



United Professional Firefighters Contra Costa • Local 1230

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June 2, 2022

Kensington Fire Protection Board of Directors,

On behalf of the United Professional Firefighters of Contra Costa County, I would like to express our support for the long overdue construction/modernization of Fire Station 65 in Kensington. This station serves a critical role in the county's emergency fire response due to several factors. First and foremost, the type 1 and type 3 fire engines that respond from this station are in close proximity and equipped to mitigate the hazards that are of the greatest concerns to your community. Additionally, due to the difficulties associated with access to various locations within this geographical area, the type and specifics of the responding apparatus from this station are critical in the rapid response and early intervention of most emergency incidents. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, the personnel assigned to Fire Station 65 with the mission of protecting your community possess the local knowledge and expertise, supported by continuous training, necessary to efficiently serve the citizens of Kensington with any issue that may arise.

As several geotechnical engineering studies have shown, the current station is seismically unsafe in the event of a moderate/major earthquake. To put it simply, even if the building shifted slightly during an earthquake, the ability of your fire engines to pass through the apparatus doors (which already maintain minimal clearance) would be compromised. With regards to the space necessary in a modern fire station, NFPA 1500 defines the impacts of fire station design as it pertains to areas dedicated to training, firefighter fitness, spaces where firefighters can unwind from the stresses of the profession, office work, etc. These spaces must not only accommodate the standard, three person crew at the station, but also additional emergency personnel that staff the station in times of increased emergency staffing needs. Lastly, while several attempts to find an alternate location for a fire station have been attempted, the current site is not only central to the entire primary response area within the Fire District, but provides for the most efficient use of time in terms of demolition/reconstruction. Continual research in finding a new site simply prolongs the existing sub-par condition with the potential of encumbering emergency response in the event of a major seismic emergency.

In conclusion, we strongly urge your continued support of this project. A modernized Fire Station 65 with efficient use of space meeting the minimum requirements of NFPA 1500 is critical to the Kensington Fire Protection District's future. This station will be immensely beneficial in providing the proper workspace required for your firefighters to perform their duties in the most efficient manner possible. In turn, the Board can rest assured that these professionals will be prepared, equipped, and able to serve the community of Kensington and the county of Contra Costa when the need arises.

Vincent Wells, President

United Professional Firefighters of Contra Costa County, IAFF Local 1230

