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Chula Vista to build 2 new fire stations

By Mark Armao
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The city of Chula Vista will break ground next month on two new fire stations, replacing a pair of aging stations and expanding the city's firefighting capabilities.

Located in the southwestern portion of the city, fire stations 5 and 9 are currently housed in 1960s-era buildings that have fallen into disrepair, said Capt. Linda D'Orsi, public information officer for the Chula Vista Fire Department.

"They're old, and they're falling apart," she said. "Over time, we've had rodents, termites, water leaks and sewage problems, so instead

See Page 7 — STATIONS

Stations

Continued from page 1

of trying to fix those or rebuild on those properties, we've decided through internal analysis that the stations would better serve the citizens if we relocated them."

The need to replace the stations was identified as a priority of Measure P, a half-cent sales tax for infrastructure projects that Chula Vista voters passed in 2016.

Last week, the city council awarded a construction contract of \$16.6 million to EC Constructors Inc., a Lakeside-based contractor.

Fire Station 5 is currently located at 391 Oxford Street, and the new station will be built a few blocks south, near the intersection of Fourth and Orange avenues. The future home of Engine 55 will feature three vehicle bays and be configured so that vehicles can drive through the facility as opposed to backing out into traffic.

Just south of the San Diego Country Club

golf course, crews will construct Fire Station 9, which is currently located near the intersection of Oneida Street and Melrose Avenue. Station 9 will go from one to four vehicle bays.

D'Orsi said the additional apparatus bays will provide space not only for more firefighting vehicles in the future but also for ambulances that will be housed there once emergency medical services are transferred from a private company to the city next year.

Along with providing enhanced capabilities and faster response times in certain areas, the new stations will also afford more privacy for firefighting crews, she said.

"Right now, both stations have open dorms with partitions or non-load-bearing walls that separate the sleeping quarters," she said. "The male and female firefighters have little to no privacy, so that will be remedied with the new stations."

Both stations are slated to break ground in March and open early next year.

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