

Bond Progress – October 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 update is part of our commitment to report back on these important public safety projects. Our fire district has made significant progress in the past year even while participating in the busiest wildland fire season on record.

Facilities

Our proposal was to build three new stations and a training facility to improve service and coverage for our community. Overall, we are on target for completing these projects on time, which is great news.

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 by consolidating other projects as explained here.

Station 40 (Elk-Chattaroy and Hamilton Road) – The foundation is complete and we just took delivery of the steel frame for the building in early October. The walls are going up now, and contractors will finish the interior of the building. We estimate that this project will be complete sometime in January of 2016. This station is an important addition to improve emergency response times and service for approximately 500 homes in our area.

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 they own and would like the fire district to use. The location is ideal for a fire station and may help us save money through this partnership with the city. We are working with the City to complete the property transfer by early November 2015 at which point we can finalize construction plans for the new station.

Firefighter Training Facility – We had planned to purchase land and build a new training facility for our firefighters. Thanks to the partnership with the City of Deer Park, we plan to move our administrative offices to this station once it is finished. We will then renovate the old administrative building on East Chattaroy Road and turn it into our 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 around 15 years ago with the intent of building a station to better serve the community in the future. The building pad is not large enough to accommodate the size of station we need now 15 years later. We are considering other pieces of land in the area that might be more suitable for our needs. A decision on the location will be made soon and we will report back when we have more information to share.

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 for us to have fire engines and other emergency vehicles in good working order – but we don't always have to buy new units. Sometimes we can replace part of a rig, or purchase gently used apparatus to save money.

For example, we purchased new chassis for five Brush/Medic vehicles this year, but kept the bodies of the existing rigs that house the equipment and materials we use in an emergency. We reattached the bodies onto the new chassis for less than it would cost to buy new ones.

We had planned to buy a new Support Unit vehicle sometime in 2017, but a used one became available this year in our area. We snapped it up, saving our taxpayers \$150,000 in the process. In 2016, we will take delivery of two new water tenders and expect to complete the design and specifications necessary to order four new fire engines.

These are the highlights of what we have accomplished one year after the bond. We will continue to report back to you as we make progress. We couldn't do this without your support – so thank you!