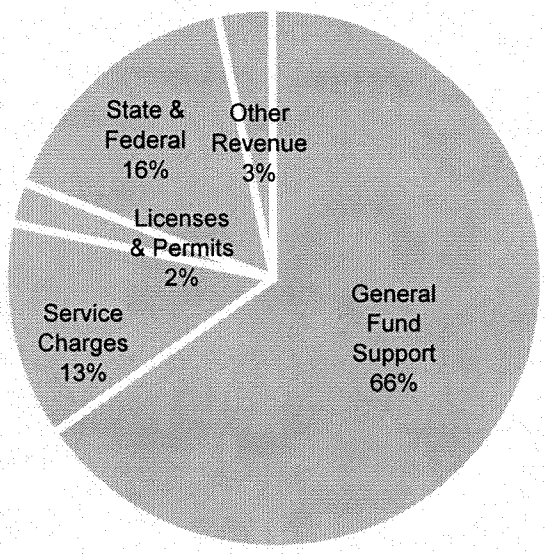
MISSION STATEMENT

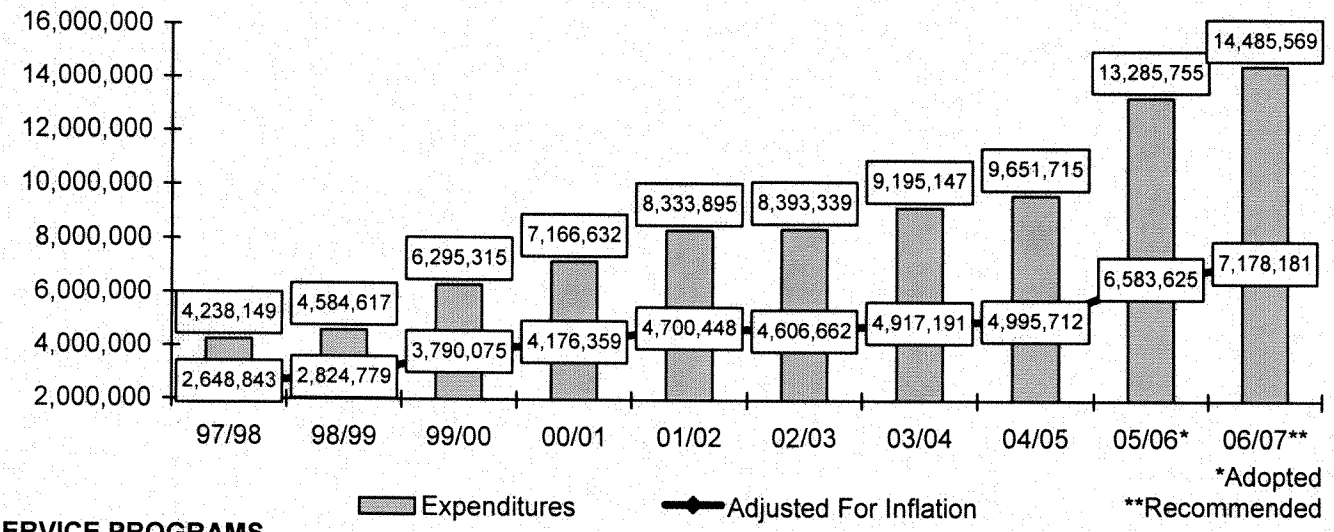
To serve and safeguard the community from the impacts of fire, emergency injury and illness, and other physical dangers by providing emergency fire/rescue response, public education, planning, and prevention for the County of San Luis Obispo and its residents.

Financial Summary	2005-06 Budget	2005-06 Projected	2006-07 Requested	2006-07 Recommended	Change From 2005-06
Revenues	$ 4,363,237	$ 5,969,843	$ 5,040,074	$ 5,040,074	$ 676,837
Services and Supplies	12,215,755	12,937,585	13,748,538	13,635,569	1,419,814
Fixed Assets	1,070,000	2,056,618	830,000	850,000	(220,000)
**Gross Expenditures	$ 13,285,755	$ 14,994,203	$ 14,578,538	$ 14,485,569	$ 1,199,814
General Fund Support (G.F.S.)	$ 8,922,518	$ 9,024,360	$ 9,538,464	$ 9,445,495	$ 522,977

Source of Funds



10 Year Expenditures Adjusted For Inflation



SERVICE PROGRAMS

Emergency Response

Provide a well trained and disciplined emergency response team that is properly equipped and prepared to command and control fires, technical rescues, medical emergencies, vehicle accidents, floods, airport crash/rescues, radiological emergencies, hazardous material spills, and other emergencies.

Total Expenditures: $13,428,247 Total Staffing (FTE): 80.75

Prevention/Code Enforcement/Investigation

Promote a safe community by protecting the public health and safety from direct and indirect impact of fires and other emergencies through planning, investigation, public education, hazard and risk reduction, and code enforcement.

Total Expenditures: $560,888 Total Staffing (FTE): 5.0

Training

Train career and volunteer firefighters to enhance skills in firefighting, hazardous materials emergencies, emergency medical service; cliff, flood, and surf rescue, radiological emergencies, heavy fire equipment operation, incident command system, and airport crash/rescue/firefighting.

Total Expenditures: $496,434 Total Staffing (FTE): 4.0

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

The primary mission of the Fire Department is the protection of life and property. The department accomplishes this goal by providing a number of services including but not limited to fire/rescue response, advanced life support, public education, code enforcement, planning, and prevention. Our goal is to provide the residents of our county with the greatest level of protection possible in an efficient and cost effective manner. We are committed to seeking every opportunity for continual quality improvement.

Examples of results achieved in the past year FY 05/06

Goal 1: Customer Service –

a. Developed and distributed evacuation plans for the Parkhill and Avila Valley areas. These plans provide residents with vital survival information and directions for safe evacuation procedures in the event of emergency.

b. Worked extensively with the Fire Safe Council in providing public education, defensible space around homes, brush chipping programs, developing fuel breaks, and improving emergency egress for our county residents.

Goal 2: **Internal Business Improvements –**

a. Completed the replacement of the dispatch system in our emergency command center. The project included the installation of a new computer aided dispatch system, a new radio system, and new dispatch consoles. This new system ensures quicker reflex times from 911 calls to emergency equipment response.

b. In cooperation with the County Health Officer we established policy allowing our Firefighter/Paramedics to provide advanced life support services on an "as available basis" in areas of the county that normally receive basic life support services. This is accomplished by providing a mobile cache of advanced life support equipment that can be utilized by our Firefighter/Paramedics when assigned to provide coverage outside their regular duty station.

Goal 3: **Finance –**

a. Obtained $1,125,170 in Homeland Security and Assistance to Firefighter grant funding revenue to facilitate the purchase of emergency apparatus, protective equipment, fire shelters and facility improvements.

b. Obtained $1,000,000 in State funding for the installation of the new emergency dispatch system. This reduced the County's contribution to only $35,000 to date.

Goal 4: **Learning and Growth –**

a. Developed comprehensive pre-fire plan for the Parkhill area. This plan is easily distributed to incoming emergency responders and provides vital information on predicted fire behavior for the area, tactics and strategy, evacuation plans, fire roads, and water sources.

b. Provided over 62,000 student hours of local, state and federal mandated training including participation in numerous multi-agency disaster preparedness exercises.

Major Focus for 06/07

The department will continue to focus on organizational efficiency and enhancing customer service delivery systems within available resources. The Emphasis will be on long range planning, public education, and staff development. Major efforts for 06/07 include:

Customer Service –

a. Expand C.E.R.T. (Community Emergency Response Team) training program countywide. This important training program teaches residents how to react, be self sufficient, and render aid to their community in the event of an emergency or disaster.

b. Completion of a North Coast emergency response plan. This comprehensive automatic-aid plan between the County, Morro Bay, Cayucos, Cambria, and Hearst Castle Fire Departments provides for enhanced service levels by automatically responding the closest emergency responders irregardless of jurisdictional boundaries.

Internal Business Improvements –

a. Development of a comprehensive fire department master plan. The purpose is to identify focus areas key to maintaining and improving customer service and to ensure our residents continue to receive excellent emergency services in to the future.

b. Implementation of a new standardized Resource Ordering System (R.O.S.). This system is being adopted by local, state, and federal agencies to streamline the ordering of emergency resources.

Finance –

a. Creation of an Administrative Officer position to manage increased work load and provide day to day oversight of the personnel and finance sections. This will reduce processing times and allow for increased fiscal efficiencies by providing full-time budget and personnel cost management.

b. All full-time staff are being scheduled to receive 8 hours of finance training. This will provide increased awareness of the budget process and finance system, resulting in increased fiscal efficiency.

Learning and Growth –

a. We will be assigning a Fire Captain/Paramedic position to our Training Bureau to ensure all staff receives the highest levels of basic and advanced life support training available. This will be accomplished by redirecting existing staff thus eliminating the need to hire an additional position.

b. Our graphic information systems, training, and operations divisions will continue to expand the development of pre-fire plans for communities countywide. These plans provide a vital training tool for our staff by providing information on predicted fire behavior for an area, tactics and strategy, evacuation plans, fire roads, and water sources.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommended General Fund Support level is $522,977 (5%) above FY 05-06 levels. The number includes an overall increase in expense of approximately $1.1 million (9%) over the budgeted expenses in FY 05-06. Recommended revenues are $676,837 (15%) higher than the revenues budgeted in FY 05-06.

This budget funds the existing service levels provided by the County Fire Department and recommends two new positions. Labor costs in the recommended budget are about $1.04 million more than FY 05-06. The labor cost increase is the result of three components. The first is an increase of $616,000 for the contract labor expenses for the County contract with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF). The second is a $234,693 increase in fire protection labor costs for the Los Osos Community Services District (LOCSD). The LOCSD contracts with the County for fire protection services. The expense is offset by the payment made by the district. The third component is the addition of $196,706 to fund two new staff positions requested by the County Fire Department. One new position is to assist with administrative and fiscal functions. Uniformed staff is currently handling fiscal and administrative functions. By using non-uniformed staff to fill this function, the department will be better able to deal with the increased complexity related to fiscal and contract administration and will allow the reallocation of one uniformed staff to other fire protection functions. The second new staff member is a geographic information specialist. Contract and temporary help have fulfilled this function for the past several years. Creation of this new position will provide consistent, qualified staff to assist with the development of maps and information related to the development of countywide fire protection plans.

Recommended fixed assets include the purchase of one replacement fire truck at $400,000, one replacement water tender at $300,000, one replacement utility vehicle at $35,000, two replacement paramedic heart monitors totaling $40,000 and $75,000 for a new computer aided dispatch interface.

Recommended revenues will increase by $676,837 over the FY 05-06 budgeted amounts. The increases are related to payments by the LOCSD and CSA 9i that offset the contract to provide fire services to the district and Zone 9i area just outside of the LOCSD boundaries. The increase in revenue is primarily related to greater funding from Proposition 172 revenue (the ½ cent sales tax for public safety) and plan check fees.

GOALS AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Department Goal: Effectively manage and mitigate emergencies within nationally recognized response time standards.

Communitywide Result Link: A safe community, A healthy community.

1. Performance Measure: Average response time to emergencies by stations staffed with volunteers (Morro/Torro and Oak Shores).

01-02 Actual Results	02-03 Actual Results	03-04 Actual Results	04-05 Actual Results	05-06 Adopted	05-06 Projected Results	06-07 Target
18 min.	17.5 min.	15 min	15 min	15 min	18 min	15 min

What: Response time is the time elapsed between receiving a 911 emergency call and Fire Department resources arriving at the scene of the emergency.

Why: Nationally accepted standards identify that response times in excess of 5 minutes dramatically reduce emergency responders' effectiveness in mitigating the effects of cardiac arrest or spread of fire.

How are we doing? Current average is 18 minutes. Both the Morro/Torro and Oak Shores stations experienced a significant increase in average response times this year. While Nationally recognized standards call for an average 5 minute response time 90% of the time, it is unrealistic to expect to meet this standard in all rural areas. This should, however remain the standard by which we measure our effectiveness. The instability and availability of an all volunteer workforce combined with an increasing call volume and long travel distances are the main contributing factors in the longer than average response times experienced this year.

2. Performance Measure: Average response time to emergencies by stations with part-time staff coverage (Cambria, Carrizo Plain, Creston, San Luis Obispo, and Shandon).

01-02 Actual Results	02-03 Actual Results	03-04 Actual Results	04-05 Actual Results	05-06 Adopted	05-06 Projected Results	06-07 Target
15 min	14.5 min	13 min	13 min	13 min	14 min	13 min

What: Response time is the time elapsed between receiving a 911 emergency call and Fire Department resources arriving at the scene of the emergency.

Why: Nationally accepted standards identify that response times in excess of 5 minutes dramatically reduce emergency responders' effectiveness in mitigating the effects of cardiac arrest or spread of fire.

How are we doing? Current average is 14 minutes. The range averages 10 minutes in San Luis Obispo to 21 minutes in California Valley. While Nationally recognized standards call for an average 5 minute response time 90% of the time, it is unrealistic to expect to meet this standard in all rural areas. This should, however, remain the standard by which we measure our effectiveness. The fact that these stations are only staffed part-time or occasionally go uncovered, combined with an increasing call volume and long travel distances appear to be the main contributing factors in the increased average response times this year.

3. Performance Measure: Average response time to emergencies by stations with full-time staff coverage (Airport, Avila Valley, Heritage Ranch, Meridian, Nipomo, Nipomo Mesa, Parkhill, and Paso Robles).

01-02 Actual Results	02-03 Actual Results	03-04 Actual Results	04-05 Actual Results	05-06 Adopted	05-06 Projected Results	06-07 Target
11 min	10.5 min	10.5 min	10 min	10 min	10.5 min	10 min

What: Response time is the time elapsed between receiving a 911 emergency call and Fire Department resources arriving at the scene of the emergency

Why: Nationally accepted standards identify that response times in excess of 5 minutes dramatically reduce emergency responders' effectiveness in mitigating the effects of cardiac arrest or spread of fire.

How are we doing? Current average is 10 minutes. The range averages 8 minutes in Nipomo to 14 minutes in Park Hill. While Nationally recognized standards call for an average 5 minute response time 90% of the time, it is unrealistic to expect to meet this standard in all rural areas. This should, however remain the standard by which we measure our effectiveness. An increase in back-to-back emergency incidents due to an increasing call volume appears to be a contributing factor to the slight increase in response times this year.

Department Goal: Effectively manage and mitigate emergencies within nationally recognized response time standards.
Communitywide Result Link: A safe community, A healthy community.

4. Performance Measure: Annual fire loss per thousand population.

01-02 Actual Results	02-03 Actual Results	03-04 Actual Results	04-05 Actual Results	05-06 Adopted	05-06 Projected Results	06-07 Target
$30,000	$30,000	$33,600	$42,663	$30,000	$27,300	$30,000

What: Property lost to fire in relation to community population. Includes structure, vehicle, and wildland responsibilities.

Why: Fire loss trends are an indicator of fire suppression and public education program effectiveness.

How are we doing? Our 5 year average for fire loss per thousand population has been $30,000. This past year we experienced a slightly lower than average level of fire activity. We believe that a public education effort by the Fire Dept. and Fire Safe Council to provide adequate clearance around homes was a contributing factor in this success.

5. Performance Measure: Number of fire related deaths per 10,000 population.

01-02 Actual Results	02-03 Actual Results	03-04 Actual Results	04-05 Actual Results	05-06 Adopted	05-06 Projected Results	06-07 Target
.5	0	.125	0	0	.125	0

What: Fire related death rate in relation to community population. Includes structure, wildland, and vehicle fires.

Why: Fire related death trends are an indicator of fire suppression and public education program effectiveness.

How are we doing? The national average is .15 fire deaths per 10,000 population. There was 1 fire death this past year in County Fire jurisdiction.

6. Performance Measure: Number of firefighters per capita.

01-02 Actual Results	02-03 Actual Results	03-04 Actual Results	04-05 Actual Results	05-06 Adopted	05-06 Projected Results	06-07 Target
.9 per 1000	.9 per 1000	.75 per 1000	.75 per 1000	.75 per 1000	.75 per 1000	.75 per 1000

What: The number of fire department personnel in relation to community population.

Why: The fire department strives to provide cost effective service. The number of firefighters per capita is one reflection of the fire department's efficiency.

How are we doing? Nationally recognized standards identify 1 to 1.5 firefighters per 1,000 population as the optimum fire department staffing level for a community such as ours. As the population of our county continues to grow we will need to address the issue of our lower than average staffing levels.