



Northern Sonoma County
Professional Firefighters Local 1401
PO Box 14833
Santa Rosa CA 95402-1251

Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District Board of Directors
Re: Strategic Plan Priorities: Second Staffed Station and Measure H Commitments

Dear Members of the Board,

On behalf of the Northern Sonoma County Professional Firefighters, Local 1401, we write to express our support for a clear strategic plan moving forward, and to share our perspective on the priorities that plan should reflect.

We believe the District's strategic plan should include a defined outline, timeline, and budget for a second staffed station. This was a commitment made to voters during the passage of Measure H, and our community has an expectation that the District will follow through on what was communicated at that time. Delivering on that commitment should be treated as a foundational element of the District's planning process, not an aspiration to be revisited indefinitely.

We also want to be clear about our view on sequencing. Local 1401 believes that building a new, second staffed station should take priority over remodeling the existing station. Some of our members have shared feedback about the current station in their capacity as District employees. We want to note for the record that this feedback should not be read as support for prioritizing a remodel over new construction. Our position remains that a new station is the priority. If a new station cannot be feasibly planned, funded, and staffed at this time, we do not believe the District should move forward with a remodel of the existing station until there is certainty that a second station can, in fact, be built and staffed. Investing significant resources into remodeling the current facility, without a clear path to the second station promised under Measure H, risks the District's credibility with the community and does not serve the long-term operational needs of the District or the firefighters who serve it.

We also ask the Board to consider the financial risk of moving forward with a remodel before the District's long-term funding picture is fully understood. Should a budget shortfall emerge that requires the District to go back to the community with an additional assessment or tax measure, that request will be a much harder sell if a large sum of money has already been spent remodeling the existing station rather than delivering the second station the community was told to expect. Although the station in Geyserville is now roughly 20 years old, it is still widely perceived by this community, as well as by the fire service, as "the new station." Asking the public to approve an additional assessment or tax after spending significant money to remodel a station

most people still think of as brand new would be a difficult story to tell, particularly before a second staffed station has even been built. That perception gap would only add to the challenge of passing any future funding measure.

To be clear, our concerns about sequencing do not extend to every improvement at the existing station. We do support moving forward with the additional building planned for the back of the property to provide added storage and engine housing. We see that project as distinct from a full remodel, and as a reasonable, lower-cost improvement that does not compete with or delay the District's commitment to a second staffed station.

We also believe the strategic plan should clearly outline the District's plan for staffing levels at the station, both now and as the District grows. A timeline and budget for a second station only tell part of the story; the plan should also address how the District intends to staff that station, along with any changes anticipated at the existing station, so that our members and the community understand what staffing levels to expect going forward.

Finally, as noted in a previous letter to the Board, Local 1401 continues to support full consolidation, and we ask that this be taken into account as the strategic plan is developed. As part of that planning, the District should incorporate a review of office and storage space availability at all of its facilities, including the current station, the Cloverdale station, and any future stations. Addressing these space needs now, as part of a consolidation-minded plan, will help ensure the District's facilities can support its operations well into the future.

We appreciate the Board's consideration of these priorities and welcome the opportunity to discuss them further as the strategic plan is developed. Local 1401 remains committed to working collaboratively with the District to ensure the commitments made to voters are honored and that our members are equipped to serve this community effectively.

Respectfully,

Northern Sonoma County Professional Firefighters, Local 1401