

Attachment 7

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City of Gilroy

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J. Edward Tewes
Interim City Administrator

Date: November 17, 2015

To: Planning Commission

From: J. Edward Tewes, Interim City Administrator

RE: Public Safety Response Times and the General Plan

The Police Chief, Fire Chief and I are suggesting that specific response times not be included in the General Plan.

However, not only do we strongly endorse the concept of measureable standards of response times, we regularly include those in the proposed budget. Attached are the standards which the City Council has adopted as part of the budget process.

The previous staff report explained why we believe that such specific numeric targets are better established by specific Council action. However, mindful of the GPAC's desire that the General Plan establish policies that require that "new growth" pay for itself and not impose burdens on the existing community such as the diminution of current service levels, we proposed the following language.

Provide and maintain police/fire services that are adequate in staffing, equipment, and resources to respond to emergencies and calls for service as the City continues to grow. Measureable standards of levels of service shall be established by the City Council in the biennial budget. City staff shall annually report on actual performance compared against the established standards.

If the Commission wishes to pursue an approach that does not establish specific targets in the General Plan, there may be alternative or modified language that would meet our concerns and the GPAC's fundamental concerns.

The actual performance standards shown on attachments A and B illustrate the difficulty of the current General Plan metrics which we understand were established at least 15 years ago. For example, "average" response time is not as meaningful as "median" response time, and for most measures, not as meaningful as setting a target level and establishing the percentage of responses that must meet the target: for example, 90% of calls within x minutes.

A second problem with the current General Plan language is that it does not distinguish the type of calls to be responded to within the standard. Both Police and Fire establish priority levels to distinguish emergency from non-emergency responses. Also, the City is bound by contract with the County for

medical emergency response times in order to receive certain reimbursements from the Countywide EMS system.

During the Commission's discussion on November 12, 2015, there was public testimony about a City Service Level Review in draft form prepared for LAFCO. That draft report was in error with respect to Gilroy Police Department response times and we have been given the opportunity to correct it prior to the report being completed and presented to LAFCO. Specifically, the draft report identified the "average" response times to "Priority One" calls as in excess of 12 minutes. That is correct, but the report did not make clear that in Gilroy there is an even higher priority of dispatched calls which our current Computer Aided Dispatch system calls "Priority E". The data for Priority E calls shows an average of about 6 minutes, but is itself misleading because of the way the soon to be upgraded CAD system revises the classification of lower priority calls that later are determined upon arrival to have been misclassified.

You will note that in calendar 2014 the Police Department was not meeting its response time benchmarks. In that year the Council authorized a staffing study that resulted in recommendation for a revised schedule to better cover peak workload periods, and to increase patrol staffing. The Council subsequently approved three additional sworn officer positions.

We hope that this background information is helpful to the Commission as you deliberate on the language to be placed in the General Plan text for purposes of environmental review. As you know, the actual General Plan will not be adopted until the environmental review process is complete.

Attachment A

Gilroy Fire Department Performance and Benchmarking Measures	FY12	FY13	FY14
Arrive on the scene of emergency calls for service within 5 minutes 75% of the time	80	86	87
Arrive on the scene of emergency calls for service within 8 minutes 95% of the time	89	96	93
In combination with mutual and auto-aid agreements provide an effective response force of 12-15 personnel within 10 minutes of initial dispatch for 95% of fires in order to effectively contain the escalation of the emergency	100	100	93

Attachment B

Gilroy Police Department Performance & Benchmarking Measures	FY12	FY13	FY14
Percent of all Priority "E" call responses in 5 minutes	95%	95%	51%
Percent of all Priority "1" call responses in 5 minutes	95%	95%	31%
Percent of priority "2" call responses in 20 minutes	N/A	N/A	68%