

*City of Alexandria, Virginia*

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 28, 2008

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO 50: PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS FOR  
IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE 6101 EDSALL ROAD  
(ALEXANDRIA KNOLLS WEST) INCIDENT ANALYSIS

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The Fire Department will kick off a broad strategic planning process for its Fire and EMS operations on April 7, 2008. The Incident Analysis from the August 25, 2007, high-rise fire at 6101 Edsall Road (Alexandria Knolls West) will be a significant input into this strategic planning process. A related but more targeted planning process will be initiated to develop specific options for implementing the recommendations described in the consultant's report on the Edsall Road incident in time for presentation to the City Council in the Fall of 2008 and inclusion in budget deliberations for the FY 2010 budget.

Given the extent of the consultant's recommendations and their fiscal impact, a range of factors will be considered by Fire Department staff and employees in developing a multi-year, phased approach to addressing the equipment, personnel, training, and procedural needs specified in the report.

The recommended deployment of additional firefighters to engine and truck companies will take into account: fire-EMS service demand (current and projected); overall daily workload (i.e., emergency incident response, training/education, wellness/fitness, and community outreach activities); population density (day and night); special hazards (i.e., higher-risk occupancies including unsprinklered high-rise buildings); and operational specialties such as HAZMAT, Technical Rescue, and Marine Operations.

Notwithstanding the intensive planning efforts noted above, Fire Department staff will identify any recommendations where immediate action can be taken and work with the City Manager's Office (CMO) to tackle them. Since receiving the report in late-November 2007, actions already taken to address issues raised by the consultant include: initiating a comprehensive study, by Kimball and Associates, of Police/Fire emergency communications capacity, organization, training, and technology; providing a salary market rate adjustment to Police/Fire emergency

communications personnel; scheduling additional training opportunities on the National Incident Management System-Incident Command System (NIMS-ICS) for City employees; applying for a federal grant to create a portable incident command training/simulation capability; revising standard operating procedures (SOPs) for supporting major incidents with additional Fire-EMS command officers and Office of Emergency Management (OEM) staff; participating in regional efforts to provide CAD interoperability between jurisdictions (e.g., Alexandria, Arlington County, and Fairfax County); and including three Fire-EMS shift safety officers in my FY2009 Alternative Proposed budget.

The consultant's report specifically addresses operational needs with recommendations for additional equipment, personnel, training, and procedures. Beyond the resources detailed in the report, capacity-building in the Fire Department will likely be required to fully implement the consultant's recommendations; options for creating the needed capacity will be included in the implementation planning effort.