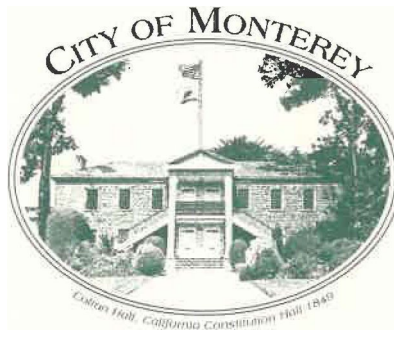




MONTEREY FIRE DEPARTMENT

April 14, 2025

The Honorable Judge Stephanie E. Hulsey
Judge of the Superior Court
c/o Office of the County Counsel
Attention: Sandra Ontiveros
168 W. Alisal Street, 3rd Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Re: 2023-2024 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury Final Report- "Monterey Fire Department: Overdue for Overhaul"

Dear Judge Hulsey,

This letter is in response to the letter sent to the City of Monterey on February 21, 2025, requesting an update to the City's response to the Monterey County Civil Grand Jury Final Report- "Monterey Fire Department: Overdue for Overhaul".

The City of Monterey and Monterey Fire Department have made significant progress within the department on the items identified in the Civil Grand Jury report as well as other areas as identified in the department's strategic plan. On behalf of the City of Monterey, I would like to assure you that the Monterey Fire Department (MFD) is very invested in ensuring the department continues its tradition of delivering high quality and responsive emergency services to the community. The City of Monterey appreciates the follow-up from the Civil Grand Jury and the opportunity to update the CGJ on our progress in the past six months.

Our responses to the additional requests are below. The report language and updated request language are displayed in *italics* and the City's response is in bold for readability.

Recommendation R2. The City of Monterey formalizes its multi-year strategic plan for the MFD that addresses updating facilities, replacing apparatus, training firefighter staff, and ensuring that the mental health service policy is clearly defined by December 31, 2024.

The recommendation has been implemented. Through an internal committee, the MFD created a multiyear strategic plan in January 2024. It was reviewed and updated in April 2024 and will continue to be reviewed and updated quarterly. Facilities, apparatus replacement, training and mental health services are all addressed in the plan.

The CGJ requests a copy of the multi-year strategic plan for the MFD, updated April 2024 as well as any quarterly updates.

Response to Recommendation R2 updated request: The Strategic plan documents are attached from April 2024, July 2024, November 2024 and February 2025.

Recommendation R3. The MFD Administration consolidates all MFD policies into a single unified system by September 30, 2024.

The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but it will be implemented in Lexipol prior to September 30, 2024.

The requests update the integration of policies into Lexipol.

Response to Recommendation R3 updated request: On August 1, 2024, the single unified system was implemented. The department was notified that all current policies are located in Lexipol and that all other policies (in hard copy or located elsewhere) are no longer valid and were removed. The policies can be accessed through the web or the Lexipol app on mobile devices. As of April 2025, the Monterey Fire Department has 142 total policies available on the platform.

Recommendation R4. The MFD Administration aligns its Monterey Vehicle & Equipment Replacement Policy with NFPA Standards for apparatus replacement by September 30, 2024.

The recommendation has been implemented. The City of Monterey has always and will continue to meet National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standards. NFPA guidelines are not policies but are guidelines to consider; they are recommendations, not absolutes. Whether or not a vehicle remains in service should be based on the true condition of the individual vehicle. The decision to remove a vehicle from front-line service or from emergency service altogether is based on the quality of the vehicle, the usage of the vehicle over its lifetime, and most importantly, the quality and quantity of the preventative maintenance that the vehicle has received over its years of service. The City of Monterey will continue to reference the NFPA guidelines when determining apparatus replacement.

The CGJ requests an update on the replacement of vehicles identified as 6473 Aerial Ladder Truck/Aerial and 6411 Engine/pumper.

Response to Recommendation R4 updated request: The City of Monterey ordered an aerial ladder truck in October 2022 and it is anticipated to arrive by the end of 2025. Once the new truck is placed in service, the current frontline truck (6471) will move to reserve status and truck 6473 will be surplus.

The City of Monterey also ordered a new Type 1 engine in May 2024 and it is anticipated to arrive in June 2027. Once the new engine is placed in service, engine 6411 will move to reserve status and the department will surplus an older reserve engine.

Recommendation RS. The City of Monterey funds the repair of the primary MFD aerial ladder making it operational by October 31, 2024.

The recommendation has already been implemented. MFD's frontline aerial ladder truck has been out of service since September 2023, due to loss of power to the aerial ladder. It was first brought to Monterey's Fleet Division, but they were unable to complete the work. In February 2024, the truck was brought to Golden State Truck and Trailer in Salinas, CA. The power to the aerial ladder, suspension, and additional identified repairs have been completed. The truck is expected to be placed back in service by mid-August 2024.

The CGJ requests confirmation that this truck has been placed back in service.

Response to Recommendation RS updated request: The City of Monterey confirms that truck 6471, MFD's frontline aerial ladder truck, was placed back in service in August 2024. The truck has had minimal downtime since being back in service. When the new aerial ladder truck arrives (expected by the end of 2025) and is placed in service, truck 6471 will move to reserve status.

Recommendation RB. The City of Monterey ensures that all visual 911 Center alert system boards function at all MFD stations, including the south-side modular trailer by August 31, 2024.

This recommendation is in progress. In May 2024, the City entered into a contract with technology services firm FirstArriving, which provides digital dashboards. The dashboards will provide realtime emergency information on screens at all fire stations and the Fire Administration office. Implementation is expected to be completed by November 2024.

The CGJ requests an update on the implementation and functioning of the 911 digital dashboards at all MFD stations.

Response to Recommendation RS updated request: The department replaced all of the mobile data computers (MDCs) in all apparatus. The Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) displays in the fire stations are all operable. Crews can see unit status from the County dispatch information in real-time.

The City received the new First Arriving digital dashboards in October 2024 and installed one of them in the Fire Administration office in November 2024 to verify the dashboards function as intended. All of the screens and wiring are in place at the fire stations and the department has been testing the one unit in Fire Administration. Unfortunately, due to continuing issues

with the vendor, we have not been able to roll the program out to the fire stations yet. Fire Administration has been actively working with the vendor to resolve the pending issues. Per the vendor, as of March 31, 2025, the projected full implementation will be by mid-April 2025.

Recommendation R9. The City of Monterey immediately red-tags and develops a plan to repair or demolish the Station 13 training tower by October 31, 2024.

This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. Based on the assessment by the structural engineer and architect, the building's condition does not warrant a red tag. However, the recommendation to repair the tower is fully funded and in progress. Structural inspection of the Station 13 training tower discovered that the salvage value is high enough to warrant the repair of the tower over its demolition. The City is working with a consultant on a design that will repair and improve the training capacity of the Station 13 training tower to better suit the needs of the Fire Department. Design plans are nearing completion, and permits will be acquired.

The CGJ requests a status report on the repairs to the tower.

Response to Recommendation R9 updated request: The project to rebuild the Station 13 tower was funded through the CIP budget. The City of Monterey completed design plans and received permits. The City issued an RFP for the rebuild and bids are due April 15, 2025.

Recommendation R16. The City of Monterey ensures all CAD software/hardware is consistently operational in all fire apparatus and stations by November 30, 2024.

The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented by November 30, 2024. The Fire Department is currently working with the City's Information Services Division (/SD) and Fleet Division to upgrade all of the hardware in the apparatus. It is anticipated to be completed by November 30, 2024. MFD is also currently working with /SD the implementation of a system called First Arriving for all MFD stations to replace the in-station CAD system with a more reliable digital dashboard system. The new digital dashboards will provide real-time emergency information, including weather, training schedules, traffic, staffing, etc. to improve operational readiness.

The CGJ requests an update on the upgrade of the CAD software/hardware in all apparatus.

Response to Recommendation R16 updated request: The City has replaced all of the MDCs (with current CAD software and hardware) in all fire apparatus.

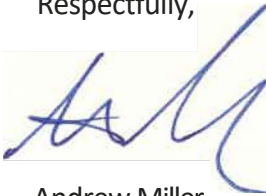
Recommendation R17. The MFD Administration conducts a study to gauge the interest and feasibility of MFD personnel obtaining one or more facility dogs by August 31, 2024.

This recommendation is in process. MFD Administration is collaborating with the Monterey Fire Fighter's Association to study and identify the interest and feasibility of obtaining one or more facility dogs. A current MFD firefighter has been identified as the project lead.

The CGJ requests the status of the interest and feasibility of obtaining facility dog(s).

Response to Recommendation R17 updated request: As of the Civil Grand Jury report, the firefighter tasked with the project has been training her dog and gauging interest within the department. She has also contacted the Risk Manager regarding feasibility. The Monterey Fire Fighter's Association will be putting out a formal survey to the department, anticipated by the end of April 2025.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. Miller', is written over a light yellow rectangular background.

Andrew Miller
Fire Chief

MONTEREY FIRE STRATEGIC PLAN

Completed Initiatives (2025)	Short Term Initiatives (1 year)	Medium Term Initiatives (2 - 3 years)
• Implement PG engine ALS paramedic service • Implement formal training schedule/live fire training • Enhance/expand wellness program • Complete funded Station 14 repairs/remodel • Implement professional qualification standardization (update taskbooks) • Begin Firefighter of the Year program • Successfully onboard 7 new firefighter recruits to probationary firefighters • Order new utility for Monterey	• Update department website • Create apparatus replacement plan • Create technology committee • Complete Station 13 training tower rebuild (funded) • Negotiate CFA contract • Create Fire Dept. Sharepoint • Complete Station 16 station alerting system • Continue funding for facility repairs and improvements • Complete department reorganization • Finalize First Arriving implementation • Finalize First Due implementation • Create a strategic plan for Fire Prevention Division (Community Risk Reduction) • Assess feasibility of using Airport Emergency Response gate • Increase Mobile Mechanic Contract • Complete Station 11/12/13 Station Alerting System installation • Fund Station 14/15 Station Alerting System installations	• Complete Station 15 upgrades for new engine • Begin ALS standardized care • Hire FT EMS Coordinator • Star Car (conceptual) • Develop engine equipment standardization • Plan for paramedic training program • Enhance mechanical aptitude training for Engineers • Develop internal Serious Accident Review Team (SART) • Assess need for Firefighter Recruit classification • Remodel Station 12/13 (funded) • Research enhancement of aquatic rescue response
		Long Term Initiatives (3-6 years)
		• Explore options for Fire Station 17 • Apply for formal CFAI Accreditation • Explore JPA/service model • Remodel Station 11

In Progress

Not Started

Completed

MONTEREY FIRE STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE GOALS

Short Term Goals (1 year)	Medium Term Goals (2 - 3 years)	Long Term Goals (3 - 6 years)
• Update policy manual (Lexipol) • Transition PG engine to ALS • Update department Website • Create formal Training Schedule • Live Fire Training • Create Apparatus Replacement Plan • Create Technology Committee • Enhance/Expand Wellness program • Update Training grounds ○ Training prop ○ Training location options for crews ○ Location for academy • Negotiate CFA Contract • Create Fire Dept. Sharepoint (centralized information sharing) • Develop emergency fleet repair plan • Complete Station 16 transition • Repair KME Ladder truck • Begin Station 14 Repairs • Update Lifeguard Contract • Reorg Fire Prevention	• Reorganization • Begin ALS Standardized Care (all units provide ALS Service) • Hire FT EMS Coordinator • Create engine equipment standardization • Star Car (conceptual) • Apply for Paramedic School/Grant opportunities • Develop internal fire mechanic training • Develop internal SART Process • Professional Qualification standardization • Standardized Instructor certifications • Create a separate FF/Paramedic Job Classification • Replace Prevention and Utility vehicle • Remodel Station 12/13 • Research enhancement of aquatic rescue response team	• Build new Fire Station 17 • Apply for formal CFAI Accreditation • JPA/Service Model • Build new Public Safety Building
		Completed Goals
		• Update/realign Program Management list • Apply for AFG Grant • Expand Training/Safety Committee • Assign/Create Shift Training Coordinators • Recruit for new Fire Chief • Fill DC Vacancy • Replace Medic Engine 11
		On-going/Continuous Goals
		• Increase grant opportunity development • Succession Planning • Collaborate with department for hiring processes • Increase Contract City Relationships • Increase Pub Ed

MONTEREY FIRE STRATEGIC PLAN

Completed Initiatives (2024)	Completed Initiatives (cont.)	Medium Term Initiatives (2 - 3 years)
• Update/realign program management list • Apply for AFG grant • Expand training/safety committee • Assign/create shift training coordinators • Secure new academy & training locations • Recruit for new Fire Chief • Fill DC vacancy • Replace Medic Engine 11 • Collaborate with department for firefighter hiring process • Create department Instagram • Increase Pub Ed events and budget • Develop emergency fleet repair plan • Repair KME ladder truck • Update lifeguard contract • Replace prevention and utility vehicles • Install turnout tent and red phone at Station 16 • Repair roof, fix front door, upgrade Plymovent, repair kitchen cabinets and repaired tower at Station 14 • Receive Montage grant for EMS equipment (~\$100,000) • Receive Homeland Security Grant for marine safety equipment (~\$15,000)	• Fill Assistant Chief vacancy • Receive & place OES engine in service • Update Lexipol policy manual • Finalize training prop grounds	• Complete Station 15 upgrades for new engine • Begin ALS standardized care • Hire FT EMS Coordinator • Star Car (conceptual) • Develop engine equipment standardization • Plan for paramedic training program • Enhance mechanical aptitude training for Engineers • Develop internal Serious Accident Review Team (SART) • Professional qualification standardization • Assess need for Firefighter Recruit classification • Remodel Station 12/13 (funded) • Research enhancement of aquatic rescue response
	Short Term Initiatives (1 year)	
	• Finalize PG engine paramedic service (expected January 2025) • Update department website • Implement formal training schedule • Live fire training • Create apparatus replacement plan • Create technology committee • Enhance/expand wellness program • Complete Station 13 training tower rebuild (funded) • Negotiate CFA contract • Create Fire Dept. Sharepoint • Complete Station 16 station alerting system • Complete Station 14 repairs/remodel (funded) • Assess department reorganization • Finalize First Arriving implementation • Finalize First Due implementation	
		Long Term Initiatives (3-6 years)
		• Explore options for Fire Station 17 • Apply for formal CFAI Accreditation • Explore JPA/service model • Build new public safety building

MONTEREY FIRE STRATEGIC PLAN

Completed Initiatives (2024)	Short Term Initiatives (1 year)	Medium Term Initiatives (2 - 3 years)
• Update/realign program management list • Apply for AFG grant • Expand training/safety committee • Assign/create shift training coordinators • Secure new academy & training locations • Recruit for new Fire Chief • Fill DC vacancy • Replace Medic Engine 11 • Collaborate with department for firefighter hiring process • Create department Instagram • Increase Pub Ed events and budget • Develop emergency fleet repair plan • Repair KME ladder truck • Update lifeguard contract • Replace prevention and utility vehicles • Install turnout tent and red phone at Station 16 • Repair roof, fix front door, upgrade Plymovent, repair kitchen cabinets and repaired tower at Station 14 • Receive Montage grant for EMS equipment (~\$100,000) • Receive Homeland Security Grant for marine safety equipment (~\$15,000)	• Fill Assistant Chief vacancy • Receive and place in service new OES Engine (expected Sept. 2024) • Continue succession planning • Update Lexipol policy manual (expected Oct 1, 2024) • Finalize PG engine paramedic service (expected Oct. 2024) • Update department website • Implement formal training schedule • Live fire training • Create apparatus replacement plan • Create technology committee • Enhance/expand wellness program • Finalize training prop grounds • Complete Station 13 training tower rebuild (funded) • Negotiate CFA contract • Create Fire Dept. Sharepoint • Complete Station 16 station alerting system • Complete Station 14 repairs/remodel (funded) • Assess department reorganization	• Complete Station 15 upgrades for new engine • Begin ALS standardized care • Hire FT EMS Coordinator • Create engine equipment standardization • Star Car (conceptual) • Plan for paramedic training program • Enhance mechanical aptitude training for Engineers • Develop internal Serious Accident Review Team (SART) • Professional qualification standardization • Assess creating a separate FF/Paramedic job classification • Remodel Station 12/13 (funded) • Research enhancement of aquatic rescue response
		Long Term Goals (3-6 years)
		• Explore options for Fire Station 17 • Apply for formal CFAI Accreditation • Explore JPA/service model • Build new public safety building