



Mayor Harry T. Price

December 4, 2018

Birgitta Corsello, Chair
Solano Emergency Medical Services Cooperative
355 Tuolumne Street, Suite 2400
Vallejo, CA 94590

Submitted via Email

RE: EMS System Review and Blueprint Report

Dear Chair Corsello:

The City of Fairfield appreciates the opportunity to comment on the EMS System Review and Blueprint Report (“Blueprint Report”) presented and submitted to the Board of the Solano Emergency Medical Services Cooperative (“SEMSC”) on October 11, 2018.

The City of Fairfield wholeheartedly supports the objectives of the Blueprint Report to ensure a financially sustainable emergency medical service system that addresses the needs of those who live and work in our community. Since 2000, the City of Fairfield has been part of a Public-Private-Partnership (“PPP”) that has contracted for emergency medical transportation services with Medic Ambulance through the Solano Emergency Medical Services Cooperative. Under the existing arrangement, despite an increasing number of calls-for-service, the current partnership has consistently provided timely response and high quality emergency medical and transportation services.

Despite acknowledging the success of the current EMS system, the recently released Blueprint Report proposes significant changes that will impact our community. What is most concerning is that the recommendations are not grounded in a robust public engagement process nor do they rely on actual financial and patient outcome data in Fairfield. In addition to these concerns, the City hopes that the SEMSC Board will consider the following at its December 13, 2018 Board meeting when it discusses the Blueprint Report:

- **Centralized Medical Dispatching.** The City understands that there is a need to work collaboratively with Solano County and all of its cities to ensure that resources are dispatched appropriately to address emergencies. The Blueprint Report recommends “converting to central dispatching for emergency medical calls”. The benefits are not clear. We are concerned about the level of communication and coordination that would occur with our police and fire units that need to be deployed and adding yet another dispatch center in what is already a fragmented system. More analysis and outreach should be performed with Solano County and all of its cities to develop a long-term approach to address this issue. Further, the Blueprint Report fails to acknowledge the City’s “201” rights with respect to existing dispatch services conducted by the City.
- **Emergency Medical Dispatching.** This is an area that the City is interested in exploring further and have already begun to implement in a limited manner. With that being said, the Blueprint Report recommends the implementation of priority dispatching with minimum response times varying (9 minutes to 40 minutes in urban areas) based on the type of call that is received. Under

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the current system, our Fire Department is required to be on-scene to emergency medical calls within 7 minutes 90% of the time. The recommendation in the Blueprint Report is a significant change and one that we cannot support without a better understanding of how this will impact our community. Also, it would be helpful if the report clearly identified the types of calls that are associated with the various Response Priority categories.

- Tiered EMS Response. The Blueprint Report recommends the implementation of tiered EMS response such that lower priority calls would be handled by the ambulance provider rather than the City of Fairfield. The report also recommends that certain calls would receive a Basic Life Support (“BLS”) ambulance response rather than an Advanced Life Support (“ALS”) response. Without a better understanding of the facts, it is impossible to know if implementing this recommendation will have negative effects on our residents needing emergency care. Further, we are concerned about the degradation in the level of customer service provided in our community and public safety. Deploying an ALS response to calls ensures that the resources are in place to address circumstances in the field that may be different than what was conveyed to a dispatcher over the phone.
- Financial impacts. The City of Fairfield currently receives a little more than \$550,000 per year from the PPP in exchange for providing first responder advanced life support. The Blueprint Report needs to clearly articulate the financial impacts of its recommendations, not only on the City of Fairfield, but on all of the member agencies in the PPP. This funding stream is important to the City.
- Experience Requirement. The Blueprint Report recommends that a condition of proposal eligibility is demonstrating at least five (5) years of experience in serving a minimum population of 300,000. We would ask the SEMSC Board to consider alternatives that enable innovative models to come forward that have the potential to capture emerging revenue streams to bolster the financial sustainability of the EMS system.

Despite the concerns outlined above, there are recommendations in the Blueprint Report that are promising. More specifically, a new approach to liquidated damages based on patient outcomes, protecting the incumbent workforce, and ensuring a greater level of financial transparency and accountability are all items that should be considered.

We appreciate the work of the SEMSC and ask that the Board consider the feedback provided in this letter.

Sincerely,



HARRY T. PRICE
MAYOR
City of Fairfield

cc: Ted Selby, Administrator, Solano County Health and Social Services Department, Medical Services Division, TSelby@SolanoCounty.com