LaSalle Fire Sub-Station Question & Answer Sheet

Q: Why is a fire substation required at this time?

A: A comprehensive Fire Master Plan study determined that in order to address both current and anticipated ongoing challenges of urbanization and growth throughout the municipality, a two-station model is required. This substation is a key component to help maximize the benefits of our combined full-time & paid-on-call staffing system, in order to maintain and improve emergency response capability. A two-station model provides for more rapid and efficient distribution of emergency response vehicles and personnel.

Q: How/why was the proposed site on Hazel St. selected as the best location?

A: The master plan recommendation for a second station, based on multiple factors, was in the western urban area of the municipality. A critical analysis was completed comparing relevant significant criteria to available potential sites. A central factor in the criteria is the efficient and timely emergency response for our paid-on-call responders. A location close to where many of the paid-on-call responders live and can easily access, as well as in an area providing an optimal coverage area consistent with current and projected response trends, is critical to addressing current response challenges. Although no site is perfect, following a thorough evaluation of all relevant criteria and site options, the municipally owned Hazel St. site that formerly accommodated a public school and a municipal community center is the preferred site that best addresses the needs for improved emergency response capability. It is central to the area where many paid-on-call responders consistently reside and can access quickly, and as importantly, it is also strategic to current and projected response trends so that responders are not substantially deviating from their most efficient response route for the majority of emergency responses.

Q: Will this project eliminate the neighborhood park?

A: John Dupuis Park is, and will remain, an important neighborhood feature. The developed and actively utilized park area currently occupies the center area of the site. The proposed fire substation and community room would predominantly occupy the undeveloped area facing Hazel St., formerly occupied by a public school and community center. While disruption of
the park is unavoidable during the construction phase, the park area and the fire service themed play structures will be relocated slightly east of their current location on the site as the park area is re-designed.

Q: How big will the fire station be? What other components or amenities will this community project include?

A: As a sub-station to supplement the main fire station, this will be a “1 Engine station”, much smaller than the current headquarters station. It will house one fire engine and one smaller support vehicle (pickup truck) and include modest crew quarters for staff utilizing the station. The current recommendation also includes a community room, which will provide meeting and community activity space for 30 to 50 persons that will be available to residents or businesses in the area. This room would also serve as a secondary municipal Emergency Operations Center, to coordinate municipal response to large-scale municipal emergencies.

On site parking will be included for the facility. In addition to the redesign of John Dupuis Park, Hazel St. would also be reconstructed to a full urban cross-section, including sidewalk, between Bouffard Rd. and Laurier Dr.

Q: What consideration has been given to the effects of a fire station on the existing residential neighborhood?

A: A major positive effect will be the enhanced level of emergency response resources strategically located in the western urban core for more efficient response when required by residents and businesses in the area. Responders from this station are also neighborhood residents, who share concerns for safety and quality of life.

Although response to emergency calls necessarily involves the use of lights and sirens, efforts have been made to minimize unnecessary intrusion for existing neighbors. The activity expected from this station will be far less than that of the main cluster of emergency services on Normandy St. The headquarters station remains the main meeting and training facility and administrative office. The vehicle(s) from this sub-station would be activated on approximately two-thirds of the total calls received, or an average of four or five times per week, based on current call volumes. Many of those responses would involve response
routes similar to current practice on Laurier Dr. or Bouffard Rd. The site plan has been developed to ensure all vehicular traffic into and out of the substation and community room parking area is via Hazel St. only, away from the park area and the residential side streets. The buildings have also been sited to provide for parking and workspace at the rear of the station, buffered by trees and landscaping, to minimize activity from the street. The station design includes a drive-through apparatus bay configuration to eliminate the need for backing fire trucks into the station from the street. The exterior of the building and landscaping will be designed to blend with the residential neighborhood.

Q: Will this sub-station be permanently staffed?

A: At this time, the sub-station will not be regularly staffed. An existing fire truck and smaller support vehicle will be relocated to this station. Paid-on-call responders will report to the station as required to access the vehicles for more efficient emergency response. Non-emergency activity such as routine vehicle and station maintenance, and administrative duties will provide periodic staff presence. The proposed central western station location and design will accommodate full-time staffing as may be required in the future.