however, only San Jose and CCFD have station numbers that match the unit assigned.

- Each agency should consider assigning station numbers (in addition to station names) that match the unit identifier assigned across the county to improve awareness of the home station of response units.

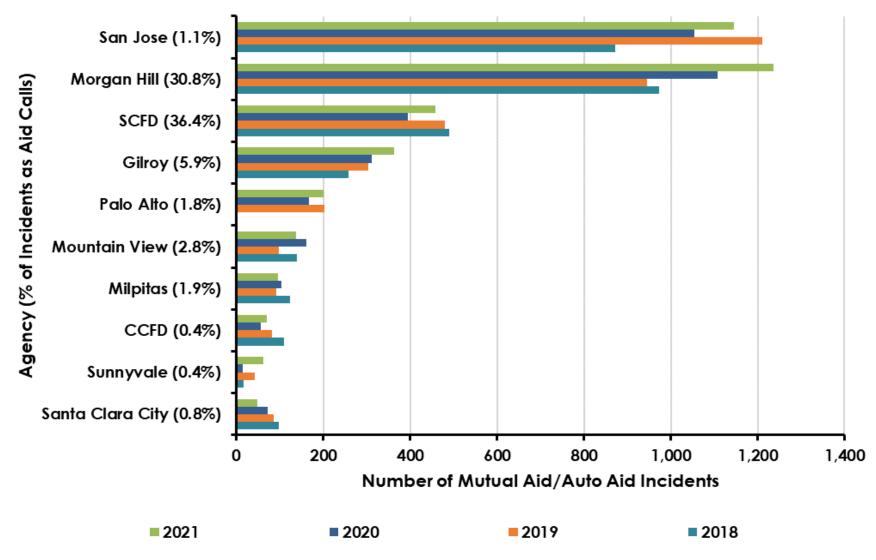- The Santa Clara Fire Chiefs Association should coordinate this effort.

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EMS Overview

- Ambulance Transport is provided by AMR for all but Palo Alto and the Stanford contract area where Palo Alto Fire provides ambulance transport.

- Eight of the nine fire agencies provide ALS pre-hospital care for their service area; Sunnyvale provides BLS.

- Gilroy, Milpitas, Morgan Hill, San José, and Santa Clara City are available to provide ambulance transport when the system is busy.

- Mountain View, Morgan Hill, Sunnyvale, and CCFD have not assumed responsibility for emergency medical transport.

EMS Performance

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Mutual Aid

Growing Wildfire Concerns

- 20 Most Destructive California Fires shows at least six Bay Area fires with 13,000 lost structures and over 600,000 acres burned.

- Every community within the bounds of Santa Clara County is subject to WUI fire threats and should consider mitigation of these threats a high priority.

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WUI Hazard Mitigation

- The County's WUI areas are noncontiguous and represent about 23.3% of the county

- The Fire Safe Council was a pivotal step in creating a community-based, grassroots organization to share ideas regarding issues affecting the WUI.

- In 2016, Santa Clara County was successful in creating a regional strategic Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) to create a safer wildland urban interface.

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WUI Recommendation

- **CWPP Updates:** Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council should coordinate CWPP updates with particular emphasis on ensuring all communities within Santa Clara County are participating (Milpitas does not have an Annex).

WUI Recommendation

- **Multi Party Fuel Mitigation:** Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council should concentrate on multi-party mitigation, monitoring, and outreach in the CWPP update.

WUI Recommendation

- **Combine Fuel Mitigation Strategies:** Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council should consider combining mitigation strategies from city Annexes into a single list that can be used to locate fuel breaks and fuel modifications to protect multiple jurisdictions, recognizing efficiencies of scale.

- The list should be prioritized to fund the most significant risks to the County first. The Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council should also develop public messages and online tools for all fire agencies to echo and make available to residents. Grants are available to fund projects.

- Implementation of projects should involve staff of impacted fire agencies, cities, and County OES, as well as hired contractors.

- Napa, Marin, and San Diego counties have already implemented this best practice and can serve as examples.

WUI Recommendation

- **Annual Updates of the CWPP:** Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council should conduct annual CWPP and fire agency updates regarding project planning, implementation, and maintenance.

WUI Recommendation

- **Annual CWPP Project Coordination Meetings:** Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council should conduct annual project coordination meetings between fire agencies, land management agencies, local non-profits, and the Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council to evaluate project priorities and review project accomplishments.

WUI Recommendation

- **CWPP Project Database:** Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council should maintain an extensive project database available to the community.

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Fire Prevention and Public Education (1)

Provider	Staffing	Amend/ Adopt Fire Code	Plan Review & Construction Inspections	Mandated[1] & Annual Inspections	HazMat[2]	Investi-gations	Public Ed
Gilroy FD	Part of Community Dev't	Yes/Yes	FM in Building	Unknown	CUPA	No	Info on website
Milpitas FD	DC/AFM + 10	Yes/Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Mountain View FD	FM + 7	Yes/Yes	FPE in Building	Yes (Multi-family every 5-yrs)	PA for HMBP All Tanks	Yes	Yes
Palo Alto FD	FM + 8 (functionally in Planning)	Yes/Yes	In Building	Yes	PA for HMBP AST	Yes	Yes
San José FD	FM/DC + 42	Yes/Yes	In Building	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Santa Clara FD	FM + 17	Yes/Yes	Yes	Yes	CUPA	Yes	Yes
Sunnyvale Public Safety	FM + 9	Yes/Yes	In Building	Yes	CUPA	Yes	Info on website

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Fire Prevention and Public Education (2)

Provider	Staffing	Amend/ Adopt Fire Code	Plan Review & Construction Inspections	Mandated[1] & Annual Inspections	HazMat[2]	Investi- gations	Public Ed
CCFD	25 Chief is County FM + FM/DC +14 DFM	Yes/Yes	County Offices with frequent trips to cities served	Yes	PA for HMBP UST	CCFD Inv	Yes Comm Risk Red (CRR) Staff
Cupertino	0	Yes/Yes	CCFD	CCFD	PA via CCFD	CCFD Inv	CCFD CRR
Los Gatos	0	Yes/Yes	CCFD	CCFD	PA via CCFD	CCFD Inv	CCFD CRR
Monte Serrano	0	Yes/Yes	CCFD	CCFD	CCFD HazMat	CCFD Inv	CCFD CRR
SFD	0	Yes/Yes	CCFD	CCFD	CCFD HazMat	CCFD Inv	CCFD CRR
Los Altos	0	Yes/Yes	CCFD	CCFD	CCFD HazMat	CCFD Inv	CCFD CRR
Campbell	0	Yes/Yes	CCFD	CCFD	PA via CCFD	CCFD Inv	CCFD CRR

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Fire Prevention and Public Education (3)

Provider	Staffing	Amend/ Adopt Fire Code	Plan Review & Construction Inspections	Mandated[1] & Annual Inspections	HazMat[2]	Investi- gations	Public Ed
LAHCFD	2 FC and Education & Risk Reduction Manager	Yes/Yes	CCFD	CCFD	CCFD HazMat	CCFD Inv	CCFD CRR + On-line classes
Morgan Hill (CAL FIRE)	1.66 BC/FM	Yes/Yes	In Building	FM & Ops	No	CAL FIRE	Info on Web
SCFD (CAL FIRE)	0.33 Contracted FM + BC & 2FCs	N/A	FM	FM	No	CAL FIRE	Yes Eng Co

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Fire Prevention Recommendation

- **Fire Inspections:** Each jurisdiction should annually report the status of mandated inspections to its governing body in accordance with state law (California Health & Safety Code 13146.4).

- This will allow the governing body to assess and make decisions regarding resources and corrective action.

- A similar report should be submitted to the State Fire Marshal per the 2020 letter of request from the State Fire Marshal.

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Fire Prevention Recommendation

- **Plan Review and Construction Processes:** The Santa Clara County Fire Marshals Association should consider creating processes like the one used for hazardous materials for plan reviews and construction inspections.

- Unidocs is an excellent way to clearly convey who is responsible, where to go, and what is required for service.

- Updates on requirements and/or turnarounds times, and other relevant information can be kept current on this living, web-based document.

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Fire Prevention Recommendation

- **Cities and Districts with Fire Prevention Services provided by other agencies:** Cupertino, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Los Altos, Campbell SFD, LAHCFD, SCFD should all provide an explanation and links on their websites to connect community members with the agency providing fire prevention services.

- Those providing the service should consider adding guidelines and checklists used by staff to assist customers.

Fire Prevention Recommendation

- **Fire Prevention Fee Schedules:** Fee schedules adopted by each jurisdiction should be assessed for compliance with California Government Code Section 66016.6, requiring that fees not exceed the cost of providing service.

- Although fee schedules were not part of this study, compliance is questionable in the cities that contract with Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District (CCFD) for service and develop their fees independently.

- Consider allowing the CCFD Governing Body to adopt fees for the services they provide each city.

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Fire Prevention Recommendation

- **Fire Investigators' Access to Incident Data:** CCFD and CAL FIRE should provide access to the incident database for every fire agency in Santa Clara County.

- The Fire Investigation Task Force is a best practice, and the data collected can be used to identify the fire problem countywide.

- The data quality must be high enough to determine what caused the fire (ignition source and material first ignited), where it occurred (fire origin in specific occupancy type, as well as geographic location), who caused it, if applicable (age, sex, etc.), and why it occurred (the action that brought the ignition source and material first ignited together).

- A shared database/geocoded map would facilitate the creation of programs that target specific populations and occupancies in areas at risk.

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Fire Prevention Recommendation

- **Public Education:** Public education regarding community risk reduction is sparse and distinct among the agencies.

- Many rely on their websites to provide information and links. Creating a set of coordinated materials, programs, and messages, based on the identified fire (and EMS) problem(s), would go a long way in providing a clear, consistent message to targeted occupancies and populations throughout the county.

- A Public Education Task Force, working with local CERT and Red Cross groups, would be a best practice in efficiency as well as maximize the potential for behavior change in impacted populations.

- The Santa Clara County Fire Marshals Association should coordinate this recommendation with all the fire agencies in the County.

Emergency Preparedness (1)

City	Entity	CERT	Other Programs	Outreach
Gilroy	Office of Emergency Services*	No		Info on Website
Milpitas	Office of Emergency Management*	Yes	ARES/RACES	Info on Website
Mountain View	Fire Department	Yes + Neighbor-hood Groups	Disaster Preparedness Classes	Info on Website
Palo Alto	Office of Emergency Services*	Yes	Block Preparedness Coordinators, ARES/RACES, Citizen Corps	Info on Website
San José	Office of Emergency Management*	Yes	Preparedness Classes, RACES	Info on Website
Santa Clara	Fire Department	Yes	Special Needs Database	Info on Website
Sunnyvale	Public Safety Department	Yes	Listos Preparedness Classes, SARES	Info on Website

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Emergency Preparedness (2)

City	Entity	CERT	Other Programs	Outreach
Santa Clara County	LEAD AGENCY Office of Emergency Management	CCFD	Personal Emergency Preparedness Classes	Info on Website
Cupertino	Office of Emergency Management*	Yes	Neighbor-hood Block Leader	Info on Website
Los Gatos	Police Services	Yes	DART, Emergency Vol Center & Training	Info on Website
Monte Serrano	Partners with Los Gatos			Info on Website
Saratoga	City	Yes		Info on Website
Los Altos	Police Department	Yes	Los Altos Prepares	Info on Website
Campbell	Police Department	Yes	ARES/RACES	Info on Website
Los Altos Hills	Town	Yes	HAM Radio, Be Ready Be Prepared Classes & Videos	Info on Website
Morgan Hill	PD/Office of Emergency Service	Yes	HAM Radio, Map Your Neighborhood	Info on Website

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Emergency Management Recommendation

- **Emergency Operations Plan Updates:** The County Office of Emergency Management, should develop a schedule for regular updates of the Emergency Operations Plan.

Emergency Management Recommendation

- **Emergency Management Outreach:** The County Office of Emergency Management, should build community resiliency to disasters through regular outreach and scheduled drills.

Emergency Management Recommendation

- **Emergency Management Partnerships:** The County Office of Emergency Management, should look for additional strategic partnership opportunities that combine city and county-wide resources to improve the efficiency of service delivery like Los Gatos-Monte Sereno and CCFD and the county.

Emergency Management Recommendation

- **Fire Safe Council Representation:** The County Office of Emergency Management, should consider adding a representative from the Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council as a partner in plan updates and revisions.

Emergency Management Recommendation

- **Reference to the Community Wildfire Protection Plan:** The County Office of Emergency Management, should include references to the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) in the wildfire threat summary portion of the Emergency Management Plan to help ensure coordination.

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Emergency Communications

Service Provider	PSAP	Dispatch Center	CAD Product	MDCs	AVL Dispatch
CCFD	County Comms, Campbell Police, Los Altos Police, Los Gatos Police, and Monte Sereno Police	County Comms (CCFD)	Homegrown	Yes	No
Gilroy FD	Gilroy Police	Gilroy Police	Sunridge RIMS	Yes	No
Milpitas FD	Milpitas Police	Milpitas Police	Central Square	Yes	Yes
Morgan Hill (CAL FIRE)	Morgan Hill Police	CAL FIRE	Peraton	No	No
Mountain View FD	Mountain View Police	Mountain View Police	Hexagon	Yes	Yes
Palo Alto FD	Palo Alto Police and Stanford Police	Palo Alto Police	Hexagon	Yes	Yes
San José FD	San José Police and San José State University Police	San José Fire	Hexagon	Yes	No
Santa Clara City FD	Santa Clara Police	Santa Clara Police	Hexagon	Yes	Yes
SCFD (CAL FIRE)	County Comms	CAL FIRE	Peraton	No	No
Sunnyvale PSD	Sunnyvale PSD	Sunnyvale PSD	CommandCAD	Yes	No
Rural/Metro Ambulance	14 separate PSAPS	County Comms	Homegrown	No	No

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Processing a 911 Medical Emergency

Origin of 911 Call	Processing the Medical Emergency
Cupertino, Los Altos Hills, and Saratoga	911 calls are answered by County Communications who dispatches both fire and ambulance from the same center.
Unincorporated areas of CCFD, LAHCFD, and SFD	911 calls are answered by County Communications who dispatches both fire and ambulance from the same center.
Palo Alto	911 calls are answered by Palo Alto Police who dispatches both fire and ambulance from the same center. Calls received from Stanford are first received by Stanford Police then transferred to Palo Alto.
San José	911 calls are answered by San José Police then transferred via Common CAD to San José Fire Dispatch. Fire Dispatch requests response for EMS Transport via CAD to County Communications.
Santa Clara, Mountain View, Milpitas, Gilroy, and Sunnyvale	911 calls are answered by the cities' Police Department who dispatches fire, then transfers the information via phone to County Communications for an ambulance response.
Campbell, Los Altos, Los Gatos, and Monte Sereno	911 calls are answered by the Cities Police Department who transfers the information via phone to County Communications for fire and ambulance response.
Unincorporated areas of SCFD	911 calls are answered by County Communications who dispatches the ambulance, then transfers the information to the CAL FIRE dispatch center via phone for a fire response.
Morgan Hill	911 calls are answered by the Morgan Hill Police Department who transfers the information via phone call to the CAL FIRE dispatch center for a response from the Fire Department and to County Communications via phone for an ambulance response.

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Emergency Comms Recommendation

- **CAD-to-CAD Interoperability:** Establish a CAD-to-CAD connection between dispatch centers to enhance interoperability.

- This connection would enable the transfer of information and real-time monitoring of neighboring agency resource status.

- It would streamline the process of requesting resources from neighboring centers and facilitate the determination of available resources outside the center for specific incidents.

- Silicon Valley Regional Interoperability Authority (SVRIA) should provide coordination with all the Fire Dispatch Centers to meet this recommendation.

Emergency Comms Recommendation

- **AVL Dispatch of Resources:** Gilroy, Morgan Hill, San Jose, Sunnyvale, CCFD, and SCFD are not currently utilizing Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) technology to dispatch the closest available resource for emergencies.

- By integrating AVL into the CAD system through GIS mapping, the system can identify and dispatch the nearest unit to the incident.

- AVL Dispatch can help improve overall response times, potentially making a significant difference in critical calls.

- Each of these agencies should implement AVL dispatch in their dispatch center.

Emergency Comms Recommendation

- **Communications Feasibility Study:** Silicon Valley Regional Interoperability Authority (SVRIA) should commission a comprehensive feasibility study to address weaknesses in the overall emergency communications system in the county.

- The study should focus on reducing the number of Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), establishing a common Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) platform for fire and EMS agencies, and evaluating the benefits and challenges of combining fire and EMS dispatch centers, at least virtually.

- This study will provide valuable insights to improve services for individual agencies and the entire county.

Government Structure Alternatives

Requirements

- LAFCO is required to identify potential governmental structure options and operational efficiencies upon which the agencies may be able to capitalize.

- The options and recommendations included here are intended to initiate discussions amongst the affected agencies.
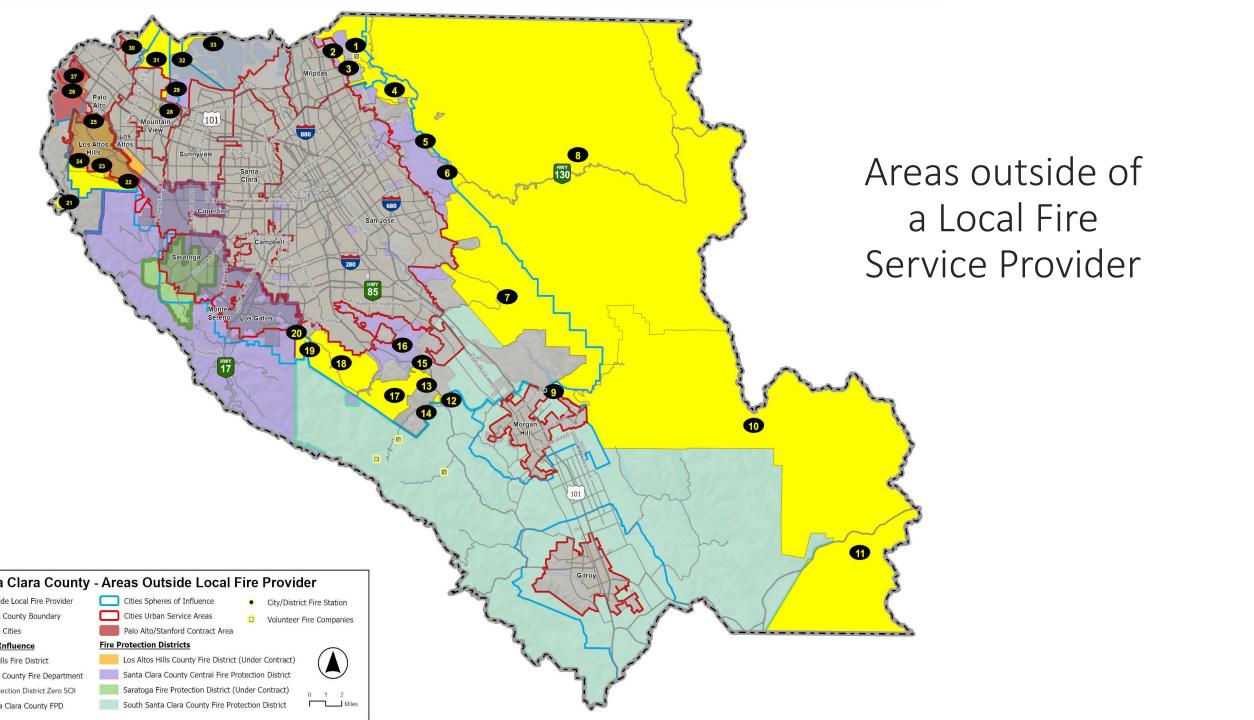
Efficiencies of Contracts and JPAs

- Joint service structures aimed at resource sharing, consist of contracting for services or joint powers authorities to combine operations of two or more agencies.

- Provide opportunities to pool resources, share expertise, and optimize operations, leading to improved service delivery despite limitations in personnel and facilities.

- These structure alternatives do not provide a singular solution to all constraints to services and must be combined with other strategies.

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Recommendation

- A JPA service structure may be most beneficial for neighboring city fire departments of Mountain View, Palo Alto, Sunnyvale, Santa Clara, and CCFD.

- Creating a larger independent entity with a unified structure, or a specific function such as training, can offer benefits such as increased accountability, improved efficiency, and enhanced effectiveness in delivering fire services to the community.

Areas outside of a Local Fire Service Provider

- 33 distinct areas, totaling over 539 sq. miles, outside a local fire service provider, were identified based on each territory's location with respect to critical boundaries.

- Aims of ensuring all territory in the County lies within the boundaries of a local fire protection provider:

    - Ensure year round rapid and efficient response in both LRA and SRA (CAL FIRE only serves SRA during the fire season unless there is a specific agreement)

    - Validate ability of agency to provide necessary services

    - Ensure efficiency and speed of dispatch

    - Enhance accountability

    - Recoup some costs for services likely already provided

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Areas outside of a Local Fire Service Provider

Santa Clara County - Areas Outside Local Fire Provider

Areas Outside Local Fire Provider	Cities Spheres of Influence	• City/District Fire Station
County Boundary	Cities Urban Service Areas	▫ Volunteer Fire Companies
Cities	Palo Alto/Stanford Contract Area	

Fire Protection Districts

- Los Altos Hills County Fire District (Under Contract)
- Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District
- Saratoga Fire Protection District (Under Contract)
- South Santa Clara County Fire Protection District

Recommendations

- The primary service structure that is most feasible and leads to logical boundaries is annexation of areas outside a fire provider's boundaries by the adjacent fire protection district and the district contracting with the nearest provider with facilities in the area.

- Areas 1 thru 6 are recommended to be annexed into CCFD then contract with the appropriate city FD for services in the expanded territory.

- This similar structure is proposed for areas adjacent to SCFD and LAHCFD boundaries and is applicable to Areas 7, 9–20, and 22–25.

Recommendations

- Promote Annexation of Existing Areas in LAHCFD and SCFD SOI's

- Reimplementing the Amador Plan, funded by the County, in Area 8, where there are no other nearby alternative fire providers, would enhance public safety ensuring faster response year-round in these remote areas.

- Promote an agreement between the City of Palo Alto and Palo Alto Unified School District for service at two elementary schools

- The service structure for Areas 28–33 is recommended to remain unchanged given minimal demand (no or few structures), extremely limited financing potential, expansive SRA receiving necessary services from CAL FIRE, and a lack of feasible options.

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Recreation and Open Space

- County parks compose all or portions of Areas 9, 17-20, and 22-23.

- Sizeable open space properties owned by the MidPenninsula Regional Open Space District (MidPen) are located in the rural areas outside of the urban core throughout the County, portions of which are in Areas 19-23.

  Public Resources Code Section 5561.6 requires Open Space Districts to "be primarily responsible for the prevention and suppression of all fires on any lands in its possession or control, excluding all lands of a district located within the exterior boundaries of any municipality or other fire protection district."

- Should one of the adjacent providers choose not to annex the areas in question, it may be beneficial for MidPen to enter into an agreement (or other desired structure) with an appropriate fire service provider.

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State Contract County

- Six counties have opted to become "contract counties" by providing contract services to the State, filling the services that would otherwise be provided by CAL FIRE for reimbursement.

- Reassessing the possibility of Santa Clara transitioning to a contract county may be warranted.

- Inclusion of Alameda and Contra Costa in the restructuring would create a more cohesive fire service structure in the Bay Area and likely enhance bargaining power with the State.

Governance Structure Alternatives for the Four Fire Districts

- Governance structure options for each of the four special districts reviewed in this report were identified based on service efficiency, cost effectiveness, and viability as established in the criteria for this review.

CCFD

- CCFD has reasonable economies of scale that allow for greater efficiency and effectiveness, there are few governance structure alternatives available for the District.

- CCFD does face service constraints as a result of limited staffing levels for uniformed support staff in certain divisions, indicating there could be enhanced efficiencies and value-added services to CCFD by developing a shared services structure with Mountain View, Palo Alto, Sunnyvale, Santa Clara through a JPA.

- There is the potential for CCFD to enhance public safety services in the County by annexing several areas that currently lack an identified fire and emergency response provider.

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LAHCFD

- Annexation of LAHCFD's territory by CCFD and subsequent dissolution of LAHCFD, with CCFD identified as the successor agency is an option to streamline the governance structure.

- LAHCFD augments services within its boundaries, through additional staffing, enhanced equipment and engines, funding of expanded crews during fire season, and supplemental properties/facilities for fire protection activities.

- Given LAHCFD's key supplements to services within its boundaries, strong financial position, and lack of impact on logical boundaries of other providers, there appears to be no impetus to pursue any potential cost savings that would be the result of this reorganization.

LAHCFD

- There is also the potential for LAHCFD to enhance public safety services in the County by annexing four areas (Areas 22-25) that currently lack an identified fire protection and emergency response provider.

SFD

- The 2010 Countywide Fire Service Review and the 2014 Special Study: Saratoga Fire Protection District both indicated that duplicative costs and efforts could be reduced by dissolving the district and consolidating with CCFD.

- This review affirms that there are redundancies in the current service structure that could be more efficient with just one fire district serving the area.

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SCFD

- The southern region of Santa Clara is served by SCFD and the cities of Gilroy and Morgan Hill. These agencies each play an integral role in the other's services

- The three agencies have practiced significant collaboration, planning and resource sharing

- There are further opportunities to better share and leverage resources and develop cohesive response in the region:

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SCFD

- Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding outlining the three agencies' commitment to providing long-term cooperative fire services.

- Establishment of a joint strategic planning team "to evaluate potential cooperative service elements for approval by the respective policy bodies, and then to conduct the detailed implementation planning necessary."

- Gilroy may contract with CAL FIRE, thus making the region served by a single entity for consistency and cohesiveness of response and ease of communication, and potentially enhancing negotiation power with CAL FIRE.

- In the long-term, the agencies may wish to consider annexation of Morgan Hill and Gilroy fire services into SCFD to fully maximize efficiencies and effectiveness.

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SCFD

- There is the potential for SCFD to enhance public safety services in the County by annexing several areas that currently lack an identified fire and emergency response provider.

- While SCFD is working to address projected financial shortfalls over the next five years, the district remains the only viable option for taking on services in six areas—Areas 9–14.

The Full Report

- Significant detail on the countywide overview of service, growing wildfire concerns, hazard mitigation in Santa Clara County, and the Governance Structure Alternatives.

- Detailed profiles for each agency providing fire and emergency medical response, including determinations for each of the cities and districts.

- Description of the Volunteer Fire Companies.

- Survey results and comments from the August 2021 Community Engagement.

AP Triton wishes to thank…

- **Santa Clara LAFCO Commissioners**

- **Countywide Fire Protection Service Review Technical Advisory Committee**

- **LAFCO Staff**

- **Fire District Elected Officials and Staff**

- **Fire Chiefs and their Staff**

Special Thanks to Steve Borgstrom and Matt Thompson, Santa Clara County Planning Office, for preparing the maps included within this report.