

JOANNE HAYES-WHITE
CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT



LONDON N. BREED
MAYOR

SAN FRANCISCO FIRE DEPARTMENT
CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

To: The Honorable London N. Breed, Mayor
Thru: Andrea Bruss, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor
From: Joanne Hayes-White, Chief of Department, San Francisco Fire Department
Date: August 27, 2018
Re: Response to Policy Summit Recommendations for Public Safety

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "JHW", written over the "From:" line of the header.

In reviewing the documentation from the Public Safety portion of the Mayor's Policy Summit Recommendations, many points raised have been incorporated into some of the longer-term strategic discussions that the Department has had during the course of completing its Strategic Plan (enclosed). Many of the challenges the Department encounters exist due to the financial limitations facing the Department. In light of fiscal constraints, many needs have been deferred, resulting in additional costs long term as well as numerous operational issues along the way. A number of these issues are the result of lack of infrastructure support over time, due to the prioritization of front-line operations over other Departmental needs in times of funding restrictions. While prioritization of front line operations is the correct strategy, not supporting other initiatives results in deferred costs and limits the Department's abilities to create efficiencies.

Given how the Department's budget leans predominately towards the salaries and benefits of front-line operational personnel, there currently exists limited funding for all other areas of the Department. With a large portfolio of facilities, expansive inventory of apparatus and specialty equipment, and increasing pressure on administrative personnel reduced over the years, deferring investment in these areas has resulted in areas where the Department must play catch-up. The key for the Department would be a balance of supporting its core mission and initiatives as well as the infrastructure to support those initiatives. With efforts in recent years surrounding hiring, equipment/apparatus replacement, facilities repair, and outreach/education, the Department has made strides in addressing some areas of concern that have built up after years of minimal funding enhancements. The Department must be able to maintain and expand those initiatives to address the issues highlighted in the report.

Along with establishing baseline funding that sufficiently meets Department needs and allows the Department to replace personnel, equipment, and facilities in an acceptable manner, the Department must be able to plan for future growth. Given annual increases in residential and workforce populations, as well as continued large-scale development that changes the face of the City, the Department must be able to add resources to meet its increased demand for services. In addition to growth of the City, changes in the City, such as traffic and construction, must be incorporated into future planning efforts, potentially changing how the Department responds to emergencies. The Department is also directly affected by the main problems facing the City as a whole, including homelessness and affordable housing.

With regard to the specific recommendations in the Policy Summit Memo submitted by the Public Safety Committee, the Department's comments are as follows:

- **Restore Incident Support Specialist Positions to All Chief Officers** – Restoring Incident Support Specialists for all Chief Officers would have positive impacts on response, improve operational efficiencies and increase overall safety for our members. It would allow for increased situational awareness for the Incident Commander and greater focus on incident management, strategy and tactics.
- **Increase EMS staffing to meet needs of a growing population** – Given the growth of the City in recent years, and the lack of any foreseeable slowdown in day/night population increases or call volume, this is an area that continues to require regular analysis. Recent staffing additions have assisted the Department in meeting its EMS mission, including the creative addition of H-8 per diems, improving the flexibility of the Department for addressing gaps in the schedule. However, even with these recent personnel additions, as well as additional resources such as EMS6 and Quick Response Vehicles, the Department is almost at capacity regarding its response capabilities given current resources. Even though it is currently meeting response times, with a large-scale medical event, or prolonged surge in medical calls, the City's 911 system could be vulnerable, impacting the Department as well as the City's private providers. Along these lines, the local Emergency Medical Services Agency must continue to improve the collaboration and information sharing amongst all parties of the 911 system, in addition to the hospitals that the 911 providers transport to. Overall 911 response needs to be constantly reviewed to determine if the City is resourced appropriately.
- **Secure a location to build a modern training facility to replace facilities at Treasure Island and 19th and Folsom Streets** – The Department considers this issue the top current priority. The next few months will be crucial as far as site identification and getting the project on the next ESER bond, currently slated for a 2020 vote.

A state-of-the-art training facility is a critical need for the Department. It will allow the Department to continue its State Fire Marshal-certified entry-level Firefighter Academy. Technological improvements incorporated into a new facility, both with online training infrastructure as well as with tools/equipment and other training props, would supplement both Academy training as well as In-Service and other curriculum, expanding the Department's capabilities in delivering training to its workforce. A modern training facility could also generate revenue for the Department, by hosting regional or private classes for a fee.

Outside of discussions of a joint training facility with another public safety department in the City, which may or may not be feasible depending on site size, costs and/or logistics, exploring a partnership with City College of San Francisco on a facility could provide many benefits for the Department. There could be cost savings associated with this track, as City College may have access to local and State funds to assist with costs of this project. This model has been replicated in other jurisdictions, to very positive results.

- Institutionalize a vehicle replacement policy as part of long term budgeting solution for fleet management** – A few years ago, the late Mayor Lee instituted a five-year vehicle/equipment replacement plan for the Fire Department. With this injection of funding, the Department began to replace many of its outdated equipment and apparatus. The condition of the Department's aging fleet and equipment can lead to operational issues, potentially resulting in out-of-service time for crews. In addition, due to the age and condition of apparatus and vehicles, the Department ends up paying higher costs for repair and maintenance of the units. While raising the level of funding for the Department in recent years as part of the Mayor's plan, the Department remains behind in its equipment and fleet replenishment due to year and years of inadequate funding that a continuation and expansion of this plan is needed to bring the Department's equipment and fleet in line with industry standards. A consistent funding source is crucial to ensure that the Department does not return to a deep hole with regard to vehicle and equipment replacement.
- Allow for funding in budgets for facility maintenance** – In line with the vehicle/equipment replacement item above, this issue comes down to funding. The fact that the ESER bond program was established and provides a large allocation of funds for the Department to address its facilities is a great thing. However, given the age and condition of our current facilities, in addition to the years and years of deferred maintenance on various facility issues, the ESER program is only able to slightly improve the hundreds of millions of dollars in maintenance, repair, and seismic work needed for the Department's properties. Outside of the potential improvements due to material increases in General Obligation or General Fund allocations, relatively small investments in personnel would lead to drastic improvements in facility conditions for the Department. If the Department was able to hire City employees from the trades, mainly electrical and plumbing, the Department would be able to address many of the facility issues that arise over the course of the year in a timelier manner, saving time and money in repairs and improving the overall health of the stations. The Department could also then prioritize work that is needed to quickly address unanticipated issues that need immediate attention.
- Lead a top-down reorganization to reflect current needs and responsibilities** – This topic was discussed at length during the Strategic Planning process. While the Department's overall structure has remained mostly consistent, there have been additions to our levels of supervision and support, particularly within the EMS Division. The Department continuously seeks to be nimble and forward thinking in the manner in which it carries out its Mission. The Department is recognized as a leader in our Training, Operations, Recruitment, Retention and Diversity and is often called upon by other Departments, nationally and internationally, regarding our organizational structure and overall successful Department operations.

A specific area for growth in the Department would be related to development of an enhanced Leadership/Management curriculum for members promoting up through the ranks. The training model envisioned would provide enhancements to a member's administrative skillset. Much of this was discussed in the lead up to the Strategic Plan and is included in the document. The Department has initiated discussions with City College to bring this type of curriculum into reality as part of an Instructional Service Agreement and provide these classes at little or no cost to the members and Department.

- **Explore ways to better integrate various City Departments for increased efficiency and interoperability** – The Department believes this can always be improved. It is apparent that the Department works with many other City Departments daily, and improvements centered on communication and collaboration have assisted in both everyday response as well as large-scale events. Whether it is mission-related areas such as fire suppression or emergency response, or other areas like training, there are opportunities to improve the City's overall response.

From an administrative perspective, the Department has made great strides in recent years regarding efficiencies amongst City Departments. Whether it is with the Department of Public Works, Public Utilities Commission, the Office of Contract Administration, or Central Shops to name a few, improvements made recently have assisted in completing work and projects more easily and efficiently. However, there is still room to improve, and additional improvements in workflows can result in further efficiencies, both operationally and financially. All Departments can claim a certain uniqueness when it comes to their needs, however, given the 24/7 emergency response function the Department provides, exploring possibility of further improvements, be it policy-wise or legislative, to ease the burden on obtaining goods and services will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department carrying out its mission. A comprehensive view of functionality, including whether the Department would be better served absorbing some of the work performed by other departments, should be undertaken to maximize efficiencies across City Departments.

Thank you for providing the Department with the opportunity to provide feedback to the Public Safety Policy Summit Recommendations.

San Francisco Fire Department

The San Francisco Fire Department has been functioning under the same basic organizational structure for nearly 50 years. During this period, the department has absorbed all EMS responsibilities, Prevention and Permitting workloads have skyrocketed and call volume has increased to nearly 150,000 calls per year.

A 'Band-Aid' approach has been taken to address these new demands, while significant budget cuts have reduced the necessary administrative and support staff to levels which make it difficult, if not impossible, to meet the demands of the modern-day Fire Department.

Bureaucratic obstacles and restrictive purchasing processes lead to massive amounts of waste, inefficient repair times and costs, and an inability to properly maintain, update and rebuild critical infrastructure and facilities.

The following areas have been identified for improvement and enhancement

- **ORGANIZATION and ADMINISTRATION**

- Top down re-organization to reflect current needs and responsibilities consistent with the management structure currently in place at San Francisco Police Department, Department of Emergency Management, and other Metropolitan Fire Departments
- Institutionalize succession planning through the increased use of Chief Officers in Administrative roles and by providing professional education and development opportunities
- Develop and employ a Health and Safety Division, Planning and Research Division and Community Outreach Division.

- **OPERATIONAL**

- Creation of a 24/7 staffed Marine Unit
 - SFFD often responds to water rescues several times daily. Cross-staffing leads to delayed response times and periodic inability to respond due to staffing shortages. This model also leaves the Marina District unprotected while these rescues take place
 - San Francisco is bordered on 3 sides by water.

-Restore Incident Support Specialist Positions to all Chief Officers

- Provides for situational awareness for incident commanders
- Provides for safety and accountability at the scene of an incident
- Allows Chief to focus on incident management and development of strategy enroute to incident. Prevents distracted driving and accidents

-Increase EMS staffing to meet needs of growing population

- **FINANCIAL**

-Create a Grant Writing unit to take full advantage of available monies for the most efficient delivery of services to the taxpayers

-Explore the use of GSA, HGAC and NIPA contracts to expedite purchasing and reduce overall expenses

-Consider SFFD employing in-house vehicle mechanics, plumbers, electricians, carpenters to significantly reduce costs of vehicle and facility maintenance.

- We currently spend approx. \$450,000 MONTHLY for vehicle repair and maintenance. 2/3 of this cost is LABOR
- Current model results in excessive down time for emergency response vehicles as well as increased cost of repair

- **FACILITIES and EQUIPMENT**

- Secure a location to build modern Training Facility to replace facilities at Treasure Island and 19th/Folsom
- Provide for proper indoor storage of relief apparatus and equipment for use during major incidents, natural disasters and as daily relief equipment
- Institutionalize a vehicle replacement policy as part of long term budgeting solution to fleet management
- Allow for adequate funding in budgets for Facility Maintenance. SFFD currently maintains 51 facilities with \$800,000. That equates to approx. \$15,000 per facility. The vast majority of these facilities are 50 plus years old.

- **LEGISLATIVE**

- Create a seat for Public Safety representation on Capital Planning Committee
- Explore ways to better integrate various City Departments for increased efficiency and interoperability
- Revise processes at OCA for Public Safety Agencies to expedite execution of contracts. This will ensure more reliable service to the Citizens of San Francisco
- Allow limited exceptions to purchasing rules to accommodate the 24/7/365 needs of the Fire Department.

Solving San Francisco's Housing Crisis

To solve San Francisco's housing crisis, we must provide a consistent supply of housing at all income levels, especially affordable housing, that better keeps up with job and population growth. We need to enact policies that reduce regulatory constraints and increase subsidized affordable housing and mixed-income housing that provides affordable housing. We must advance these policies while acknowledging we live in a challenging time for housing policy. State and federal funding for affordable housing have declined dramatically this past decade, and while San Francisco has significantly increased funding for affordable housing, it is still only at or around pre-redevelopment levels. As such, we need to enact policies that can quickly recognize and adjust economic constraints to housing production based on data, not politics.

San Francisco's development costs outpace not just the rest of the state, but surrounding counties as well. We are experiencing historically high construction and land costs, which when combined with high rates of required affordable housing, creates a difficult climate for creating new and consistent market-rate housing production. At the moment, neither market-rate nor affordable housing production meets the needs of the city's middle-class residents, who don't make enough to afford market-rate housing nor qualify for affordable housing. Since there are currently no subsidies available to produce middle-income housing, we need to enact policies that create financial benefits to incentivize mixed-income developers to utilize the policy tools and effectively cross-subsidize the production of middle income housing including but not limited to density, FAR and height bonuses. Meanwhile while we increase housing production, we must also protect against the loss of affordable housing and rent control units for our vulnerable tenants. In solving the issue of loss of rent controlled housing, there should be a focus on increasing production of permanent Below Market Rate (BMR) housing because it is determined by economic need. Once lost, those residents will likely find similarly priced housing on the margins of the Bay Area or out of the region. This affordability out-migration is disrupting our economy, our environment, and diversity here in San Francisco and the Bay Area. Though our housing challenges are grave, they are not inevitable. But to change the future, we need to change the paradigm.

First we must focus on what we can control locally. While we can plan for the local impacts of state action such as Costa-Hawkins repeal on the November ballot and the potential return of state redevelopment powers next legislative session, we have to acknowledge that our ability to influence these state actions is more limited than our ability to shape local policy. Below are the specific policies we can advance:

Protect Tenants and Neighborhood Diversity and Culture

- Fully fund and implement the Right to Counsel by June 2019, as Prop F states
- Fully implement all affordable housing preferences including the Certificate of Preference program, and ensure adequate funding for outreach and application assistance
- Immediately implement neighborhood preference legislation
- Preservation should include robust policies to implement cultural districts, avoiding transit-oriented displacement, expiring uses from the HUD contracts, artist housing, SRO preservation, Right of First Refusal to purchase buildings
- UC Berkeley's Urban displacement map and Rent Board eviction map should guide prioritization of neighborhoods to focus preservation on
- Analyze preservation subsidy costs and impact to guide how housing funding is directed
- Analyze current preserved housing and households to understand what's at risk - this analysis would include expiring use, master lease etc. tools
- Implement program to protect SRO affordability to keep those who have no other choice in housing. Rising SRO rents are eliminating the last entry-point for low wage workers and housing of last resort for seniors; refugees and others. SRO hotels are being quickly converted to dorms for high wage workers

Expand the Affordable Housing Legacy of Mayor Lee

- Complete HOPE SF and RAD and examine strategies to improve near-term living conditions for residents of Sunnydale and Potrero while also following through on long-term redevelopment plans without displacement
- Through a “big tent” process that generates broad support, identify the best new funding source for more affordable housing production, including housing for middle-income families, people experiencing homelessness, and the City’s workforce – including but not limited to a GO Bond of \$500M or more
- Add Affordable Housing to the regular Capital Committee Bond Cycle and create a seat at the committee for the MOHCD director
- Advocate at the state for return of local redevelopment powers and expand the legality of IFD bonds to enable housing construction
- Expand and scale the small sites program to permanently fund a minimum \$25 million per year and \$1 million to develop network of local non-profit developers dedicated to tenant organizing and housing preservation. Small sites should be expanded beyond 4-25 apartments and to prioritize more neighborhoods that are experiencing, have experienced high levels of displacement, or are close to the tipping point of experiencing high levels of displacement. Program analysis should include 2018 Planning department report on recommendations for small sites as an anti- displacement strategy and Housing Accelerator fund report
- Establish a preservation financing fund in direct proportion to funding for production financing to indicate the administration’s priority on keeping diversity of San Francisco
- Create a revolving loan fund for socially desirable housing types
- Work with business, labor and philanthropic groups like San Francisco Foundation, Tipping Point and the Chan/Zuckerberg Initiative to find creative solutions to housing needs
- Explore creative use of air-rights for affordable housing on new public buildings such as fire stations
- Create a Department of Tenant Relocation and Return within MOHCD

Reduce Cost in a High Cost Environment without Reducing Affordable housing

- Inclusionary housing incentives – In order for the city to meet its goal of 5,000 units of housing a year, the City will investigate new incentives for on-site production of middle-income and low-income housing. Planning, MOHCD and OEWD will convene a developers working group to review how to create deeper incentives for the on-site production of middle-income housing, with an emphasis on teacher and first-responder housing. Luxury housing that supports additional BMR production above code should also be examined as a method of delivering more affordable housing
- The working group will review and analyze new fees and requirements on development added by local ordinance or administrative action to the building and planning code since 2011 as well as any fees and requirements from SFPUC. The intent is to provide non-discretionary waivers for projects that provide on-site inclusionary housing. In order to ensure that these waivers do not compromise any safety considerations, the waivers will not include any seismic considerations or changes to the State Building code
- Create a Housing Advocate staff position with authority to expedite housing permits and adjudicate inter-departmental disputes that delay housing production
- Fully implement Mayor Ed Lee’s Executive Directive regarding housing permitting deadlines, with strong enforcement provisions
- Implement pending streamlining recommendations from the Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development that come out of Mayor Mark Farrell’s “High Costs of Affordable Housing Construction Summit”
- Implement CEQA compliance for infill residential projects
- Ensure that housing regulations are data-driven, e.g., tie Inclusionary housing rates to independent feasibility analyses
- Eliminate Discretionary Review, which can block even fully compliant projects, and rely instead on the Board of Appeals process

- San Francisco needs to staff up and redesign its entitlement and infrastructure departments in order to dramatically cut unnecessary wait time
- Embrace new technologies including factory built construction and recycled shipping containers. To ensure that modular construction in San Francisco can be both pro-labor and cost-saving, the Mayor will appoint a Modular Housing Advisory Council. The Council will be comprised of representatives from various building trades, construction companies, affordable and market-rate developers, and leaders from MOHCD, DBI and OEWD along with resident participation. The focus will be on planning for and creating a modular factory in San Francisco while also allowing more “San Francisco” modular housing in the city

Pursue Equitable Development in All San Francisco Neighborhoods

- Working with our state legislators and new governor, use property tax reform and rebates to build more middle-income and workforce housing
- Bring more density to the transit and commercial corridors where appropriate, such as a Better Neighborhoods Plan for Geary Boulevard and increase as appropriate height and density restrictions to enable the creation of a greater number of BMR units than mandated by code using as a model Home-SF
- Where existing height limits already allow it, build 4-6 unit apartment buildings in low-density neighborhoods, such as the current architectural mix in the Marina
- Create streamlining and incentives to increase ADU production
- Build more affordable housing and permanent supportive housing for people experiencing homelessness with pre-fabricated technologies now
- Create better, more effective construction training programs to increase San Francisco’s skilled construction workforce