

Draft Resolution

111 Santa Rosa Avenue, Suite 240
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

September 4, 2019

Resolution of the Local Agency Formation Commission of the County of Sonoma, State of California, Making Determinations Related to Information Contained in the Municipal Service Review for West County Fire and Emergency Service Agencies, Determining Exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act, and Adopting the Determinations of the Municipal Service Review.

RESOLVED, that the Local Agency Formation Commission of the County of Sonoma (“the Commission”) hereby finds and determines as follows:

1. Procedural History

1.1. The Commission directed staff to prepare a Municipal Service Review (“MSR”) of fifteen agencies that provide fire and emergency services in western Sonoma County pursuant to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, Government Code section 56000 et seq. (“the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act”).

1.2. The Executive Officer determined that the Commission would comply with California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) and the State CEQA Guidelines by acting as the lead agency in its consideration of the MSR and adoption of the determinations of the MSR. The Executive Officer further determined that the MSR is exempt pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3).

1.3. Following the preparation of the MSR, the Executive Officer set the matter for consideration by the Commission and provided notice thereof as provided in the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act.

1.4. The Executive Officer considered written comments received on the MSR and prepared a staff report (“the Executive Officer’s Report”) which included a recommendation to adopt the MSR. The Executive Officer furnished copies of the Executive Officer’s Report to all persons entitled to copies under the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act.

1.5. The Commission considered the MSR at its regular meeting on August 7, 2019. At the meeting, the Commission heard and received all relevant oral and written testimony and evidence presented or filed and considered the Executive Officer’s Report and the MSR. All interested persons were given the opportunity to hear and be heard. At the conclusion of public testimony, the Commission closed the public comment period and directed the Executive Officer to provide a formal resolution for adoption of the determinations in the MSR.

1.6. The Commission adopted the determinations in the MSR at its meeting on September 4, 2019.

1.7. The Commission has reviewed and considered this resolution and hereby finds that it accurately sets forth the intentions of the Commission regarding adoption of the determinations of the MSR.

2. CEQA Compliance

2.1 The Commission concurs with the Executive Officer and finds and determines that the Commission has principal responsibility for preparation and adoption of the MSR and its determinations, and, pursuant to Section 15367 of the State CEQA Guidelines, is the lead agency for the preparation of the MSR and adoption of the determinations of the MSR.

2.2 The Commission finds and determines that the preparation of the MSR and adoption of the determinations of the MSR are exempt from CEQA under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), which exempts an activity from the provisions of CEQA where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment. The facts and circumstances supporting the Commission's conclusion are set forth below:

a. The MSR is a study of fifteen agencies in the western portion of Sonoma County which provide fire and emergency medical services.

b. As a result of the MSR, the Commission makes determinations relating to growth and population, disadvantaged unincorporated communities, capacity and adequacy of public facilities and services, financial ability to provide services, governance and accountability, and opportunities for shared services.

c. No physical changes to the environment are anticipated, planned, or reasonably foreseeable as a result of the preparation of the MSR and the Commission's adoption of the determinations of the MSR.

2.3 The Commission has considered the potential environmental effects of the preparation of the MSR and the adoption of the determinations of the MSR prior to reaching its decision. The Commission finds that, in doing so, it has fully discharged its responsibilities under CEQA.

3. Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act Compliance – Municipal Service Review

3.1 The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act directs LAFCOs to review and update agencies' spheres of influence, as necessary, every five years and further to conduct municipal service reviews prior to, or in conjunction with such updates. With regard to the Municipal Service Review for West County Fire and Emergency Service Agencies, the Commission makes the following determinations:

3.2 Summary Determinations - Growth and Population Projections:

a. Although there continues to be modest population growth in West County, subject agencies point to an array of other factors driving increased call volumes.

b. These factors include an aging population, a shift to year-round use of homes instead of seasonal or part-time use, an increase in the homeless population, and a dramatic increase in tourist visitors to the region.

c. Agencies do not consider land use development a driver of call volume. Even in Sebastopol and the modest urban/suburban areas of Forestville, Guerneville, and Monte Rio, development activity is not driving subject agency service needs.

3.3 Summary Determinations – Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities:

- a. There are four LAFCO-designated disadvantaged unincorporated communities within three of the territories served by the subject agencies; the remaining three disadvantaged unincorporated communities are not adjacent to any of the subject agencies.
- b. Fire and emergency service provision is exempted from provisions of Senate Bill 244.

3.4 Summary Determinations – Capacity and Adequacy of Public Facilities and Services:

- a. All agencies are experiencing staffing challenges of one form or another. These challenges range across a spectrum that includes:
 - i. A decline in active volunteer ranks
 - ii. Declines in volunteer availability during particular shifts/times
 - iii. A lack of promotional career paths for career professionals
 - iv. Difficulty in retaining career professionals due to salary and benefit competition in Sonoma County and the Bay Area region
- b. Improvements to stipend programs for volunteers may enable agencies to address staffing challenges without transitioning fully to career-professional staffing, which most agencies cannot support financially.
- c. Many agencies cannot provide “2/0” staffing at all times – the ability to respond to incident calls with two qualified personnel. The agencies with career professional staff are often unable to provide “3/0” staffing for responses, which is considered the optimum staffing level for providing appropriate service in suburban and urban areas.
- d. Establishing more career-professional positions (particularly during weekday daytime shifts) within a regional agency would provide more opportunities for career progression.
- e. A regional agency would, over time, provide standardized training that would improve service delivery.
- f. While a cursory review of response time statistics indicates that most agencies are meeting National Fire Protection Association guidelines, the statistics are rudimentary and can obscure significant service level deficiencies.
- g. The provision of emergency medical services and ambulance coverage throughout West County is becoming a critical concern. The Russian River and Bodega Bay FPDs are providing advanced life support and ambulance coverage for areas well beyond their boundaries and are unlikely to be able to sustainably provide that service in the future.
- h. Many of the subject agencies in West County have deficient facilities and/or equipment and do not have sustainable finances to rectify those deficiencies.

3.5 Summary Determinations - Financial Ability to Provide Service:

- a. The subject agencies (with only a few exceptions) do not prepare multi-year budget projections, which would nominally inform agency boards of impending financial sustainability challenges.
- b. Most agencies have prepared only a rudimentary vehicle and equipment capital plan, and most agencies are not setting aside sufficient funding for future expenditures.
- c. While some agencies have facilities (stations) that are in reasonable condition, they have not evaluated capital funding needs for ADA compliance, seismic retrofitting, other facility upgrades (e.g., engine bay ventilation systems), or outright facility rebuilds.

3.6 Summary Determinations – Governance and Accountability:

- a. The fire protection districts in West County appear to have well-functioning governing

boards. The governance and accountability of volunteer fire company 501 (c)(3) bodies was not evaluated.

b. No district reported any particular difficulty in recruiting candidates to run for board seats, although most have not seen contested seats either. Board members often have a fire and emergency services career background; it might better serve agency and community interests to have a wider variety of board member backgrounds and experience and for there to be a somewhat higher turnover rate.

c. Some districts, generally due to a lack of administrative capability, or as a matter of practice, do not ensure that board members have filed financial interest disclosures or completed state-mandated ethics training.

d. There are no apparent instances of recent violations of open meeting regulations, campaign regulations, or other accountability requirements among the fire protection districts in West County.

3.7 Summary Determinations – Opportunity for Shared Services:

a. Any proposed reorganizations of subject agencies, or contractual service arrangements, are unlikely to generate significant cost savings.

b. As subject agencies begin to establish or add paid professional staff positions, administrative support needs will increase. Adding administrative support capability would best be accomplished through shared staffing resources, either on a contracted basis or by regionally consolidated agencies.

c. A regionally consolidated agency or agencies would be better positioned to evaluate and project capital and expense needs, enabling agency leadership to develop funding strategies.

3.8 Bodega Bay Fire Protection District – Summary Determinations:

a. Bodega Bay Fire Protection District provides “all risk” coverage to residents and visitors to Bodega Bay and ambulance/paramedic coverage to adjoining areas, using predominantly a career-staffing model supported by adjunct volunteers.

b. The District is financially unsustainable if its current level of service provision is to continue. The District is rapidly depleting reserve funding for operational costs and has no provisions for vehicle replacement or other capital needs.

c. To provide redundant emergency medical service coverage, which is needed due to significant travel times to Santa Rosa-based hospitals, the District would need to add a fourth career position. Instead, the District may face the painful choice of cutting staff; resulting in a significantly degraded service level.

d. The board of directors/leadership for the District has assiduously sought solutions to address financial sustainability, including securing approval from residents for one of the highest parcel taxes in the state, seeking revenue from the County in recognition of the impact of tourism on the District’s call volumes, and seeking reorganization opportunities that would in part recognize that neighboring areas are reliant on Bodega Bay FPD service without making financial contributions to the District. The County has recently authorized a package of fire and EMS agency funding streams that includes a two-year commitment to provide Bodega Bay FPD with funding that will stabilize service and pay for a fourth full-time position, improving redundant service provision. The funding does not provide a long-term solution for the District, both due to its short-term nature and because it does not address vehicle funding needs.

3.9 Bodega Bay Fire Protection District – Determinations - Growth and Population:

a. The regions served by Bodega Bay FPD will continue to experience minimal development and population growth due to land use policies enacted by the County of Sonoma and managed by the County's Permit and Resource Management Department (Permit Sonoma), and land use policies enacted by the California Coastal Commission.

3.10 Bodega Bay Fire Protection District – Determinations – Capacity and Adequacy of Public Facilities and Services:

a. The Bodega Bay Fire Protection District has experienced call volume growth that is not commensurate with population and development growth. Call volume is being driven by an increase in medical service calls (due in part to an aging population) and service calls for transient visitors to the region.

b. While the District has maintained acceptable response times, it faces an increasing risk of being unable to effectively respond to second “call outs” (a service call when the primary response team is already on a call).

c. The Bodega Bay Fire Protection District effectively provides fire and emergency services within its existing service area and is expected to be able to serve population and development growth for the foreseeable future. However, without an increase in funding, the District would likely implement reductions in crew staffing that could impair service quality.

d. The District, because it provides emergency services/ambulance in areas outside District territory, and because of limited staffing, has very limited redundancy capability for emergency services. Therefore, for several hundred occurrences each year, the District has only long-response time back-up coverage.

3.11 Bodega Bay Fire Protection District – Determinations – Financial Condition:

a. The Bodega Bay Fire Protection District has been meeting its expenses, although, to some extent, this has been accomplished with occasional funding support from the County. District financial projections indicate that reserves will be depleted as early as the next fiscal year.

b. Bodega Bay FPD will require additional, sustained revenue to support its current operations, which includes a “2/0” staffing program.

c. Financial management of the District is sound and is independently audited on an annual basis. The District is one of few West County agencies that prepares budget projections for future years.

3.12 Bodega Bay Fire Protection District – Determinations – Shared Services and Facilities:

a. Were Bodega Bay FPD to join a regional consolidation of fire and emergency service agencies, there would likely be only modest reductions in total administrative and leadership costs.

b. Although not analyzed in this report, a consolidated agency might realize modest reductions in fleet costs by eliminating duplicative equipment.

3.13 Bodega Bay Fire Protection District – Determinations – Accountability, Structure and Efficiencies:

a. The District is governed in a manner that not only complies with all statutes and laws but is fully open to community input. Board directors have been elected and/or appointed appropriately.

b. Bodega Bay FPD undertakes annual independent financial and business practice audits and is in compliance with financial regulations and recommended practices.

c. The District is encouraged to continue discussions regarding opportunities for coordinating service provision to produce efficiencies and cost savings, up to and including potential consolidation of operations in the future.

3.14 Forestville Fire Protection District – Summary Determinations:

a. Forestville FPD is widely admired for its ability to manage a combined staff of both career and volunteer firefighters and envied for maintaining a steady volunteer recruitment program relying on local residents.

b. Despite a solid staffing condition and currently healthy finances, the District does have a sense that it will face challenges in the future and is cautiously open to proposals for regional consolidation.

c. The District would like to move to “3/0” staffing, and to share battalion chief coverage with neighboring agencies if a system can be put in place.

d. The District relies to a large degree on the Russian River FPD for EMS/ambulance support but does not contribute financially for that service. Barring a reform of EMS/ambulance service provision in the region, including equitable financial support, District residents would likely see a significant degradation in EMS/ambulance service.

3.15 Forestville Fire Protection District – Determinations – Growth and Population:

a. The region served by Forestville FPD will continue to experience minimal development and population growth due to land use policies enacted by the County of Sonoma and managed by the County’s Permit and Resource Management Department (Permit Sonoma).

3.16 Forestville Fire Protection District – Determinations – Capacity and Adequacy of Public Facilities and Services:

a. The District has been able to maintain service response times.

b. Forestville effectively provides fire and emergency services within its existing service area and is expected to be able to serve population and development growth for the foreseeable future.

3.17 Forestville Fire Protection District – Determinations – Financial Condition:

a. The District has been meeting its expenses without difficulty and has been able to provide funding for infrastructure needs (primarily vehicle and equipment replacement).

b. Forestville will require additional, sustained revenue if it is to support a “3/0” staffing program.

c. Financial management of the District is sound and is independently audited on an annual basis.

3.18 Forestville Fire Protection District – Determinations – Shared Services and Facilities:

a. Were Forestville FPD to join a regional consolidation of fire and emergency service agencies, there would likely be only modest reductions in total administrative and leadership costs.

b. Although not analyzed in this report, a consolidated agency might realize modest reductions in fleet costs by eliminating duplicative equipment.

3.19 Forestville Fire Protection District – Determinations – Accountability, Structure and Efficiencies:

a. The District is governed in a manner that not only complies with all statutes and laws but is fully open to community input. Board directors have been elected and/or appointed appropriately.

b. Forestville FPD undertakes annual independent financial and business practice audits and is in compliance with financial regulations and recommended practices.

c. The District is encouraged to continue discussions regarding opportunities for coordinating service provision to produce efficiencies and cost savings, up to and including potential consolidation of operations in the future, despite the relative “comfort” of its existing operational and financial condition.

3.20 Gold Ridge Fire Protection District – Summary Determinations:

a. The Gold Ridge Fire Protection District has a history of conservative fiscal management, with a “live within means” credo. Nonetheless, Gold Ridge FPD, which has one of the most diverse set of position classes of any West County agency, recognizes that pressure will build to support more paid career firefighters, which will strain financial resources.

b. Gold Ridge FPD has a vehicle leasing program which could serve as a model to other West County fire and emergency services agencies, and to agencies throughout the County.

c. It is apparent that the District provides crucial, regular mutual aid service to the City of Sebastopol, along with the Graton FPD. Regardless of reorganization and consolidation opportunities, the District might consider codifying this provision of support through a contractual arrangement with the City.

d. The District primarily relies on ambulance coverage provided by the contracted provider for the “Exclusive Operating Area” in Sonoma County, which is currently AMR.

e. The District relies, in part, on the Bodega Bay FPD for EMS/ambulance support but does not contribute financially for that service. Barring a reform of EMS/ambulance service provision in the region, including equitable financial support, some District residents would likely see a significant degradation in EMS/ambulance service if Bodega Bay revamps coverage.

3.21 Gold Ridge Fire Protection District – Determinations - Growth and Population:

a. The communities served by Gold Ridge FPD will continue to experience minimal development and population growth due to land use policies enacted by the County of Sonoma and managed by the County’s Permit and Resource Management Department (Permit Sonoma).

3.22 Gold Ridge Fire Protection District – Determinations - Capacity and Adequacy of Public Facilities and Services:

a. The communities served by Gold Ridge FPD will continue to experience minimal development and population growth due to land use policies enacted by the County of Sonoma and managed by the County’s Permit and Resource Management Department (Permit Sonoma).

b. The District effectively provides fire and emergency services within its existing service area and, with additional funding, can be expected to be able to serve population and development growth for the foreseeable future.

3.23 Gold Ridge Fire Protection District – Determinations - Financial Condition:

a. The District has been meeting its expenses without difficulty and has been able to

provide funding for infrastructure needs (primarily vehicle and equipment replacement).

b. Gold Ridge will require additional, sustained revenue to support its current operations, if downward trends in volunteer availability continue.

c. Financial management of Gold Ridge FPD is sound and is independently audited on an annual basis.

3.24 Gold Ridge Fire Protection District – Determinations - Shared Services and Facilities:

a. Were Gold Ridge FPD to join a regional consolidation of fire and emergency service agencies, there would likely be only modest reductions in total administrative and leadership costs.

b. Although not analyzed in this report, a consolidated agency might realize modest reductions in fleet costs by eliminating duplicative equipment.

3.25 Gold Ridge Fire Protection District – Determinations - Accountability, Structure and Efficiencies:

a. The District is governed in a manner that not only complies with all statutes and laws but is fully open to community input. Board directors have been elected and/or appointed appropriately.

b. Gold Ridge FPD undertakes annual independent financial and business practice audits and is in compliance with financial regulations and recommended practices.

c. The District is encouraged to continue discussions regarding opportunities for coordinating service provision to produce efficiencies and cost savings, up to and including potential consolidation of operations in the future.

d. The District might consider, in particular, holding discussions with the City of Sebastopol and the Graton FPD to determine if there are opportunities to contractually provide mutual aid service. (Sebastopol is considering adding career positions but has otherwise been over-reliant on support from Gold Ridge and Graton FPDs.)

3.26 Graton Fire Protection District – Summary Determinations:

a. The Graton Fire Protection District has a healthy financial, staffing, and operational outlook.

b. The District has recently been awarded a SAFER grant, which would allow the addition of paid staff resulting in “3/0” staffing of responses. However, Graton is reticent to add staffing that may have to be reduced at the conclusion of the three-year grant so is directing funding in July 2019 to two career engineers and a stipend program for volunteers. The District expects that this will preserve “2/0” staffing levels for some time.

3.27 Graton Fire Protection District – Determinations – Growth and Population:

a. The region served by Graton FPD will continue to experience minimal development and population growth due to land use policies enacted by the County of Sonoma and managed by the County’s Permit and Resource Management Department (Permit Sonoma).

3.28 Graton Fire Protection District – Determinations – Capacity and Adequacy of Public Facilities and Services:

a. The District has experienced call volume growth that exceeds population and development growth. The District has been able to meet response time standards.

b. The District effectively provides fire and emergency services within its existing service area and is expected to be able to serve population and development growth for the foreseeable future.

3.29 Graton Fire Protection District – Determinations – Financial Condition:

a. The District has been meeting its expenses without difficulty and has been able to provide funding for infrastructure needs (primarily vehicle and equipment replacement).

b. Graton FPD has a mortgage of \$2.9 million for the firehouse but is paying off the debt with extra payments of \$100,000 per year.

c. Financial management of Graton FPD is sound and is independently audited on an annual basis.

3.30 Graton Fire Protection District – Determinations – Shared Services and Facilities:

a. Were Graton FPD to join a regional consolidation of fire and emergency service agencies, there would likely be only modest reductions in total administrative and leadership costs, and no reduction in staffing and leadership costs.

b. Although not analyzed in this report, a consolidated agency might realize modest reductions in fleet costs by eliminating duplicative equipment.

3.31 Graton Fire Protection District – Determinations – Accountability, Structure and Efficiencies:

a. The District is governed in a manner that not only complies with all statutes and laws but is fully open to community input. Board directors have been elected and/or appointed appropriately.

b. Graton FPD undertakes annual independent financial and business practice audits and is in compliance with financial regulations and recommended practices.

c. The District is encouraged to continue discussions regarding opportunities for coordinating service provision to produce efficiencies and cost savings, up to and including potential consolidation of operations in the future.

3.32 Monte Rio Fire Protection District – Summary Determinations:

a. The Monte Rio Fire Protection District manages to provide a remarkable level of fire and emergency service given limited resources, a hugely challenging service area, and what has been an all-volunteer operation. However, the District acknowledges that service provision is “nominal” – often at “1/0” staffing for much of a given week.

b. The District recently secured approval of a parcel tax, which will be used to support career staffing during typical work hours on weekdays.

c. The District’s facilities are in need of a comprehensive review, which would include the development of a plan to build a new facility in Monte Rio, and to evaluate the viability and use of the Duncans Mills and Jenner facilities.

d. The District relies on the Russian River and Bodega Bay FPDs for EMS/ambulance support but does not contribute financially for that service. Barring a reform of EMS/ambulance service provision in the region, including equitable financial support, District residents might see a significant degradation in EMS/ambulance service.

3.33 Monte Rio Fire Protection District – Determinations - Growth and Population:

a. The regions served by Monte Rio FPD will continue to experience minimal development and population growth due to land use policies enacted by the County of Sonoma and managed by the County's Permit and Resource Management Department (Permit Sonoma) and by restrictions on coastal-area development imposed by the California Coastal Commission.

3.34 Monte Rio Fire Protection District – Determinations - Capacity and Adequacy of Public Facilities and Services:

a. The District has experienced call volume growth commensurate with population and development growth. The District has been able to meet response time standards.

b. Although call response times for the District are within standards, Monte Rio is providing a level of service below what is recommended by NFPA standards, often responding to calls with only one firefighter/medic. A recently-authorized parcel tax will allow the District to hire career firefighters and to potentially increase volunteer stipend payments, which may enable the District to provide "2/0" call coverage.

3.35 Monte Rio Fire Protection District – Determinations - Financial Condition:

a. The District has been meeting its expenses without difficulty and has been able to provide funding for some infrastructure needs (primarily vehicle and equipment replacement). The District does not have funding for facility replacement.

b. Financial management of Monte Rio FPD has improved due to an arrangement for administrative support from Russian River FPD.

3.36 Monte Rio Fire Protection District – Determinations - Shared Services and Facilities:

a. Were Monte Rio FPD to join a regional consolidation of fire and emergency service agencies, there would likely be only modest reductions in total administrative and leadership costs.

b. Although not analyzed in this report, a consolidated agency might realize modest reductions in fleet costs by eliminating duplicative equipment.

3.37 Monte Rio Fire Protection District – Determinations – Accountability, Structure and Efficiencies:

a. The District is governed in a manner that not only complies with all statutes and laws but is fully open to community input. Board directors have been elected and/or appointed appropriately.

b. Monte Rio FPD undertakes annual independent financial and business practice audits and is in compliance with financial regulations and recommended practices.

c. The District is encouraged to continue discussions regarding opportunities for coordinating service provision to produce efficiencies and cost savings, up to and including potential consolidation of operations in the future.

3.38 Russian River Fire Protection District – Summary Determinations:

a. Russian River FPD has already transitioned to what is effectively a fully paid-career staffing model but will find its existing service levels increasingly difficult to support, as the District faces fiscal unsustainability.

b. The District provides emergency medical/ambulance coverage throughout the Russian River-area and is experiencing service coverage issues due to a lack of internal redundancy and backup support that has relatively poor response capabilities.

c. Neighboring agencies, which rely on Russian River FPD emergency medical/ambulance services, do not financially contribute to the District for that service. A consolidated regional agency would likely be best-suited to address service and financing options for fire service in general and emergency medical/ambulance service in particular.

d. The District's facility in Guerneville is in dire need of replacement; Russian River does not have any funding to embark on a building program.

3.39 Russian River Fire Protection District – Determinations – Growth and Population:

a. The regions served by Russian River FPD will continue to experience minimal development and population growth due to land use policies enacted by the County of Sonoma and managed by the County's Permit and Resource Management Department (Permit Sonoma).

3.40 Russian River Fire Protection District – Determinations – Capacity and Adequacy of Public Facilities and Services:

a. The District has experienced call volume growth commensurate with population and development growth. The District has been able to meet response time standards.

b. The District effectively provides fire and emergency services within its existing service area and is expected to be able to serve population and development growth for the foreseeable future. However, without an increase in funding, the District would likely implement reductions in crew staffing that could impair service quality or would be forced to consider limiting emergency medical/ambulance coverage to neighboring agencies.

3.41 Russian River Fire Protection District – Determinations – Financial Condition:

a. The District has been meeting its expenses without difficulty and has been able to provide funding for infrastructure needs (primarily vehicle and equipment replacement). However, projections indicate that Russian River will not be able to cover expenses very soon and will face difficult service cuts.

b. Russian River will require additional, sustained revenue to support its current operations, which includes a "2/0" staffing program for engine companies and the ambulance. The District would ideally be staffed at a "3/0" level.

c. Financial management of Russian River is sound and is independently audited on an annual basis.

3.42 Russian River Fire Protection District – Determinations – Shared Services and Facilities:

a. Were Russian River to join a regional consolidation of fire and emergency service agencies, there would likely be only modest reductions in total administrative and leadership costs.

b. Although not analyzed in this report, a consolidated agency might realize modest reductions in fleet costs by eliminating duplicative equipment.

3.43 Russian River Fire Protection District – Determinations – Accountability, Structure and Efficiencies:

a. The District is governed in a manner that not only complies with all statutes and laws but is fully open to community input. Board directors have been elected and/or appointed appropriately.

b. Russian River undertakes annual independent financial and business practice audits and is in compliance with financial regulations and recommended practices.

c. The District is encouraged to continue discussions regarding opportunities for coordinating service provision to produce efficiencies and cost savings, up to and including potential consolidation of operations in the future.

3.44 Timber Cove Fire Protection District – Summary Determinations:

a. Timber Cove Fire Protection District is a wholly volunteer operation that responds to over two-hundred calls generated primarily by visitors or travelers through the region and for downed trees and other roadway hazards.

b. Although the District has a fairly stable roster of a dozen volunteers (with ten active volunteers), many volunteers are “aging out” of service. There is not a younger or growing population in the area from which to draw new volunteers.

c. The only likely paid career staffing model for the District would be a contract with CalFire, although the District does not have sufficient funding to consider that option, and CalFire does not have a facility proximate to the District territory.

3.45 Timber Cove Fire Protection District – Determinations – Growth and Population:

a. The regions served by District will continue to experience minimal development and population growth due to land use policies enacted by the County of Sonoma and managed by the County’s Permit and Resource Management Department (Permit Sonoma) and the California Coastal Commission.

3.46 Timber Cove Fire Protection District – Determinations – Capacity and Adequacy of Public Facilities and Services:

a. The District has experienced steady call volume growth. Ten years ago the District responded to about 100 calls per year; in 2018 they responded to 230 calls. The District has been able to meet response time standards.

b. The District effectively provides fire and emergency services within its existing service area and is expected to be able to serve population and development growth for the foreseeable future. (Emergency medical services are supported by the Coast Life Support District for most of the District’s territory, with Russian River FPD providing coverage in the southernmost area of the District. Bodega Bay FPD often provides coverage as well.)

3.47 Timber Cove Fire Protection District – Determinations – Financial Condition:

a. The District has been meeting its expenses without difficulty and has been able to provide funding for infrastructure needs (primarily vehicle and equipment replacement).

b. Financial management of Timber Cove FPD is sound and is independently audited on an annual basis.

3.48 Timber Cove Fire Protection District – Determinations – Shared Services and Facilities:

a. Were Timber Cove to join a regional consolidation of fire and emergency service agencies, there would likely be no cost savings.

3.49 Timber Cove Fire Protection District – Determinations – Accountability, Structure and Efficiencies:

a. The District is governed in a manner that not only complies with all statutes and laws but is fully open to community input. Board directors have been elected and/or appointed appropriately.

b. Timber Cove FPD does not ensure that board members have filed appropriate disclosures with the Fair Political Practices Commission and should consider overseeing this function.

c. Timber Cove FPD undertakes annual independent financial and business practice audits and is in compliance with financial regulations and recommended practices.

d. The District is encouraged to continue discussions regarding opportunities for coordinating service provision with neighboring agencies.

3.50 Cazadero Community Services District – Summary Determinations:

a. The Cazadero Community Services District has difficulty providing fire and emergency service responses with an appropriate staffing level, and the County has interceded by contracting with CalFire to provide winter-season daytime response. This contract is slated to end at the beginning of fire season in 2019, leaving the District with no identified coverage beginning at the end of fire season in 2019.

b. The District is contemplating seeking funding support from District residents in order to directly enter into a contract for services with CalFire.

c. The District relies on the Russian River FPD for EMS/ambulance support but does not contribute financially for that service. Barring a reform of EMS/ambulance service provision in the region, including equitable financial support, District residents would likely see a significant degradation in EMS/ambulance service.

d. The District should consider ceding its parks and street lighting services to other agencies to enable it to participate in an anticipated regional or county-wide consolidation of fire and emergency service agencies.

3.51 Cazadero Community Services District – Determinations – Growth and Population:

a. The region served by Cazadero CSD will continue to experience minimal development and population growth due to land use policies enacted by the County of Sonoma and managed by the County's Permit and Resource Management Department (Permit Sonoma).

b. The region experiences minimal impacts from transient populations.

3.52 Cazadero Community Services District – Determinations – Capacity and Adequacy of Public Facilities and Services:

a. The District has experienced call volume growth higher than would be expected due to population and development growth. The District has been able to meet response time standards, in part through a contractual agreement with CalFire FPD for weekday daytime response support.

b. The District struggles to effectively provide fire and emergency services within its existing service area at acceptable staffing levels.

3.53 Cazadero Community Services District – Determinations – Financial Condition:

a. The District has been meeting its expenses without difficulty and has been able to provide funding for some infrastructure needs (primarily vehicle and equipment replacement).

b. Cazadero will require additional, sustained revenue to ensure an adequate staffing program that would include a contract with CalFire.

c. Financial management of the District is sound and is independently audited on an annual basis.

3.54 Cazadero Community Services District – Determinations – Shared Services and Facilities:

a. Were Cazadero CSD to join a regional consolidation of fire and emergency service agencies, there would likely be only modest reductions in total administrative and leadership costs.

b. Although not analyzed in this report, a consolidated agency might realize modest reductions in fleet costs by eliminating duplicative equipment.

c. Cazadero CSD might consider ceding its street lighting and parks functions to other agencies, focusing solely on fire and emergency service provision.

3.55 Cazadero Community Services District – Determinations – Accountability, Structure and Efficiencies:

a. The District is governed in a manner that not only complies with all statutes and laws but is fully open to community input. Board directors have been elected and/or appointed appropriately.

b. Cazadero CSD undertakes annual independent financial and business practice audits and is in compliance with financial regulations and recommended practices.

c. The District is encouraged to continue discussions regarding opportunities for coordinating service provision to produce efficiencies and cost savings, up to and including potential consolidation of operations in the future.

3.56 Occidental Community Services District – Summary Determinations:

a. Occidental Community Services District is increasingly unable to provide fire and emergency service response levels at generally-accepted minimum standards due to volunteer staffing challenges. In particular, the District is sometimes unable to respond to incident calls with “2/0” staffing (two firefighter/medics), especially during weekday daytime hours.

b. The District is otherwise well-equipped and well-managed but does not currently have the resources to address the aforementioned staffing challenges.

c. As a Community Services District that provides water utility, landscaping, and street lighting services, it will be difficult to reorganize the District in a regional agency focused solely on fire and EMS service. The District might consider ceding these services to other agencies to enable it to participate in a regional or county-wide consolidation of fire and emergency service agencies.

3.57 Occidental Community Services District – Determinations – Growth and Population:

a. The regions served by Occidental CSD will continue to experience minimal development and population growth due to land use policies enacted by the County of Sonoma and managed by the County's Permit and Resource Management Department (Permit Sonoma).

3.58 Occidental Community Services District – Determinations – Capacity and Adequacy of Public Facilities and Services:

a. The District has experienced call volume growth that exceeds what would be expected from population and development growth. The District has been able to meet response time standards.

b. The District has difficulty meeting generally-accepted levels of fire and emergency service due to staffing challenges. Some combination of an enhanced stipend program for volunteers, paid staffing, or consolidation with neighboring agencies is necessary to improve staffing and service levels.

3.59 Occidental Community Services District – Determinations – Financial Condition:

a. The District has been meeting its expenses without difficulty and has been able to provide funding for infrastructure needs (primarily vehicle and equipment replacement). However, the District has no capacity to fund a paid-career workforce.

b. Financial management of the District is sound and is independently audited on an annual basis.

3.60 Occidental Community Services District – Determinations – Shared Services and Facilities:

a. Were Occidental CSD to join a regional consolidation of fire and emergency service agencies, there would likely be only modest reductions in total administrative and leadership costs.

b. Although not analyzed in this report, a consolidated agency might realize modest reductions in fleet costs by eliminating duplicative equipment.

3.61 Occidental Community Services District – Determinations – Accountability, Structure and Efficiencies:

a. The District is governed in a manner that not only complies with all statutes and laws but is fully open to community input. Board directors have been elected and/or appointed appropriately.

b. Occidental CSD undertakes annual independent financial and business practice audits and is in compliance with financial regulations and recommended practices.

c. The District does not have an official website and should direct administrative staff to remedy this situation in order to provide information to the public.

d. The District is encouraged to continue discussions regarding opportunities for coordinating service provision to produce efficiencies and cost savings, up to and including potential consolidation of operations in the future.

e. The District should consider ceding responsibility for the water utility and street lighting services it provides to other agencies, enabling it to participate in a regional or county-wide consolidation of fire and emergency service providers.

3.62 City of Sebastopol (Fire and EMS) – Summary Determinations:

- a. The City of Sebastopol is often unable to provide appropriately-staffed responses to service calls, particularly during weekday daytime hours when volunteer availability is limited.
- b. The City proposes to address staffing shortfalls within its fire department by adding two paid professional positions and increasing stipend payments to volunteers. The City can afford to fund this proposal due to an extension of a sales tax measure approved by City residents.
- c. Sebastopol should consider ceding its fire and emergency services responsibilities to a regionally-consolidated agency, which would be better positioned to provide coverage to City residents. As a first step, the City could contract for services with a neighboring agency such as the Gold Ridge or Graton Fire Protection Districts.

3.63 City of Sebastopol (Fire and EMS) – Determinations – Growth and Population:

- a. The City does not project significant growth in population or development that would result in the need for increased fire and emergency service capabilities but is experiencing the same trends as other West County agencies that is driving an increase in service calls.

3.64 City of Sebastopol (Fire and EMS) – Determinations – Capacity and Adequacy of Public Facilities and Services:

- a. The City has experienced call volume growth that exceeds what would be expected based on population and development growth. The City has been able to meet response time standards, although it has experienced a degradation in response times during weekday daylight hours.
- b. Sebastopol struggles to effectively provide fire and emergency services at an appropriate level (“2/0” staffing) and is largely reliant on mutual aid partners for support. The City is rarely able to provide mutual aid support to neighboring agencies.

3.65 City of Sebastopol (Fire and EMS) – Determinations – Financial Condition:

- a. The City has been funding existing staffing levels from General Fund revenues and could be reasonably expected to fund future vehicles and equipment needs.
- b. The Fire Department has requested a budget increase that would support the addition of two full-time equivalent fire fighters in the next fiscal year, as well as funding to increase stipend payments to volunteers. These actions are intended to improve staffing availability, allowing the department to meet a “2/0” staffing standard.
- c. Financial management of the City has not been evaluated in the context of this study.

3.66 City of Sebastopol (Fire and EMS) – Determinations – Shared Services and Facilities:

- a. Were Sebastopol to join a regional consolidation of fire and emergency service agencies, there would likely be only modest reductions in total administrative and leadership costs, but potential improvements in volunteer staffing levels.
- b. Although not analyzed in this report, a consolidated agency might realize modest reductions in fleet costs by eliminating duplicative equipment.

3.67 City of Sebastopol (Fire and EMS) – Determinations – Accountability, Structure and Efficiencies:

- a. The City is governed in a manner that not only complies with all statutes and laws but is fully open to community input. City Council members have been elected and/or appointed

appropriately.

b. Sebastopol undertakes annual independent financial and business practice audits and is in compliance with financial regulations and recommended practices.

c. The City is encouraged to entertain discussions regarding opportunities for coordinating service provision to produce efficiencies and cost savings, up to and including potential consolidation of operations in the future.

3.68 Bloomfield Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) – Summary Determinations:

a. The Bloomfield Volunteer Fire Company has not been operational since 2016, although there are efforts underway in the community to restore operational capability. The portion of County Service Area 40 that the Company nominally serves is now covered by the Two Rock Volunteer Fire Company.

b. Although the Bloomfield area will be supported by the County's contract with North Bay Fire, and through North Bay Fire's contract with Gold Ridge FPD, it is crucial that service provision for the area is re-established in a sustainable fashion. This would best be achieved through a reorganization involving annexation of the area by a neighboring agency or inclusion of the area into a regional agency.

3.69 Bloomfield Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Growth and Population:

a. The Bloomfield area has not experienced significant growth and is not expected to do so.

3.70 Bloomfield Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Capacity and Adequacy of Public Facilities and Services:

a. The Bloomfield area generates about 25 service calls per year.

b. The territory now receives primary coverage from the Two Rock Volunteer Fire Company and emergency medical/ambulance service from Bodega Bay Fire Protection District.

c. Bodega Bay FPD faces significant financial and service challenges that may affect its ability to provide emergency medical/ambulance service in the future, partially because territories outside of the District but within the ambulance service area do not provide financial support to the District. The three CSA 40 areas served by volunteer companies in the northern part of the "Corridor" should consider options not only for sustainable fire service provision, but also emergency medical/ambulance service.

3.71 Bloomfield Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Financial Condition:

a. As part of County Service Area 40 – Fire Services, Bloomfield VFC was eligible for financial and administrative support from the County of Sonoma. However, the County is preparing to cede a direct administrative support role to North Bay Fire, a new non-profit organization representing the remaining volunteer fire companies in Sonoma County. North Bay Fire will in turn enter into a contract with Gold Ridge Fire Protection District to provide leadership and administrative services. The contract will include provision of stipends for volunteers and may include funding for paid professional positions if required to maintain or improve service levels. The County is funding North Bay Fire for a two-year period, with an expectation that the volunteer fire companies will participate in regional consolidations within that time frame.

3.72 Bloomfield Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Shared Services and Facilities:

a. Due to low call volumes, the Bloomfield area is likely best-served with a volunteer company that is part of a regional agency that provides leadership, administrative support, and mutual aid. The volunteer operation would provide “quick response,” likely with a single responder, with “2/0” (or even “3/0”) staffed response coming from the regional agency out of another location.

3.73 Bloomfield Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Accountability, Structure and Efficiencies:

a. The County of Sonoma, which runs County Service Area 40 as a dependent district, meets all requirements for proper governance.

b. Volunteer fire companies are not government agencies and are therefore not subject to review of governance strictures.

c. The County has established a two-year timeframe for Bloomfield VFC (and the other VFCs in the County) to seek reorganization opportunities with other fire and emergency service agencies.

3.74 Bodega Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) – Summary Determinations:

a. The Bodega Volunteer Fire Company continues to provide a solid volunteer-based fire service and, notably, has recently added committed volunteers to its longer-standing volunteer roster.

b. Although Bodega VFC will be financially and administratively supported by the County’s contract with North Bay Fire, and through North Bay Fire’s contract with Gold Ridge FPD, it is crucial to note that that funding and service support is intended to cover a two-year period only. It is critical that Bodega-area residents consider sustainable service options, which would best be achieved through a reorganization involving annexation of the area by a neighboring agency or incorporation of the area into a regional agency.

3.75 Bodega Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Growth and Population:

a. The Bodega area has not experienced significant population growth and is not expected to do so.

3.76 Bodega Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Capacity and Adequacy of Public Facilities and Services:

a. The Bodega area generates 45 to 60 service calls per year. The VFC also responds to 125 to 150 mutual aid calls per year to neighboring agencies

b. The area is provided with emergency medical/ambulance support from Bodega Bay Fire Protection District.

c. Bodega Bay FPD faces significant financial and service challenges that may affect its ability to provide advanced life support (ALS) service to neighboring agencies in the future, partially because territories outside of the District but within the ambulance service area do not provide financial support to the District. The three CSA 40 areas served by volunteer fire

companies in the northern part of the “Corridor,” including Bodega VFC, should consider options not only for sustainable fire service provision but for continued advanced life support service.

3.77 Bodega Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Financial Condition:

a. As part of County Service Area 40 – Fire Services, Bodega VFC was eligible for financial and administrative support from the County of Sonoma. However, the County is ceding a direct administrative support role to North Bay Fire, a new non-profit organization representing the remaining volunteer fire companies in Sonoma County.

b. North Bay Fire will in turn enter into a contract with Gold Ridge Fire Protection District to provide leadership and administrative services to the VFCs. The contract will include provision of stipends for volunteers, and may include funding for paid professional positions if required to maintain or improve service levels.

c. The County is funding North Bay Fire for a two-year period, with an expectation that the volunteer fire companies will participate in regional consolidations within that time frame.

3.78 Bodega Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Shared Services and Facilities:

a. Bodega VFC should consider near-term opportunities for shared services, including training and administrative support in partnership with neighboring agencies.

3.79 Bodega Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Accountability, Structure and Efficiencies:

a. The County of Sonoma, which runs County Service Area 40 as a dependent district, meets all requirements for proper governance.

b. Volunteer fire companies are not government agencies and are therefore not subject to review of governance strictures.

c. The County has established a two-year timeframe for Bodega VFC (and the other VFCs in the County) to seek reorganization opportunities with other fire and emergency service agencies.

3.80 Camp Meeker Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Summary Determinations:

a. The Camp Meeker Volunteer Fire Company continues to provide a solid volunteer-based fire service.

b. Although Camp Meeker VFC will be financially and administratively supported by the County’s contract with North Bay Fire, and through North Bay Fire’s contract with Gold Ridge FPD, it is crucial to note that that funding and service support is intended to cover a two-year period only. It is critical that Camp Meeker residents consider sustainable service options, which would best be achieved through a reorganization involving annexation of the area by a neighboring agency or incorporation of the area into a regional agency.

3.81 Camp Meeker Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) – Determinations - Growth and Population:

a. The Camp Meeker area has not experienced growth and is not expected to do so.

3.82 Camp Meeker Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) – Determinations - Capacity and Adequacy of Public Facilities and Services:

- a. The Camp Meeker area generates about 50 service calls per year.
- b. Camp Meeker receives mutual aid coverage primarily from Occidental Community Services District and from the Monte Rio Fire Protection District.
- c. Emergency medical/ambulance service for the area is provided by a private provider contracted to the County; response times are, on average, quite long.

3.83 Camp Meeker Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) – Determinations - Financial Condition:

- a. As part of County Service Area 40 – Fire Services, Camp Meeker VFC was eligible for financial and administrative support from the County of Sonoma. However, the County is preparing to cede a direct administrative support role to North Bay Fire, a new non-profit organization representing the remaining volunteer fire companies in Sonoma County. North Bay Fire will in turn enter into a contract with Gold Ridge Fire Protection District to provide leadership and administrative services. The contract will include provision of stipends for volunteers, and may include funding for paid professional positions if required to maintain or improve service levels. The County is funding North Bay Fire for a two-year period, with an expectation that the volunteer fire companies will participate in regional consolidations within that time frame.

3.84 Camp Meeker Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) – Determinations - Shared Services and Facilities:

- a. Due to low call volumes, the Camp Meeker area is likely best-served with a volunteer company that is part of a regional agency that provides leadership, administrative support, and mutual aid. The volunteer operation would provide “quick response”, with “2/0” (or even “3/0”) staffed response coming from the regional agency out of another location.

3.85 Camp Meeker Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) – Determinations - Accountability, Structure and Efficiencies:

- a. The County of Sonoma, which runs County Service Area 40 as a dependent district, meets all requirements for proper governance.
- b. Volunteer fire companies are not government agencies and are therefore not subject to review of governance strictures.
- c. The County has established a two-year timeframe for Camp Meeker VFC (and the other VFCs in the County) to seek reorganization opportunities with other fire and emergency service agencies.

3.86 Fort Ross Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) – Summary Determinations: The Fort Ross Volunteer Fire Company is actively seeking an agency partner that will serve the County Service Area 40 for which the Company is responsible, preferably through annexation to a neighboring fire protection district or to a new regional agency.

- a. Fort Ross has a very small volunteer roster and has lost the administrative support of Sonoma County Fire and Emergency Services. Although a two-year arrangement between the County and North Bay Fire will provide a “bridge” period, Fort Ross is committed to finding a partner agency in the very near term.

b. Whatever service arrangement can be made for the Fort Ross territory, it will almost certainly require more financial resources than the modest property tax revenue that the territory generates. Seeking a voter-approved parcel tax would generate additional revenue that may be sufficient to ensure sustainable service provision in the area.

3.87 Fort Ross Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Growth and Population:

a. The Fort Ross area has not experienced significant growth in recent times and is not expected to do so in the future.

3.88 Fort Ross Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Capacity and Adequacy of Public Facilities and Services:

- a. The Fort Ross area generates about 30 service calls per year.
- b. Fort Ross receives mutual aid support primarily from Cazadero CSD and Timber Cove FPD, with CalFire available to respond from Cazadero during fire season.
- c. Ambulance coverage for the area is provided by Coast Life Support District in the northern portion of the area and Russian River FPD in the southern portion.

3.89 Fort Ross Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Financial Condition:

a. As part of County Service Area 40 – Fire Services, Fort Ross VFC was eligible for financial and administrative support from the County of Sonoma. However, the County is preparing to cede a direct administrative support role to North Bay Fire, a new non-profit organization representing the remaining volunteer fire companies in Sonoma County. North Bay Fire will in turn enter into a contract with Gold Ridge Fire Protection District to provide leadership and administrative services. The contract will include provision of stipends for volunteers and may include funding for paid professional positions if required to maintain or improve service levels. The County is funding North Bay Fire for a two-year period, with an expectation that the volunteer fire companies will participate in regional consolidations within that time frame.

3.90 Fort Ross Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Shared Services and Facilities:

a. Due to low call volumes, the Fort Ross area is likely best-served with a volunteer company that is part of a regional agency that provides leadership, administrative support, and mutual aid. The volunteer operation would provide “quick response”, with “2/0” (or even “3/0”) staffed response coming from the regional agency out of another location.

3.91 Fort Ross Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Accountability, Structure and Efficiencies:

- a. The County of Sonoma, which runs County Service Area 40 as a dependent district, meets all requirements for proper governance.
- b. Volunteer fire companies are not government agencies and are therefore not subject to review of governance strictures.
- c. The County has established a two-year timeframe for Fort Ross VFC (and the other VFCs in the County) to seek reorganization opportunities with other fire and emergency service agencies.

3.92 Valley Ford Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) – Summary Determinations:

a. The Valley Ford Volunteer Fire Company continues to provide a solid volunteer-based fire service, and notably has added committed volunteers in the last few years.

b. Although Valley Ford VFC will be financially and administratively supported by the County's contract with North Bay Fire, and through North Bay Fire's contract with Gold Ridge FPD, it is crucial to note that that funding and service support is intended to cover a two-year period only. It is critical that Valley Ford-area residents consider sustainable service options, which would best be achieved through a reorganization involving annexation of the area by a neighboring agency or incorporation of the area into a regional agency.

3.93 Valley Ford Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Growth and Population:

a. The Valley Ford area has not experienced growth and is not expected to do so in the future.

3.94 Valley Ford Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Capacity and Adequacy of Public Facilities and Services:

a. The Valley Ford area generates about 30 service calls per year.

b. The Company receives mutual aid support primarily from Bodega VFC and Gold Ridge FPD and emergency medical/ambulance support from Bodega Bay Fire Protection District. Valley Ford is generally dispatched to about 65 mutual aid calls each year – double the rate of in-territory calls.

3.95 Valley Ford Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Financial Condition:

a. As part of County Service Area 40 – Fire Services, Valley Ford VFC was eligible for financial and administrative support from the County of Sonoma. However, the County is preparing to cede a direct administrative support role to North Bay Fire, a new non-profit organization representing the remaining volunteer fire companies in Sonoma County. North Bay Fire will in turn enter into a contract with Gold Ridge Fire Protection District to provide leadership and administrative services. The contract will include provision of stipends for volunteers, and may include funding for paid professional positions if required to maintain or improve service levels. The County is funding North Bay Fire for a two-year period, with an expectation that the volunteer fire companies will participate in regional consolidations within that time frame.

3.96 Valley Ford Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Shared Services and Facilities:

a. Due to low call volumes, the Valley Ford area is likely best-served with a volunteer company that is part of a regional agency that provides leadership, administrative support, and mutual aid. The volunteer operation would provide “quick response”, with “2/0” (or even “3/0”) staffed response coming from the regional agency out of another location.

3.97 Valley Ford Volunteer Fire Company (County Service Area 40) –Determinations – Accountability, Structure and Efficiencies:

- a. The County of Sonoma, which runs County Service Area 40 as a dependent district, meets all requirements for proper governance.
- b. Volunteer fire companies are not government agencies and are therefore not subject to review of governance strictures.
- c. The County has established a two-year timeframe for Valley Ford VFC (and the other VFCs in the County) to seek reorganization opportunities with other fire and emergency service agencies.

NOW, THEREFORE, based on the foregoing findings and determinations and the record of these proceedings, and pursuant to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act, the Commission hereby declares and orders as follows:

1. The foregoing findings and determinations are true and correct, are supported by substantial evidence in the record, and are adopted as hereinabove set forth.
2. The Commission has reviewed and considered the information contained in the final MSR for West County Fire and Emergency Service Agencies.
3. The Commission adopts the determinations made in the MSR.
4. The Clerk of the Commission is designated as the custodian of the documents and other materials that constitute the record of the proceedings upon which the Commission's decision herein is based. These documents may be found at the office of the Clerk of the Commission, 111 Santa Rosa Avenue, Suite 240, Santa Rosa, CA, 95404.

THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION was introduced at a regular meeting of the Commission on the 4th day of September 2019 and ordered adopted by the following vote:

Commissioners:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:

WHEREUPON, the Chair declared the foregoing resolution adopted and

SO ORDERED.

Mark Bramfitt, Executive Officer

The within instrument is a true and correct copy of the original on file in this office.

ATTEST:

BY: _____
Clerk