



## MEMORANDUM REPORT

**Meeting Date:** January 21, 2020

**TO:** Board of Commissioners of the Los Altos Hills County Fire District

**FROM:** J. Logan, General Manager

**SUBJECT:** Brush Chipping Pilot Project with Santa Clara County FireSafe Council

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Receive Report on the Brush Chipping Pilot Project with Santa Clara County FireSafe Council

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### **BACKGROUND**

At the October 15, 2019 Commission meeting, Commissioners adopted Resolution 19-38 authorizing execution of a Professional Services Agreement with the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council (FireSafe) for Program Services. FireSafe offers a suite of Program Services to agencies in Santa Clara County. The suite provides a Brush Chipping Program that includes the bidding process, contractor selection and oversight of contractor and brush chipping services provided to residents.

The Los Altos Hills County Fire District (District) has an active program of no-cost brush chipping and debris removal services available to residents. This year, upon expiration of the contract for brush chipping service, a new process that included bidding for brush chipping and debris removal services was approved by the Board of Commissioners. After substantial research and discussion with consultants and agencies, it appears that the program model utilized by FireSafe for bidding, selection of contractors and brush removal is a worthy approach for the District to explore.

### **DISCUSSION**

J.R. Call, Project Manager for FireSafe, met with Emergency Services Manager Fire Captain Denise Gluhan (Ret.) and J. Logan (team) to develop an operational plan and proposal for brush chipping services. The team then met with the Hazardous Fuel Reduction subcommittee to discuss the proposal for a brush chipping program to residents managed by FireSafe on behalf of the District.

The primary feature of the FireSafe program is management of a bidding process available to pre-qualified contractors who will bid on the cost of chipping and removal services for measured and tagged brush piles on residents' properties. FireSafe will inspect and tag each brush pile, administer the bidding process, select the contractor and manage the brush chipping services. The District will continue to send out information letters and request cards to residents based on the six brush chipping areas. The District will process returned cards, online brush chipping requests and aggregate the data into a database accessible to FireSafe staff. FireSafe staff will utilize the database to inspect the brush piles, contact residents and schedule and manage the brush chipping and debris removal services. Because this is a new approach and selection of bidding contractors, staff recommends a service agreement for a six-month pilot project with an optional one-year and additional four-year extension.

J.R. Call will present the FireSafe Proposal and be available for discussion with the Commission at the January 21, 2020 meeting.

### **Attachment(s):**

1. FireSafe Proposal

SANTA CLARA COUNTY FIRE SAFE COUNCIL  
PROPASAL TO LOS ALTOS HILLS COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT  
CHIPPING SERVICES

The Los Altos Hills County Fire District's ("District") territory is susceptible to wildfire due to an abundance of fuel load, the steep topography of the District's hillside areas, and the local climate conditions.

The FireSafe Council is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization seeking to provide a significant increase in Community Awareness and Defensible Space in its program area by providing a brush chipping coordination and competitive bidding process to assist in protecting residents and homes in preventing and reducing losses from wildfires. The FireSafe Council's chipping program is focused on protecting the Santa Clara County communities at risk for wildfire through the reduction of built-up hazardous fire-prone vegetation and the creation of informed communities with respect to Defensible Space, general fire safety, and fire's effect and role in our environment.

The District wishes to engage the support the Santa Clara Fire Safe Council. ("FireSafe Council") The FireSafe Council proposes the following:

1. **Term:** The term of this proposal will be rolled out as a "Pilot" program to commence on April 1, 2020 ("Effective Date") and extends through June 31, 2020 unless terminated earlier by either party. (30 days notice required to cancel the "Pilot" program. This "Pilot" program can be converted to an ongoing contractual Agreement by both parties in writing and may be renewed for successive 1year terms by a letter agreement between the parties. Either party may terminate the Agreement by giving written notice of termination to the other party no less than ninety (90) days prior to the effective termination date.
2. **Payment:** The District shall pay the FireSafe Council for services to be performed pursuant to this Proposal / Agreement at FireSafe Councils "cost" per employee per hour plus 25% for administration uplift. The exact amount depends on person hired or assigned, but the table below shows approximate pay range. **NOTE: The District will only be charges for actual hours worked plus drive mileage reimbursement.** (we will use U.S. government standard rate calculated from start point such as home office or county line if the person lives outside Santa Clara County)

Title	*Sample <b>Range</b> Burdened rate per hour range
Program Manager	\$45.00 - \$58.00
Project Manager	\$33.00 - \$40.00

\*(includes Workers Comp, PTO and employer paid taxes, the loading rate is updated annually)

The District shall provide a monthly prepayment to the FireSafe Council that will be used to pay the tree contractor for chipping costs. The amount of the initial prepayment should be \$20,000.00. Subsequent monthly prepayments will be reevaluated based on need and volume of requests and can be modified by agreement between the parties.

3. **Proposal / Agreement Administration:** The primary representatives of District and the FireSafe Council are listed below.

	<b>District</b>	<b>FireSafe Council</b>
Primary Representative:	J. Logan	Jay R Call
Address:	Los Altos Hills County Fire District PO Box 1766 Los Altos, CA 94023	SCC FireSafe Council 14380 Saratoga Avenue Saratoga, CA 95070 San Jose, CA 95127
Telephone:	(650) 949-1044	(408) 412-9694
E-mail:	jlogan@lahcfd.org	jrcall@SCCFireSafe.org

4. **Scope Of Work:** The District’s land is characterized by native brush, grasslands and trees, which are prone to wildfire. There is a danger that fire in this area could spread and consume significant areas of the District. To assist in reducing fire danger, the FireSafe Council will oversee a program that provides no cost chipping services for owners and residents of properties located in the District. Properties outside of District boundaries are not eligible for work supported by this Proposal / Agreement. The program consists of chipping brush as currently constituted by the District existing chipping guidelines and governance.

5. **District Responsibilities:** The District will continue all outreach and direct mail to residents. This will include:

- Management, oversight and organization of the 6 services areas and schedule as currently constituted. (see Area Schedule below)
- Preparation, creation and production of any direct mail or electronic deliverables as needed by the district to support the program and notify residents.
- Management of any existing or future webpages with information about the program on District or City of Los Altos Hills websites.

- Collect chipping address locations from residents in any given area and provide an electronic file (or equivalent) to the FireSafe Council within the first 3 working days of the scheduled month (should include email address when possible)
- Provide timely monthly prepayments as needed to sufficiently fund the tree contractor reimbursement costs.

**6. Area Schedule:**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Area</b>
Jan / July	1
Feb / Aug	2
March / Sept	3
April / Oct	4
May / Nov	5
June / Dec	6

**7. Santa Clara County FireSafe Council Responsibilities:**

The FireSafe Council shall provide one Program Manager to oversee the project and address district concerns as needed. (not to exceed 8 hours/month) The FireSafe Council will also provide one project manager to execute the program who will be available as needed to meet the expected demand. (Expected not to exceed 80 hours per month) The FireSafe Council will execute a chipping program for the District’s current chipping areas (see above table) as follows:

- *Optimize Drive Route:* Receive a list of addresses for a specific area and organize into an optimized drive route either manually or using online software.
- *Tag and Photo Graph piles:* Drive to each location and find the piles according to the information provided by the District. Mark each pile with a piece of FireSafe Council standard pink flagging ribbon and attach one FireSafe Council Chipping Tag to one of the piles. Take a photo of each pile and document the length, width and depth of each.
- *Competitive Bidding:* Create bid packages using the current FireSafe Council template. One bid package will be created for each due date on the returned chipping request card. (missed or special requests can also be added as needed) The bid packages will be sent to a minimum of three contractors for quotes. Contractors will be given three to five working days to respond. Only contractors

that agree to adhere to the State of California's Prevailing Wage as per DIR will be awarded District jobs.

- Chipping Contract Award and Chipping Schedules: The FireSafe Project Manager will review the bid package quotes and select the winning contractor. The Project Manager will request a PO using the established FireSafe Council PO process and guidelines. Once the PO is approved, the PO will be issued to the winning contractor and the Project Manager will notify the residents when chipping will occur. (only for residents who provided email address on application)
- Follow up: The FireSafe Council Project Manager will oversee scheduling and execution of the chipping and disposal of debris. The Project Manager will follow up on any reports of missed locations and resolve. All locations for an "area" are to be chipped within the planned month, however, if a location is missed or demand exceeds capacity, the locations may be rolled into the next scheduled "area". (See Area Schedule above)
- Payments and Invoices: The FireSafe Council will receive and pay tree contractor invoices. The FireSafe Council will collect a 25% administrative and liability insurance fee on all paid invoices to contractors. The FireSafe Council will coordinate the replenishment of the Districts prepayment amount as needed.
- Reporting: Create and send monthly completion reports back to District showing the locations served, chipping volume, FireSafe Council hours worked and invoices paid.