



CITY OF

NEWPORT BEACH

City Council Staff Report

June 10, 2025
Agenda Item No. 17

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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TITLE: Proposed Relocation of Newport Beach Fire Station No. 3 to 1550 Avocado Avenue

ABSTRACT:

The Newport Beach Fire Department (NBFD) recently conducted a response time analysis for Fire Station No. 3 to evaluate the optimal location for serving Newport Center and the surrounding neighborhoods. The study concluded that relocating Fire Station No. 3 from its current site at 868 Santa Barbara Drive to 1550 Avocado Avenue would significantly improve emergency response times for both residents and businesses in the area. To support the NBFD's long-term objective of enhancing public safety, staff recommends that the City Council send a letter to the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) requesting its collaboration and support in facilitating the relocation of Fire Station No. 3 to the proposed Avocado Avenue site.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) Determine this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because this action will not result in a physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly; and
- b) Authorize the City Council to submit a letter to the Orange County Transportation Authority requesting its consideration and support in facilitating the relocation of Fire Station No. 3 to the proposed to 1550 Avocado Avenue site.

DISCUSSION:

The Newport Beach Fire Department (NBFD) currently operates Fire Station No. 3 at 868 Santa Barbara Drive, adjacent to the Police Department headquarters. Recently, the NBFD conducted an analysis that focused on how it could reduce response times and improve public safety.

Based on this analysis, 1550 Avocado Avenue was identified as the optimal site. The current station is approximately 2.5 miles from the Port Streets neighborhood, resulting in response times that can exceed the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) 4-minute standard (NFPA 1710). Relocating to 1550 Avocado Avenue would reduce that distance to approximately 1.2 miles, cutting response times to an estimated 3 to 4 minutes — an improvement of 40-50%.

This reduction in travel time has life-saving implications. For instance, in cardiac arrest cases, each minute lost reduces survival chances by up to 10%. Similarly, fires can reach flashover in under five minutes, making early arrival critical to containing damage and protecting lives. Relocating Station 3 would significantly improve service to underserved areas including the Port Streets, Bonita Canyon, and Yacht Street neighborhoods, which are among the station's highest call-volume areas.

The Avocado Avenue site also offers better access to major roadways, enhancing citywide coverage and response reliability. Given these operational benefits, staff recommends the City Council send a letter to OCTA requesting its consideration and support for relocating Fire Station No. 3 to 1550 Avocado Avenue. This location would better serve the community and align with the Fire Department's long-term public safety goals.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact related to this item.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

Staff recommends the City Council find this action is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly. Should any future project move forward at the 1550 Avocado Avenue site, it would be subject to appropriate environmental analysis and full compliance with all applicable environmental laws and regulations prior to approval or implementation.

NOTICING:

The agenda item has been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which the City Council considers the item).