

Supplemental Budget Information – Item 7

Question:

Cost benefit analysis of the proposed cuts for Fire and Police.

Response:

Fire: The information below is responding to City Council's request at the meeting on 3/10/2026. The below BCPs are those that are proposed that have significant impact involving staffing.

BCP A – Mandated Program Delivery Change (Level 4 Reduction)

- The Sacramento Fire Department (SFD) proposes reducing Fire Suppression expenditures by eliminating 20.0 FTE Firefighter positions. These positions will be unavailable to support operations, resulting in reduced staffing capacity. This reduction will require rotating company closures and increased reliance on overtime to maintain minimum staffing levels. As a result, response times are expected to increase.
- The reduction proposal will reduce efficiencies and negatively impact the city's performance measures. It is anticipated that daily rotating closures will increase response times. With Sacramento averaging 300 all-risk, all-hazard emergency incidents per day, these delays rapidly compound. Daily rotating closures pull units out of position, increasing travel distances and slowing the arrival of critical resources to the Sacramento community. Research cited in National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1710, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and Underwriters Laboratory (UL) Fire Safety Research Institute (FSRI) confirms that even small response-time delays worsen outcomes across medical, fire, rescue, and hazardous incidents.
- The greatest impact falls on Sacramento's underserved neighborhoods—including Oak Park, Del Paso Heights, North Sacramento, Meadowview, and South Sacramento—where higher medical vulnerability, limited access to healthcare, and socioeconomic barriers amplify emergency risk. In these communities, even small delays reduce survivability and intensify incident severity. Daily rotating closures therefore create not just inefficiency but a clear and inequitable increase in life safety risk citywide. These areas would face deeper inequities and greater life safety risk.
- Lastly, firefighter safety will also decline with this proposal. The City's 2025 Risk Assessment shows the Fire Department already leads all departments in employee injuries—177 annual workers' compensation claims and over 64,000 injury-on-duty hours—with strain injuries rising as workload increases. Reducing company availability will further elevate injury rates, increase burnout, expand mandatory overtime, and decrease staffing resilience.

BCP E – Discretionary Program Reduction (Level 2 Reduction)

- Delete one position (1.0 FTE – Assistant Chief) with the Diversity, Outreach & Recruitment Division to reduce costs of approximately \$297,150 to the Measure U funds.

BCP H – Mandated Program Delivery Change (Level 1 Reduction)

- Delete (12.0) positions (12.0 FTE) – Firefighter and add (20.0) new positions (10.0 FTE – Paramedics and 10.0 FTE EMTs) under the Single Role Program to reduce costs of approximately \$3,545,506 to the General Fund.
- The Sacramento Fire Department proposes to activate year two of the Single Role Program by converting 12.0 FTE Firefighter positions into 20.0 FTE Single Role (10.0 FTE Paramedic and 10.0 FTE EMT) positions. This program initiative began in May 2022 and after labor contract negotiations and position establishment, the SFD seeks to maintain momentum of the Single Role program.
- This conversion will create several key efficiencies for the Sacramento Fire Department. Single-role ambulance personnel work 12-hour shifts, which not only support a healthier work-life balance but also allow for more flexible, continuous coverage throughout the day. These positions require fewer amenities and do not rely on traditional fire station infrastructure, enabling a more mobile and dynamic deployment model. This flexibility enhances operational responsiveness and resource allocation, ultimately improving service delivery while maintaining fiscal responsibility.
- A strong performance measure supporting this conversion is the program’s demonstrated ability, over nearly one year, to enhance both community service and internal operations. The single-role ambulance model has enabled a more dynamic, responsive deployment strategy, improving service to citizens while easing the workload on dual-role firefighters by more evenly distributing call volume. Additionally, the program has successfully absorbed calls that might otherwise be lost to outside agencies, preserving service continuity and response capacity. These outcomes reflect measurable improvements in operational efficiency, workforce sustainability, and service reliability.

Police: The Police Department (PD) is proposed to eliminate 62 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions in FY2026/27. Of these, 48 positions are funded by the City’s General Fund and are included in this analysis. The remaining 14 positions are funded by outside partners – Sacramento Regional Transit District (11) and Natomas Unified School District (3) – and are excluded from the analysis.

Eliminating the 48 General Fund FTE positions will reduce the PD’s workload capacity by 99,840 hours. These positions represent both sworn officers and professional staff whose salaries include the cost of pension contributions, medical insurance, and other employment benefits. The total budget reduction associated with these 48 positions is \$6.6 million.

The proposed reduction includes:

- 26 sworn officer FTE positions, with an average hourly rate of \$88.74 (including benefits), accounting for 54,080 lost working hours. This is \$4,799,291 of the total reduction.
- 22 professional staff FTE positions, with an average hourly rate of \$39.76 (including benefits), accounting for 45,760 lost working hours. This represents \$1,819,139 of the total reduction.

If these positions are eliminated, the remaining workforce will need to absorb approximately 100,000 hours of work to maintain current service levels. One way to do this is through employee overtime. Based on average overtime rates – \$98.13 per hour

for sworn staff and \$44.24 per hour for professional staff – the City would spend an estimated \$7.3 million to replace the hours lost through the proposed reductions.

For comparison:

- The sworn officer reduction of \$4.8 million reflects 54,080 working hours. If retained, that same amount of funding could provide approximately 48,904 overtime hours.
- The professional staff reduction of \$1.8 million reflects 45,760 working hours. That amount could alternatively cover about 41,120 overtime hours.

In total, if the City uses overtime to absorb the workload of the eliminated positions, estimated labor costs increase from \$6.6 million to \$7.3 million. This represents an additional \$713,287 to accomplish the same amount of work.

Overall, while the proposed reductions lower budgeted salary costs, replacing those lost hours through overtime costs more than retaining the positions.