

Bond Progress – December 2015

In 2014, voters in Spokane County Fire District 4 approved approximately \$9.6 million in bond funds to replace apparatus, equipment and build three fire stations and a training facility. This is our third update reporting back on the progress we are making on these important public safety projects.

Facilities

Overall, we are on target for completing these projects on time and on budget. The cost to build the new stations came in higher than we had estimated, which has been a challenge. As a result, we changed some building plans and have found ways to reduce costs.

Station 40 (Elk-Chattaroy and Hamilton Road) – This station is an important addition to improve emergency response times to approximately 500 homes in our area. The steel frame for the station is up, the building walls and roof are complete, and contractors are working hard to finish the interior of the building by mid-January. We plan to hold an Open House at the station in early 2016 to thank community members for supporting the bond that made this project possible.

Station 41 (Deer Park) – Our original plan was to purchase property and then build a new station. The City of Deer Park approached us about a piece of land that it owns and would like the fire district to use. The location is ideal for a fire station and may help us save money. At this point, the city has approved the land transfer and the design work is in progress for the new station. The fire district is pursuing grants to fund a portion of the construction to help reduce costs, as well. Our goal is to break ground on the station sometime in mid-2016.

Firefighter Training Facility – We plan to move our headquarters to the Deer Park Station and then turn the current administrative building on East Chattaroy Road into a firefighter training facility. Renovating and repurposing an existing building will save money as opposed to purchasing land and funding new construction.

Station 48 (Cooper Road and Highway 206) – The fire district purchased land at this location approximately 15 years ago with the intent of building a station to improve service. We redesigned the station to accommodate the buildable area on the lot. A smaller building means that we can consider a pole or stick frame construction, which would save money. Our goal is to break ground in the spring of 2016 on this station.

Equipment and Apparatus

A portion of the bond is dedicated to replacing apparatus and equipment that is more than 20 years old. It is important to have fire engines and other emergency vehicles in good working order. However, we look for ways to save money by purchasing gently-used apparatus, replacing parts of rigs (instead of the whole unit) and reusing other pieces as reserve equipment.

For example, we purchased five new chassis for brush/medic vehicles this year, and attached them to bodies from the old rigs we already owned. Four of the five “new” brush/medic vehicles are already in service and the fifth is close to completion.

We are adding pumps and tanks to three of the old chassis to extend their usable lives. These three units will serve as brush engines and support our efforts around the state during wildland fire season.

We purchased a gently-used support unit vehicle, which saved our taxpayers \$150,000. This type of vehicle carries tools, generators, lights and compressed air for firefighters responding to accidents and fires. This unit is now in service and is an important addition to our fleet.

We are still on track to take delivery of two new water tenders in 2016, and will complete the design and specifications necessary to order two new fire engines.

Spokane County Fire District 4 will continue to report back to you as we make progress on these important projects. We couldn't do this without your support – so thank you!