

PLAN FOR SERVICE

Proposed Annexation of the Community of Yermo into the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District

1. Introduction

This Plan for Service has been prepared in support of the proposed annexation of the Community of Yermo into the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District (SBCFPD). The purpose of this document is to describe the manner in which fire suppression, rescue, emergency medical services (EMS) excluding ambulance transport, and all-hazard emergency response will be provided following annexation. This document also demonstrates SBCFPD's ability to provide these services and satisfy the service planning requirements provided by LAFCO of San Bernardino County.

The proposed annexation would transfer responsibility for fire suppression, rescue, emergency medical services (EMS) excluding ambulance transport, and all-hazard emergency response within the Community of Yermo from the Yermo Community Services District (Yermo CSD) to SBCFPD. Upon completion of the annexation, SBCFPD will assume responsibility for providing fire suppression, emergency medical response (EMS) excluding ambulance transport, and all-hazard emergency response to the annexation territory.

2. Existing Conditions

The Community of Yermo is an unincorporated community located within the High Desert region of San Bernardino County adjacent to Interstate 15 and near the Interstate 40 corridor. The community occupies a strategically important transportation corridor that acts as a major economic pipeline to the region and experiences significant tourism, commercial trucking and commuter traffic, as well as the frequent movement of hazardous materials.

Fire protection services are currently provided through the Yermo CSD utilizing a volunteer fire department. The department currently operates with approximately nine volunteer members; however, volunteer availability has declined over time, resulting in limited operational staffing. On average, volunteer personnel are available to provide emergency response coverage approximately one weekend each month.

Current operational challenges include:

- Limited volunteer staffing availability
- Difficulty recruiting and retaining volunteer firefighters

- Aging facilities and infrastructure
- Non-operational fire apparatus
- Limited availability of compliant personal protective equipment
- Insufficient long-term funding to sustain modern fire and EMS operations
- Increasing emergency response demands associated with Interstate 15 and regional development

Due to these limitations, the community does not maintain a consistently staffed operational fire engine capable of providing immediate emergency response throughout the year. As a result, emergency incidents are routinely supported by neighboring regional fire resources.

3. Proposed Service

Following annexation, SBCFPD will assume responsibility for providing all fire suppression, rescue, emergency medical services (EMS) excluding ambulance transport, and all-hazard emergency response within the annexation area.

Services within this definition include:

- Fire suppression
- Advanced Life Support emergency medical response utilizing station 52
- Rescue operations
- Vehicle extrication
- Hazardous materials response
- Wildland fire suppression
- Public education and community risk reduction
- Fire prevention and code enforcement
- Disaster preparedness and emergency management
- Automatic and mutual aid coordination

All hazard emergency response services will be integrated into SBCFPD's regional services delivery model utilizing County Fire's robust communications, dispatch, command, training, logistics, and administrative systems.

4. Service Delivery

County Fire proposes to utilize the existing Yermo Fire Station, fire station 381, located at 380 W Yermo Rd as a strategic response facility serving both the local community and surrounding desert region. Subject to final operational planning, the station is anticipated to be staffed utilizing SBCFPD's Paid Call Firefighter program, supplemented by regional career resources, specifically nearby station 52 in Harvard, and automatic aid responses.

The annexation will allow emergency incidents occurring within Yermo to be dispatched and managed through SBCFPD's standardized operational procedures and incident command system.

Regional deployment will improve response reliability while maintaining the flexibility to assign additional resources during periods of increased emergency demand. This regional services delivery model is further enhanced by access to command staff who can make strategic decisions for the Yermo coverage area 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for any emergencies within the proposed annexation area.

Staffing and hours of coverage at the existing facility will vary based on Paid Call Firefighter availability. When staffed, the Paid Call Firefighters will respond in a Type 1, Type 2 or Type 6 apparatus, depending on equipment status, personnel qualifications and call type. When responding to incidents, they will be providing Basic Life Support (BLS) care. However, station 52 will respond to all incidents within the Yermo service zone whether or not station 381 is staffed that day. Station 52 is located at 39059 Kathy Ln. Harvard, CA. It is staffed 24/7 by a crew of three to include a Captain, Engineer, and Firefighter/Paramedic. It will cover all calls in Yermo and provide Advanced Life Support (ALS). Station 52 will start responding to calls immediately after the annexation.

5. Operational Benefits

The proposed annexation will improve the reliability and sustainability of fire suppression, rescue, emergency medical services (EMS) excluding ambulance transport, and all-hazard emergency response by integrating the community into an established regional emergency response system.

Operational benefits include:

- Consistent emergency response capability
- Improved firefighter safety
- Enhanced EMS delivery
- Improved incident command
- Increased resource availability
- Expanded mutual aid capability
- Improved interoperability with surrounding agencies
- Increased operational accountability
- Enhanced regional deployment flexibility

In addition, the Yermo Fire Station provides a strategically located response point along Interstate 15 and Interstate 40, improving emergency response coverage throughout the High Desert transportation corridor.

6. Financial Plan

The Yermo CSD currently operates with limited financial resources that also support park, recreation, and lighting services within the community. Existing revenues are insufficient to independently sustain contemporary fire protection operations.

Following annexation:

- Yermo CSD agrees to contribute \$40,000 in annual property tax revenue to SBCFPD, subject to the applicable property tax exchange process.
- SBCFPD will provide services utilizing its regional service delivery model, allowing operational efficiencies and economies of scale not available under the current organizational structure.
- Future commercial and industrial development may generate additional revenues through Community Benefit Agreements, development impact mitigation, and other legally authorized funding mechanisms.
- Remaining cost to provide services beyond the \$40,000 per year will be funded through the SBCFPD North Desert Service Zone operating budget.

- The Yermo CSD will continue to support parks, recreation, and lighting services with their remaining property tax revenue. \$40,000 per year represents roughly a third of their annual operating budget.

SBCFPD's regional operating model provides a more financially sustainable approach to long-term fire protection service delivery than the existing volunteer based system.

7. Future Growth

The proposed annexation will position SBCFPD to support future residential, commercial, and industrial development within the Yermo area.

Reliable fire suppression, rescue, emergency medical services (EMS) excluding ambulance transport, and all-hazard emergency response is an essential component of responsible land use planning and economic development. The proposed annexation will improve SBCFPD's ability to evaluate development proposals, coordinate fire protection infrastructure improvements, negotiate mitigation measures where appropriate, and ensure emergency response capabilities expand commensurate with future growth.

8. Regional Benefits

The proposed annexation provides benefits extending beyond the annexation territory by strengthening emergency response capability throughout the High Desert.

Regional benefits include:

- Improved Interstate 15 response coverage
- Improved Interstate 40 response coverage
- Reduced response gaps
- Improved wildfire response capability
- Enhanced automatic and mutual aid coordination
- Improved disaster preparedness
- Greater operational flexibility during large-scale incidents

The proposal supports San Bernardino County's Countywide Vision of providing efficient, coordinated, and sustainable fire protection services throughout the region.

9. Conclusion

The proposed annexation will establish a sustainable and reliable model for providing fire suppression, rescue, emergency medical response (EMS) excluding ambulance transport, and all-hazard emergency response to the Community of Yermo. By incorporating the annexation area into SBCFPD, emergency services will be delivered through an established regional fire protection agency with the personnel, equipment, operational systems, and financial capacity necessary to meet current and future service demands.

The annexation will improve emergency response reliability, enhance firefighter and public safety, strengthen regional emergency preparedness, and support responsible economic development while ensuring long-term fiscal sustainability for fire protection services within the community.

This plan for service is certified by the Fire Chief of the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District.
