

<p>FIRE DEPARTMENT</p> <p>Budget History</p> <p>Fiscal Years 1991-92 through 2003-04</p>

Background

The Salt Lake City Fire Department provides protection of life, property and the environment by providing community fire education and awareness programs as well as fire suppression, emergency medical, hazardous materials accidents and disaster services.

The Fire Department is organized into three major divisions: Office of the Chief, Services Bureau, and Operations Bureau.

Historical City Council Policy Objectives and Service Level Expectations

During the budget process for Fiscal Year 1999-00, the Council reviewed the Mayor's Recommended Budget from a performance measurement perspective based on operational plans submitted by the departments. Each department's budget was reviewed with respect to the objectives listed in its operational plan. Departments that had not developed an operational plan were asked to do so by December 31, 1999. All completed operational plans are available for review in the Council Office.

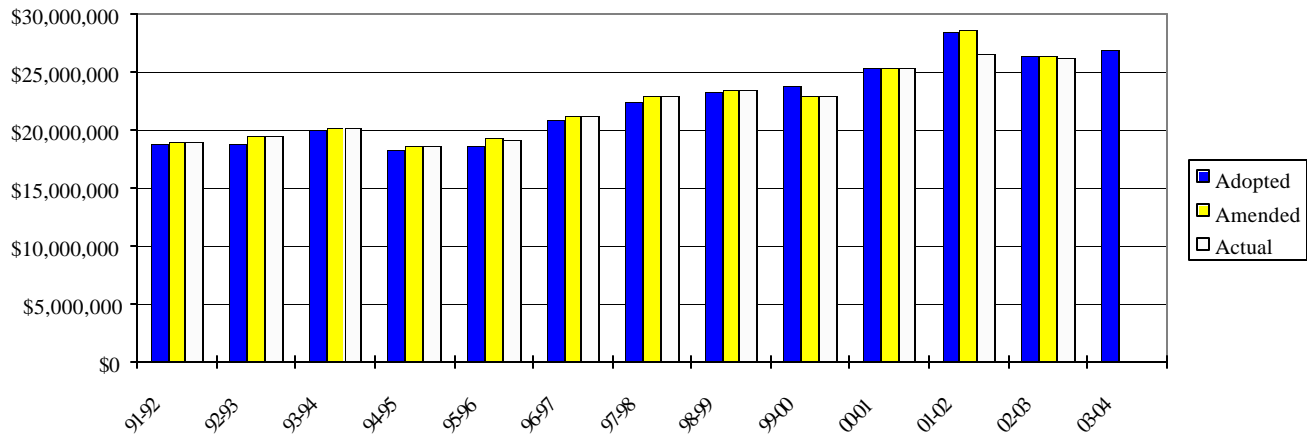
Prior to Fiscal Year 1999-00, the Council reviewed the Mayor's Recommended Budget for the Fire Department based on the following policy objectives and service level expectations:

- Continue emphasis on prevention
- Maintain staffing of four fire fighters per apparatus
- Keep all existing fire companies in service
- Maintain current Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating of 2
- Maintain standard of responding to scene within five minutes 80% of the time
- Continue to provide emergency preparedness training
- Develop a policy for public notification of issues that affect the community as well as standards for collecting and utilizing meaningful, comprehensive public input on City issues
- Reduce administrative costs where possible
- Provide cost effective, timely and dependable services to residents in a cost efficient manner
- Monitor Olympic preparation efforts and plan for appropriate City involvement
- Work toward opening Fire Station #9

Historical Expenditure Levels

The following chart depicts a comparison of Council adopted, amended and actual expenditures for the Fire Department for fiscal years 1991-92 through 2003-04.

Historic Budget Comparisons: Fiscal Years 1991-02 through 2003-04



HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Fiscal Year 1991-92

Mayor’s Recommended Budget

In 1991-92, the Mayor’s Recommended Budget for the Fire Department contained few policy changes. One noteworthy change was the decision to have the Salt Lake City International Airport reimburse the general fund for fire services provided by the Fire Department.

Council Adopted Budget

The City Council adopted the Fire Department budget as recommended and adopted the following legislative intent statements:

- *It is the intent of the Council that the Administration provide a quarterly report on the status of the resolution of issues relating to the Council’s 1990 Management Audit of the Consolidated Police and Fire Dispatch Unit.*

Administration’s Response to Council’s Intent: In the Council-initiated management audit regarding the issue of consolidating the Police and Fire Dispatch units, it was recommended to consolidate the Dispatch units. In response to the Council’s legislative intent, the units were consolidated. The fiscal year 1997-98 proposed budget included funding to separate Fire and Police Dispatch and, as such, end the consolidation program.

- *It is the intent of the Council to encourage the Administration to appoint a representative of the Legislative branch to serve on the task force to examine fire service consolidation issues with the County.*

Administration's Response to Council's Intent: The Administration continues to pursue shared services. The City Council will be informed of any shared services committees and task forces which may be formed.

- *It is the intent of the Council that the Administration continue to increase focus on community education and training in fire prevention techniques. The Administration is requested to provide a written report to the Council regarding its efforts in this area.*

Administration's Response to Council's Intent: A full written report of the Fire Department's efforts in community education was transmitted to the Council with the Legislative Intent Report dated January 1992.

- *It is the intent of the Council to request that the Administration study the potential costs and benefits of a pilot program to implement the flying squad¹ concept of delivering fire services.*

Administration's Response to Council's Intent: The Fire Department completed its study of the flying squad concept and transmitted a report to the Council in December 1991. The report concluded that flying squads would not be an effective tool for the deployment of fire protection and emergency services resources if used in conjunction with reductions in staffing levels of first-line units. The study found that flying squads were most effective in densely populated cities with relatively low emergency call workloads. Cities that are more similar to Salt Lake City have not experienced great success with the flying squad concept.

Fiscal Year 1992-93

Mayor's Recommended Budget

The Mayor's Recommended Budget for fiscal year 1992-93 contained a dramatic reorganization in the Fire Department that resulted in significant budget reductions. However, the proposed budget maintained fire suppression and emergency response service levels. One significant change was the policy decision to replace civilians with fire fighters in a number of administrative positions. The proposed budget achieved most of the Council's policy objectives but did not maintain an emphasis on fire prevention and education activities.

Council Adopted Budget

The City Council adopted the Fire Department budget with restored funding for fire prevention and education activities.

Fiscal Year 1993-94

Mayor's Recommended Budget

¹ The flying squad concept is where each fire station has a skeleton staff (the bare minimum) and there is one roving crew (the flying squad) which responds to citywide calls.

For fiscal year 1993-94, the Mayor's Recommended Budget included enhancements to the fire prevention and education program.

Council Adopted Budget

The City Council adopted the Fire Department budget as recommended. In doing so, the City Council formally agreed to abandon the flying squad fire suppression approach.

Fiscal Year 1994-95

Mayor's Recommended Budget

The Mayor's Recommended Budget included funding for a seasonal wild land fire unit. Also, all responsibility for dispatch was shifted from the Fire Department to the Police Department and a technical communication position was created.

Council Adopted Budget

The City Council identified an accounting error in the budget. As a result, the Council was able to reduce the budget and reprogram funds for other City Council general fund priorities. The remainder of the budget was approved.

Fiscal Year 1995-96

Mayor's Recommended Budget

The Mayor's Recommended Budget for fiscal year 1995-96 included the expansion of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training and funding for a study regarding the feasibility of the Fire Department assuming responsibility for emergency transport to hospitals. The budget also eliminated the seasonal wild land fire-fighting unit, established the previous year, because the City was able to use County, State, and Federal resources to deal with wild range fires.

Council Adopted Budget

The City Council chose not to fund a consultant and intern that were proposed in the Mayor's Recommended Budget. The Administration proposed that the consultant and intern would evaluate the feasibility of the City providing ambulance services. Instead, the Council chose to use the funding to conduct its own review of emergency medical services in Salt Lake City and fund other Council priorities.

Fiscal Year 1996-97

Mayor's Recommended Budget

In fiscal year 1996-97, the Mayor's Recommended Budget continued to build on the Council's historical policy directions. The budget also included hiring civilians for technical and analytical support to the fire programs.

Council Adopted Budget

The City Council adopted the Fire Department budget as proposed. The Council also adopted the following legislative intent statement:

- *It is the intent of the City Council to hold a major policy and issue discussion with the Fire Department to discuss the Department's goals and strategies for the future in October 1996.*

Administration's Response to Council Intent: The Fire Department met with the Council in January 1997.

Fiscal Year 1997-98

Mayor's Recommended Budget

The Mayor's Recommended Budget for fiscal year 1997-98 proposed new initiatives that continued emphasis on prevention and continued to provide emergency preparedness training. These initiatives included the following:

- Expand the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program with a Block Captains Program. This was done to enhance communications team building and training for CERT participants
- Encourage homeowners to dispose of household hazardous waste in the appropriate manner
- Establish "safe houses" for youth at risk
- Implement a "Swift Water Rescue Team" with water craft and equipment capable of performing rescues on the Jordan River

The recommended budget also proposed the addition of a Hazardous Materials Office Clerk to free up inspectors' time so that more inspections could occur. A major policy change in the Mayor's Recommended Budget was the proposed separation of the consolidated Dispatch Unit into Fire and Police Dispatch units. Prior to 1988, the Fire and Police Dispatch units were separate. The Dispatch Units were combined as a result of a Council-initiated review of the Dispatch Program and all existing dispatchers transferred to the Fire Department. However, the Administration alerted the Council to concerns regarding the combined Dispatch Program in the spring of 1996. Furthermore, the August 1996 Council-initiated review of emergency medical services in Salt Lake City recommended that the nature and volume of calls justified the separation of the Dispatch Unit. Therefore, in its review with the Council in January 1997, the Fire Department included the separation of Dispatch as a major departmental objective for fiscal year 1997-98.

The Fire Department launched a new organizational structure just prior to fiscal year 1997-98 and duties of the executive staff were reassigned. The fiscal year 1997-98 proposed budget reflected the changes and supported the operational needs and responsibilities of the new organization.

Council Adopted Budget

The Council adopted the Fire Department budget as recommended, including the separation of the Dispatch Units.

Fiscal Year 1998-99

Mayor's Recommended Budget

The Mayor's Recommended Budget for the Fire Department in fiscal year 1998-99 included the following proposals:

- Add new positions to facilitate training and certification of emergency medical personnel and to manage the new Pathway Management² initiative
- Purchase and outfit new apparatus
- Continue to meet the Fire Department's needs so that the City's Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating will remain at Class 2
- Promote an average response time from Dispatch to arrival on all life-threatening calls of less than five minutes
- Allow 90% of fire companies to have a minimum staffing level of four firefighters per unit (apparatus)

Council Adopted Budget

The Council adjusted the \$24,000 accounting error in the Fire Department's capital expenditures with the intention of using the savings for other Council priorities. The Council approved the remainder of the Mayor's Recommended Budget.

The Council adopted the following legislative intent statements:

- *It is the intent of the City Council that the Fire Department Administration develop a plan to address concerns related to the periods before, during, and after the 2002 Olympics. Further, the Council would like to be briefed on the Fire Department's progress with this plan.*

Administration's Response to Council Intent: The Fire Department and all other City departments have been working on their plans for the Olympics. The Administration will present these strategies for handling the special requirements of the 2002 Olympics in an Olympics Master Plan during the budget cycle for FY 1999-2000. The specific details of this plan will evolve over the next three years as information about those special requirements becomes more definitive. The Administration

² Pathway Management is a system that routes incoming emergency calls to match an appropriate response team with the emergency.

proposes that periodic status reports on the progress of this effort will be the mechanism for keeping the Council informed.

- *It is the intent of the City Council that the Administration work towards opening Fire Station #9 in the International Center next to the Airport.*

Administration's Response to Council Intent: The new Fire Station #11 on the east side of the airport will be completed during the fourth quarter (April-June 1999). While its opening will improve emergency response in the growing northwest area of the City, response time to the International Center will decline. In preparation for opening Station #9 in the International Center, the Fire Department has preliminary agreements with the State to acquire surplus modular classrooms. Once installed at the site of the drill tower (1560 South Industrial Road), these modules can serve as interim quarters for the Training Division. With the training function out of Station #9, the building can be refitted from offices and classrooms to an operational station and prepared for opening.

- *It is the intent of the City Council that the Administration explore other sources of revenue and other opportunities to share costs for the Fire Department. For example, is it possible for new developments to pay impact fees for a new fire station or new fire engines?*

Administration's Response to Council Intent: The Administration seeks aggressively to increase the revenue available from non-tax sources for underwriting its fire and emergency medical services. Several concepts with the capacity to attain this goal are under development. We welcome an opportunity to discuss these possibilities when the research and analysis are complete. Current research, analysis and planning are focused on potential partnerships with other fire departments and private industry, including Medical Pathway Management, ambulance company reimbursement, shared training and dispatch, and grant funding.

Fiscal Year 1999-00

Mayor's Recommended Budget

In fiscal year 1999-00, the Mayor's Recommended Budget included the following policy issues:

- Postponed the opening of Fire Station #9 at least one year.
- Funded the purchase of a computer-aided dispatch and records management system.
- Provided \$253,100 of ongoing funding for Olympic planning. One full time equivalent (FTE) sworn employee is proposed to be dedicated full-time to Olympic planning and preparation, with assistance from other department personnel as needed.
- Continued the Fire Department's efforts to further develop the Pathway Management initiative.
- Proposed the continued funding of 2.0 FTE vacant, non-sworn positions, that of a nurse trainer and a research analyst/grants writer.
- Continued response times from Dispatch to arrival of less than five minutes on life-threatening calls.
- Allowed 90% of fire companies to continue to maintain a minimum staffing level of four firefighters per unit (apparatus)

- Maintained a Class 2 Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating, which is evaluated once every ten years. Salt Lake City's rating was evaluated in 1998 and is expected to remain at Class 2 until 2008.

Council Adopted Budget

The City Council adopted the Fire Department budget in concept on June 8, 1999. The budget reflected an overall budget reduction of 1.5%, or \$356,205. The Council also adopted the following legislative intent statements:

- *It is the intent of the City Council that the Administration consider the opening of Fire Station #9 a high priority during fiscal year 2000-01 and that this be accomplished without negatively affecting the Fire Department's response time or minimum staffing levels.*

Administration's Response to Council Intent: The Fire Department is working towards opening Fire Station #9. The station was not approved for opening in fiscal year 2000, but the department will continue to work towards opening the station.

- *It is the intent of the City Council that the Administration provide quarterly status reports regarding the status of the Computer Aided Dispatch/Records Management System, including its compatibility with the proposed Pathway Management initiative and the City's Geographic Information System (GIS) program.*

Administration's Response to Council Intent: The Fire Department is in the beginning stages of implementing a new CAD/RMS System. This system will provide the department with the ability to gather and record data from fire and emergency medical calls. The system chose is from FDM Software. Department and FDM representatives are working together to ensure the CAD/RMS will provide the department and the city with the best system available.

On June 17, 1999, the City Council adopted the final budget, which included amendments to the Fire Department budget. Following Budget Amendment #1 and Budget Amendment #2, the Council made additional adjustments to the Fire Department's budget. The Council restored a Battalion Chief position, \$84,200; restored a vacant Captain position, \$70,800; eliminated a non-sworn vacant nurse trainer position (\$44,500); eliminated a non-sworn vacant research analyst/grants writer position (\$55,000); eliminated a vacant fire inspector position (\$55,400); eliminated one clerk position (\$29,200); reduced travel expenses (\$11,680); reduced office supplies and copy expenses (\$5,425); and eliminated the vacancy/attrition savings (\$50,000). These adjustments resulted in a base budget of \$23,791,553 for the Fire Department.

Fiscal Year 2000-01

Mayor's Recommended Budget

The Mayor's Recommended Budget for the Fire Department in fiscal year 2000-01 included the following proposals:

- Create an ordinance for Fire Emergency Fees resulting in annual revenue of approximately \$125,000. The Administration proposed charging a \$500 fee to property owners for responding to structural fires.
- Create an ordinance for First Response Rescue Service Fees resulting in annual revenue of approximately \$336,600. The Administration proposed charging fees for rescue services provided at vehicle accidents.
- Eliminate 3.0 full-time equivalent vacant positions: Deputy Chief, Office Technician II and Clerk II.
- Did not include funding to open Fire Station #9 at 5822 West Amelia Earhart Drive (International Center), which was built in 1987, used as a training facility and, at the time the budget was under review, housing the Department's communications staff.
- Continue funding for the computer-aided dispatch and records management system (CAD/RMS) approved by the Council during review of the fiscal year 1999-00 budget.
- Provide \$370,095 for funding Olympic planning efforts, an increase of \$116,995 from fiscal year 1999-00. As with the fiscal year 1999-00 budget, one full-time equivalent (FTE) sworn employee was proposed to be dedicated to Olympic planning (\$50,000 of this position is funded through the Olympic Public Safety Command), with assistance from other personnel as needed. For fiscal year 2000-01, it was proposed that an additional 0.50 FTE sworn employee is be dedicated to Olympic planning.
- Continue efforts to further develop the Access 911 (formerly Pathway Management) initiative, a program that allows dispatchers to assess incoming emergency calls and route the calls to an appropriate response team for the reported emergency.
- Meet the department's staffing goal of 90% of fire companies with a minimum staffing level of four firefighters per apparatus.
- Continue response times from Dispatch to arrival of less than five minutes on life-threatening calls.
- Maintain a Class 2 Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating. For comparison purposes, Salt Lake County had a Class 4 ISO rating at the time the budget was under review.

Council Adopted Budget

The Council chose not to adopt ordinances creating two new fees for the Fire Department. The Council has been interested for several years in seeing Fire Station #9 used as a working fire station; however, the Mayor's proposed budget did not include funding to open the station. Due to the Council's interest to open Fire Station #9 justified by growth in the northwest area of the City, the adopted budget included funding of salaries for a recruit training class in March to June 2001 and some one-time equipment costs for Fire Station #9.

The Council adopted a fiscal year 2000-01 Fire Department budget of \$25,299,436, a 6.3% increase over fiscal year 1999-00, and also adopted the following legislative intent statement:

- *It is the intent of the City Council that Fire Station #9 be opened for service by July 1, 2001 using additional revenue the City will receive from the County in relation to the paramedic fees. It is the Council's further intent that opening Fire Station #9 be accomplished without closing any other fire stations, and without negatively affecting the Fire Department's response time or minimum staffing levels.*

Fiscal Year 2001-02

Mayor's Recommended Budget

The Mayor's Recommended Budget for the Fire Department for fiscal year 2001-02 was \$28,416,027 and \$27,060,393 for fiscal year 2002-03. The budget included the following proposals:

- Funding for Fire Station #9, scheduled to open for service on July 1, 2001.
- Meet the department's staffing goal to ensure that 96% of the shifts will have a minimum staffing level of four firefighters per unit (apparatus).
- Include an average response time on life-threatening calls for service of less than or equal to 5 minutes, and will maintain this standard for residents and visitors during the 2002 Winter Olympics.
- Maintain certification as an accredited dispatch center with the National Academy of Emergency Medical Dispatchers.

Council Adopted Budget

The Council adopted the Fire Department budget as recommended and adopted the following legislative intent statement:

- *It is the intent of the Council that the Administration explores the feasibility of training non-sworn civilian staff or volunteers to perform community education services to Salt Lake City schools.*

Fiscal Years 2002-03

Mayor's Recommended Budget

The Mayor's Recommended Budget for the Fire Department proposed a budget of \$26,759,046 with 360 FTE positions. The major recommendations were:

- \$(125,000) – Elimination of dedicated staffing for the CERT program (3 FTEs through attrition).
- \$(118,962) – Employee actual pay increases and benefit costs are less than the amount estimated in the biennial budget. (2 FTEs layoff)

Council Adopted Budget

The Council adopted a budget of \$26,370,546 for the Fire Department with 360.50 FTE positions. The Council accepted the Mayor's recommendations and also added 0.50 FTE for a part time CERT program coordinator.

Fiscal Years 2003-04

Mayor's Recommended Budget

The Mayor's Recommended Budget for the Fire Department proposed a budget of \$27,528,366 with 358 FTE positions. The major recommendations were:

- Elimination of positions – The Fire Department recommended the elimination of the Tech Support Services Manager in the Communications Division. (This position was eliminated during a fiscal year 2002-2003 budget amendment to address revenue shortfalls) The department also recommended that 1.50 FTE Fire Prevention Specialist positions be eliminated from the Fire Prevention/Community Education Division. This will result in the layoff of the fire education specialist position.
- Attrition – The Fire Department is showing attrition expense increases of \$642,236. The Administration is reviewing this amount and will be providing additional information during the briefing. There is a possibility that the City's accounting/staffing software incorrectly duplicated salary information.
- Pension/Insurance rate changes – The Fire Department recommended increases to the pension rate and insurance rate expenditure categories due to higher costs to the City. Health insurance is projected to increase by 2%. Pension expenses are expected to increase 8.7% and 10.7%, firefighter pension expenses will remain at the same rate.
- 4 Handed Crews – The Fire Department recommended the continuation of the 4 handed crew staffing arrangement. The department indicates that on 99% of the City there are 4 handed staffing crews. The Council may wish to consider the effectiveness of the 4 handed crew concept and confirm that the proposed staffing will be sufficient to maintain 4 handed crews on all of the apparatus. The Council may also wish to request information on the extent to which the Fire Department needed to rely on overtime to achieve the 4 handed status, and information on whether there are increased administrative costs with managing the program.
- Salary Increases – The Fire Department recommended an increase of \$667,623 in salary expenses. This increase is approximately half of the department budget increase. The Council may wish to review the overtime expenses of the department in relation to the 4 handed crew concept and the proposed salary increases. The proposed personal service cost increase assumes a 3% increase in base salaries plus merit increases for employees covered by union contracts.

Council Adopted Budget

The Council adopted a budget for the Fire Department that totaled \$26,947,801 and had 359 FTE positions.

The Council also considered Legislative Intent statements during fiscal year 2002-03 and 03-04. The following intent statements were adopted in June 2003. They have been responded to by the Administration but have not yet been closed by the Council.

Community Education in the Fire Department - *It is the intent of the City Council that the Administration explores the feasibility of training non-sworn civilian staff or volunteers to perform community education services to Salt Lake City schools.*

Results/Steps Taken For fiscal year 2002-2003 the Department has one non-sworn individual who is responsible for teaching fire safety within the schools; this position will be eliminated in fiscal year 2003-2004. The Department also employed a retired firefighter on a per class basis to teach other classes, but funding for this has been eliminated. The Department will continue to look for more cost effective ways to provide community education to the citizens of Salt Lake City. The Department is pursuing the option of having on-duty firefighters perform public education to the schools to fill the need created in fiscal year 2003-2004.

Overtime within the Fire Department - *It is the intent of the City Council that the Fire Department continues to take measures to reduce the reliance on overtime and submit quarterly reports to the Council outlining total amount spent for constant staffing at a straight-time rate and amount spent at an overtime rate.*

Results/Steps Taken: The Department has implemented full staffing using a combination of straight-time pay and overtime pay. During fiscal year 2002-2003 the Department has maintained full staffing on 99.1% of all apparatus while approximately 85% of the Department's overtime has been at the straight-time rate.