

# SIERRA MADRE FIRE DEPARTMENT 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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|                              |    |
|------------------------------|----|
| Fire Chiefs Message          | 2  |
| Mission, Vision, Core Values | 4  |
| Department History           | 5  |
| Department Overview          | 9  |
| Administration               | 10 |
| Operations                   | 11 |
| Emergency Medical Services   | 12 |
| Training                     | 14 |
| Fire Prevention              | 15 |
| Financial Summary            | 16 |
| Notable Incidents            | 17 |
| Community Outreach           | 18 |



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

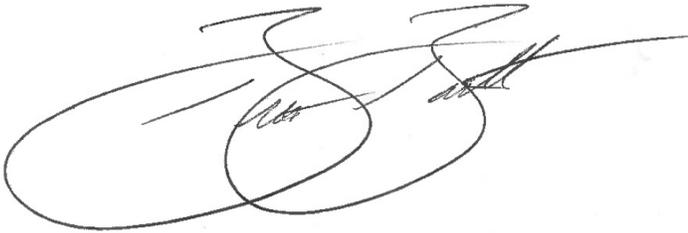
On behalf of the men and women of the Sierra Madre Fire Department, I am delighted to present the 2020 Annual Report. The contents of this report highlight many accomplishments achieved during the year. These successes exhibit the dedication, effectiveness, integrity, and compassion from all members of your Fire Department.

This past year contested our world, country, community, our loved ones, and all of us as individuals. We all have undergone tremendous challenges, that have stretched us both mentally and spiritually. Locally, from the COVID-19 pandemic, to September's Bobcat Fire we found ourselves concerned and anxious. However, in true Sierra Madre fashion, we united to look after one another and spread care to our neighbors. All the while, your Fire Department has been alongside you throughout it all and have operated determinedly to ensure the safety of our community.

Your Department strives to continue the highest degree of service to our brilliant community and its visitors. We hold this honor with great privilege! As the Fire Chief, I am exceptionally proud of every member, and the devotion they have for ministering care to our beautiful foothill village.

I am grateful for you, the City Council, the City Manager, and the City Staff for the continued support of the Sierra Madre Fire Department and its members. Such cooperation profoundly allows us to realize the level of service warranted by this community.

With True Regard,



Brent Bartlett  
Fire Chief



## MISSION

The Sierra Madre Fire Department is committed to protecting life, property, and our environment through compassionate service.

## VISION

The Sierra Madre Fire Department is dedicated to remaining a progressive, cost-effective, and innovative fire department that ensures a safe and inclusive environment for our community through exceptional customer service.

## CORE VALUES

**Honor** – adhering to the highest standard, both morally and ethically.

**Integrity** – based on trust and accountability through service.

**Respect** – to self and community, maintaining a department of teamwork and growth.

**Compassion** – treating everyone with kindness and empathy.



## DEPARTMENT HISTORY

On January 21st, 1921 a defective flue sparked a devastating fire in the Sierra Madre Bakery located on Windsor Lane. At the time, no organized Fire Department existed within the City of Sierra Madre, and residents relied on the assistance of the Pasadena and Monrovia Fire Departments. On the morning of January 21st, the Monrovia Fire Department responded to the call for aid and arrived after 30 minutes. The Pasadena Fire Department was unable to respond for several hours.

Seeing the need for a local fire agency, residents of Sierra Madre organized the first Volunteer Fire Department. At the Department's inception, over 50 residents petitioned for membership, until total volunteers grew to over 200 members.

Membership was eventually limited to only 20 active members, all of whom had to live and work in town. In the 1950's, membership expanded to include 10 auxiliary members.

Throughout the 20's and 30's, the Department became an organized force in the community. The fledgling Department planned activities to encourage recruitment and volunteered their services to many events in town. Members of the Sierra Madre Fire Department were involved in many regional Firefighting groups, and were even present for the founding of the California State Firefighters' Association. Until 2019, the Sierra Madre Fire Department was the only department in the State of California to maintain 100% membership in the CSFA since it was established in 1922.

In 1928, a new City Hall building was established at 55 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. In addition to government offices, it also housed the first official Fire Station. An air siren on top of the building was used to alert volunteer firefighters to an emergency. This siren was used and tested daily until August 1940, when it was replaced by a Diaphone Fire Horn. In addition to replacing the air siren, the new horn was able to replace an alert system used by the telephone company's central switchboard by using a series of coded blasts to communicate the general location of a fire.

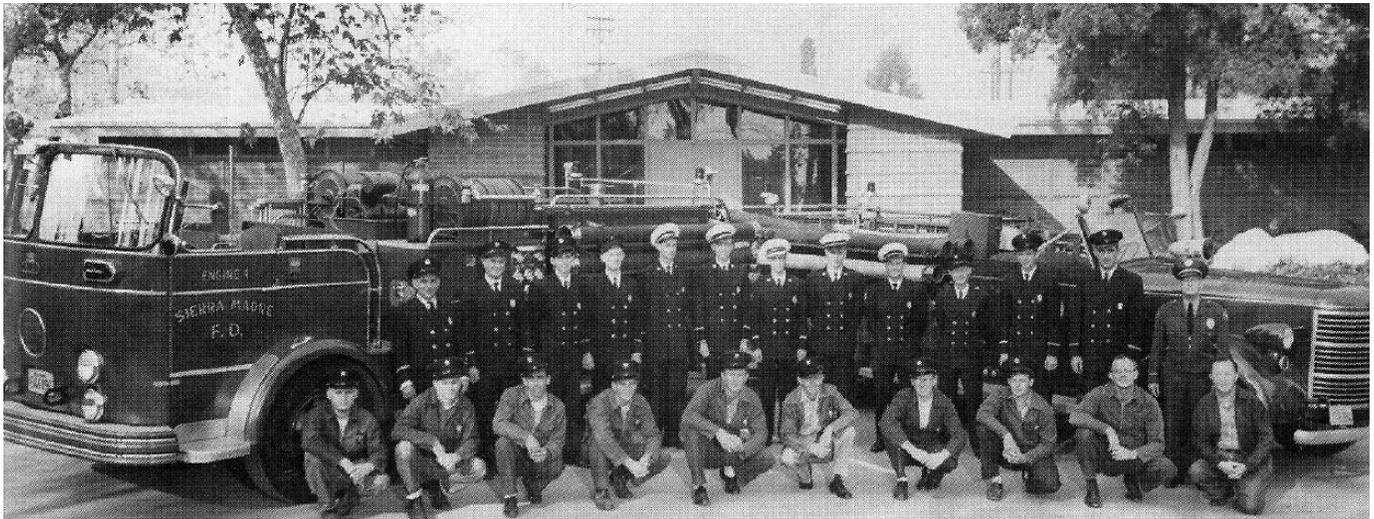
The City's first EMS program was established in 1929, when the Volunteer Fire Department built a Buick First Aid Wagon out of a donated chassis. The rig was designed to be a combination fire truck, first aid kit, resuscitator and stretcher. The First Aid Wagon could be used as an ambulance as well as to respond to fires. In 1933, the Volunteer Fire Department responded to a request for aid from the American Red Cross after the Long Beach Earthquake. Sierra Madre personnel assisted the Long Beach Fire Department for 36 hours and administered aid to 75 victims of the earthquake.

Through the second half of the 20th Century, the Volunteer Fire Department went through many changes.

The Department moved headquarters to the current location at 242 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. In 1973 the Volunteer Department enrolled two members into Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training at Pasadena City College. By 1976, six members were certified EMTs and were responding to over 300 calls a year. In the same year, seeing the need for more advanced care, the Kiwanis Club donated the Department's first Basic Life Support (BLS) vehicle. In the mid 80's the Volunteer Fire Department began recruiting women. And in 1987 the Department hosted the first annual Fire Prevention Festival.

In 1999 the Volunteer Fire Department contracted with the Verdugo Fire Communications Center for dispatch services. This membership added the Department into a mutual aid network that currently supports 13 agencies within the greater Los Angeles area.





As a result, the Fire Department increased hiring standards to meet those of neighboring agencies as well as provide a higher standard of service to the residents of Sierra Madre. The Fire Department now required all potential volunteer firefighters to be graduates of an accredited Fire Academy, possess a valid State of California EMT license, and complete State of California Firefighter 1 requirements within 18 months of hire.

By the end of the 1990's volunteer membership in the Department had begun to decline. By 2006, the City saw the need to hire a full-time Fire Chief to supervise the functioning of the Department. One year later, the Department hired a full-time Paramedic Coordinator to oversee the new Paramedic Program.

The Paramedic Program debuted on June 1st, 2007. Sierra Madre was the last city in Los Angeles County to have its own paramedics.

Seeing a need for advanced medical care within the community, the Fire Department developed a Paramedic Program based on the model created by the La Habra Heights Fire Department. The Fire Department employed part-time Paramedics to operate an Advanced Life Support (ALS) rescue ambulance and provide a higher level of care that can include cardiac monitoring, intubation, IV therapy, and administration of medication.

By 2012, the Fire Department had employed 3 full-time Captains and 1 part-time Captain to oversee daily operational duties. In the same year, due to a decreased number of qualified Engineers, the Department created the position of part-time Fire Engineer. The Department employed a mix of Full-Time, Part-Time, and Volunteer staff to crew one Type 1 Engine and one Type III Rescue Ambulance. In 2015, an automatic aid agreement was entered with Los Angeles County Fire Department.



As a result of the recent transition, on January 1, 2020, the Sierra Madre Fire Department entered into an Area C Unified Response trial period. This trial period was in place for six months. The trial allowed the department to demonstrate its capabilities with regard to inter-operability within Area C, and neighboring agencies.

As part of the agreement, Sierra Madre would respond to incidents located within the Chantry Flat Recreation Area. Los Angeles County personnel would then automatically respond to all 1st alarm fire incidents within the boundaries of Sierra Madre. In the same year, Battalion Chief Services were contracted to the Cities of Arcadia and Monrovia. Prior to contracting services, 3 residents volunteered over 6,500 hours a year to the Department. On June 13, 2019, the City acknowledged the Sierra Madre Professional Firefighters Association, L5216, as the designated bargaining unit.

September 1, 2019, marked the day the Sierra Madre Fire Department transitioned to a Full-Time/Career Department. It was by the devoted years of steadfast volunteers, and extremely devoted part-time personnel, that the department was able to achieve such a level of service to the community. And for this, we will forever commemorate those that came before us.

July 1, 2020, the Sierra Madre Fire Department was fully accepted into Area C Unified Response. This milestone in the department's history now expands the amount and availability of personnel, as well as, equipment from twelve additional departments that can be used daily for assistance, and without delay. We are pleased to be part of such a valued resource to our residents, businesses, and visitors.



# DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Sierra Madre Fire Department Station 41, located at 242 W Sierra Madre Blvd, proudly protects those residing, working and visiting the City of Sierra Madre from its central location in downtown. The Department services a primarily residential area of 3.2 square miles with a wildland/urban interface to more than 11,000 residents. The Department is divided into 5 divisions: Administration, Operations, Emergency Medical Services, Training, and Prevention.





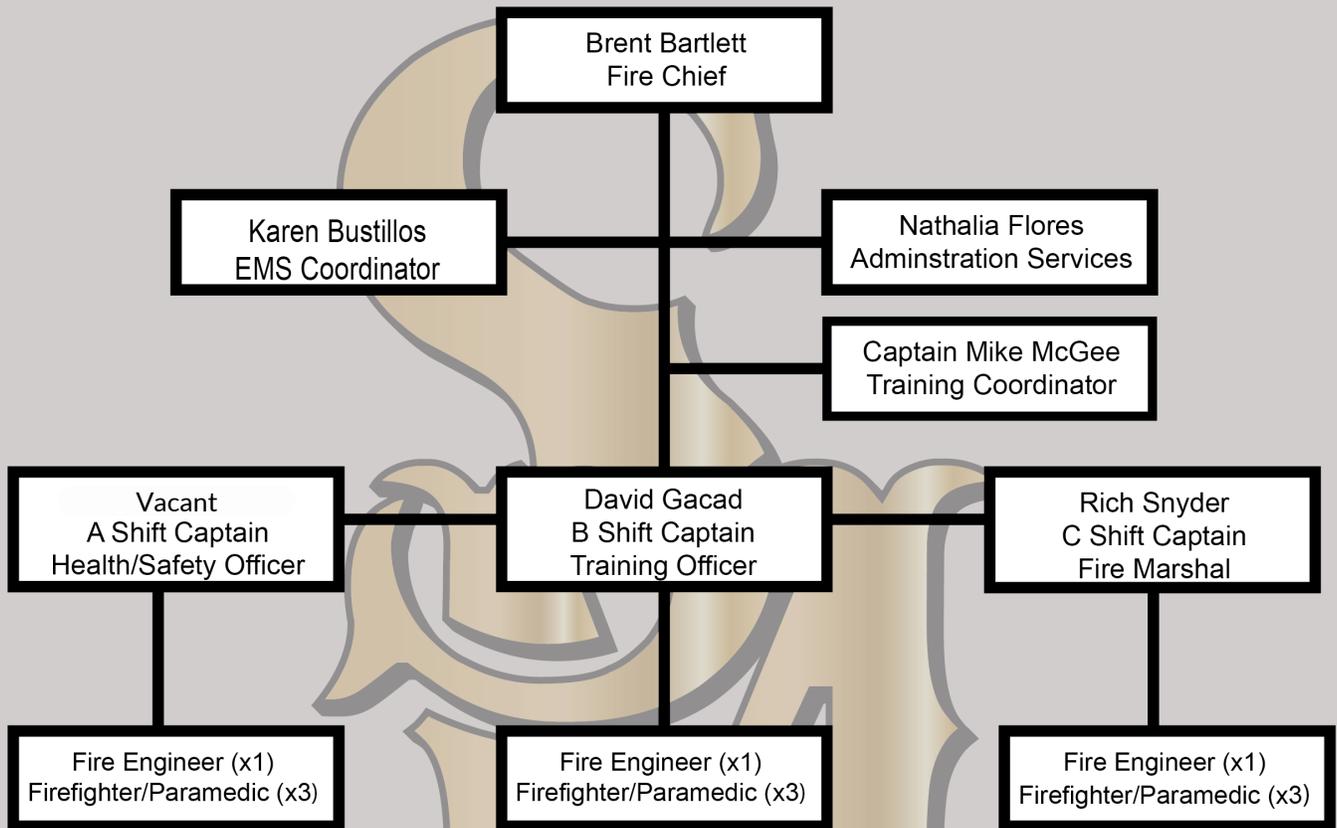
# ADMINISTRATION

The Administration Division oversees the strategic planning, policies, procedures, rules and regulations within the Fire Department, including fire suppression, emergency medical services, prevention activities, and public information. This division supervises department staff, coordinates activities with other departments, and is responsible for the completion of highly complex assignments, as well as staff assistance to the City Manager and City Council. Important responsibilities include budget completion and management, personnel and payroll administration, accounts payable, records management, and organizational development. Administration works together as a team with each division of the department in order to provide the highest level of service with the resources available.



# OPERATIONS

The Sierra Madre Fire Department is comprised of 17 full-time personnel: 1 fire chief, 1 administrative aide, 3 fire captains, 3 engineers, and 9 firefighter paramedics. The department operates on a 3 platoon 48/96 schedule. Each platoon works a straight 48-hour shift every 4 days. Battalion Chief coverage, for larger incidents, is provided by a contract agreement for incident management by the City of Arcadia. In 2020 the Department ran 1,150 calls: 64 % Emergency Medical Services, 3% Fire, 11% Service Call/Public Assistance, 9% Good Intent Call, 8% Hazardous Conditions, 5% False Alarm/False Call.





## EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

On June 1, 2007, the Sierra Madre Fire Department began the City's first Paramedic EMS Service. Our emergency medical providers are on duty for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Currently the fire department is staffed with 11 State of California licensed/Los Angeles accredited paramedics. All remaining personnel are minimally certified at the Emergency Medical Technician level.

In 2020, the Sierra Madre Fire Department responded to 736 calls for emergency medical service, accounting for 64% of total calls for the department. The Sierra Madre Fire Department is currently comprised of 4 EMT's and 11 Paramedics with a range of experience in all aspects of emergency medicine. All personnel are certified through the State of California, and are accredited through the County of Los Angeles Department of Health Services. In 2020, the Sierra Madre Fire Department medical program moved forward in obtaining non-required programs including a mechanical CPR device and Continuing Education program, in order to better serve its citizens.

## **LUCAS**

The LUCAS device is a new addition to the department that goes above and beyond normal operating procedures to increase survival rates in critical patients. The mechanical compression device provides consistent, high-quality, uninterrupted compressions to patients in Cardiac Arrest. Studies show that systems of care implementing LUCAS together with a comprehensive approach to resuscitation have shown increased survival rates as well as improved neurological outcomes compared to historical data. Additionally, LUCAS has shown to create more blood flow to the brain both in humans and experimental studies compared to manual CPR. The LUCAS device was obtained by a \$15,000 grant awarded by the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation. The Firehouse grant application was written and completed by Sierra Madre Fire Department staff.



## **Continuing Education**

In order to maintain licensure Paramedics must attend a minimum of 48 hours of continuing education every 2 years. Additionally, EMT licensed personnel must maintain a minimum of 24 hours of continuing education every 2 years.

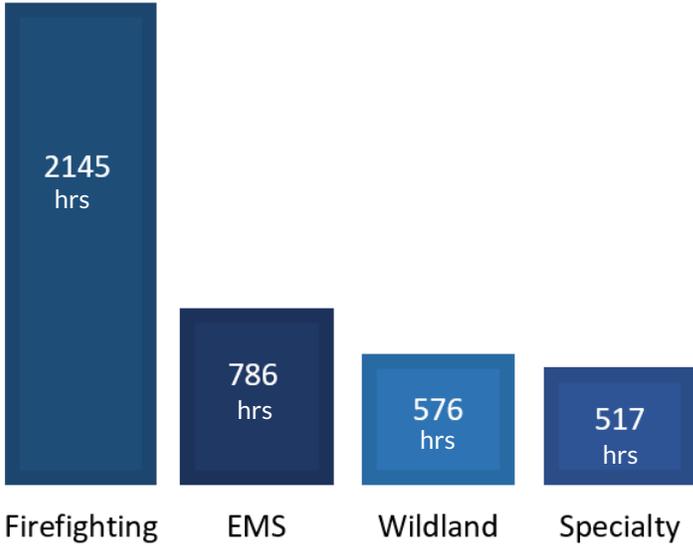
In 2020 the Sierra Madre Fire Department implemented its Continuing Education program. This program provides all personnel with education on critical medical topics and refreshes skills throughout the year. Educational speakers include Doctors, Nurses, professional experts and Paramedic staff giving live lecture on important topics in medicine to ensure all personnel are continuously up to date on the best medical practices and care.



# TRAINING

The Sierra Madre Fire Department’s Training Division promotes the improvement of public service through the facilitation of daily training drills and exercises, to ensure that consistent and effective emergency services continue to be provided to the citizens and visitors of Sierra Madre. The Training Division continually strives to assist its personnel by providing a structured training program and quality learning environment. This division focuses on developing and strengthening each members essential job skills, and insures all members are capable of performing the highest quality of public service. The Training Division is overseen by the Training Captain and supported by the Training Coordinator.

**2020 Training Breakdown**  
**4,024 Total Hours**



# FIRE PREVENTION

The Fire Department is responsible for safeguarding the community through adherence to fire regulations and hazard mitigation. Annual visits and fire safety inspections are conducted in businesses, apartment buildings, childcare facilities and schools.



The Fire Prevention Division strives to prevent the development of conditions that could lead to large fire losses. The safest and most cost effective method in minimizing losses from fire is to prevent them from occurring in the first place. The Fire Prevention Division takes a proactive approach to fire and life safety through- **Education, Engineering and Enforcement.**

**Education:** Fire Safety programs for adults and children, Wild-Fire Preparedness and Loss Prevention, Juvenile Fire Setter Intervention and Disaster Preparedness are among the many programs offered to the community.

**Engineering:** Review of building construction plans, fire sprinkler and fire alarm installations, as well as pre-fire and disaster planning.

**Enforcement:** Fire and life-safety inspections of assembly and multi-residential properties, as well as hazardous brush mitigation in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI).



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The Sierra Madre Fire Department is primarily funded by the General Fund and supplemented by EMS billing. In 2020, the Department received \$402,209.70 in revenue from ambulance transports. The EMS transport billing covers the personnel costs to staff 2 single-function Full-Time Los Angeles accredited Paramedics. In 2020, the Fire Department was deployed on 4 Strike Teams. The revenue, totaling to approximately \$136,000 will be represented in the 2021-2022 Fiscal Year Revenue in July 2021.

**2019/2020 Budget: \$2,321,950.00**

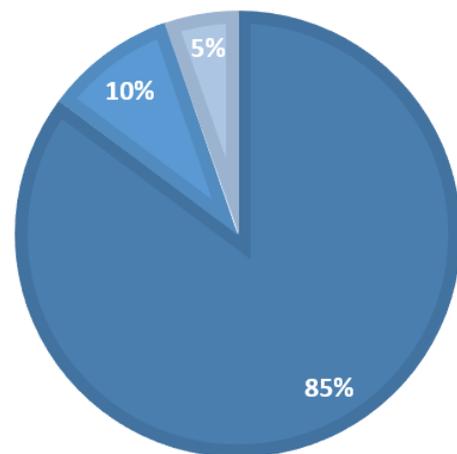
**Cost per Capita: \$208.13**

**Cost per Call: \$2,540.00**

The Fire Department's budget is divided between Suppression and Emergency Medical Services for the purchase of safety equipment and supplies, equipment maintenance, uniforms, and training. Additional costs include cost allocations for vehicle payments, vehicle maintenance, fuel, and facility maintenance. Employee related costs account for 85% of department expenditures.

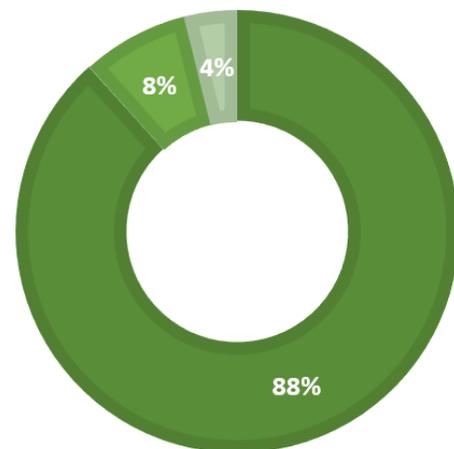
## 2019-2020 Budget Summary \$2,321,950

■ Personnel ■ Suppression ■ Emergency Medical Services



## 2019-2020 Revenue Summary \$468,735.18

■ EMS/Paramedic Billing ■ EMS Subscription Program ■ OES Reimbursements



# NOTABLE INCIDENTS

Presented with the challenges of 2020 and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department continued providing services to the community in alignment with our mission. Due to unforeseen turnover, the Department strived to maintain constant staffing. However, the vacancies were ultimately filled with the addition of five new members. Additionally, we were able to assist in Regional Mutual Aid with Water Tender responses to the Soledad Fire, Dam Fire, Water Tender Pre-Positioning, and Bobcat Fire.

## Soledad Fire:

Deployment – 7/6-7/7

Revenue achieved - \$7,127

## WT Pre-Positioning:

Deployment – 9/5-9/6

Revenue achieved - \$9,796

## Dam Fire:

Deployment – 7/30-8/3

Revenue achieved - \$17,331

## Bobcat:

Deployment – 9/6-10/4

Revenue achieved - \$101,972

41



## COMMUNITY OUTREACH & EDUCATION

The Sierra Madre Fire Department offers a variety of educational programs and presentations to educate and prepare the community of Sierra Madre. The Department strongly believes that the best way to accomplish those goals is through public education and establishing relationships with community groups, schools, and local businesses. Though the COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult for the Fire Department to offer its usual in-person presentations and station tours, the Department continued to host a variety of virtual and socially distanced events throughout the year.

