



CAMBRIA COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

MEETING	TIME & DATE	LOCATION
Fire Protection Committee	10:30 AM Thursday, May 15, 2025	Cambria Veterans' Memorial Hall, 1000 Main Street, Cambria, CA 93428

AGENDA

Regular Fire Protection Committee Meeting

May 15, 2025 10:30 AM

In person at:

**Cambria Veterans' Memorial Hall
1000 Main Street, Cambria, CA 93428**

AND via Zoom at:

Please click the link to join the webinar: [HERE](#)

Webinar ID: 894 6807 5561

Passcode: 338146

Copies of the staff reports or other documentation relating to each item of business referred to on the agenda are on file in the CCSD Administration Office, available for public inspection during District business hours. The agenda and agenda packets are also available on the CCSD website at <https://www.cambriacsd.org/>. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting or if you need the agenda or other documents in the agenda packet provided in an alternative format, contact the Confidential Administrative Assistant at 805-927-6223 at least 48 hours before the meeting to ensure that reasonable arrangements can be made. The Confidential Administrative Assistant will answer any questions regarding the agenda.

1. OPENING

1.A Call to Order

1.B Establishment of Quorum

1.C Chair Report

1.D Ad Hoc Subcommittee Reports

1.E Committee Member and Staff Communications

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public may now address the Committee on any item of interest within the jurisdiction of the Committee but not on its agenda today. Future agenda items can be suggested at this time. In compliance with the Brown Act, the Committee cannot discuss or act on items not on the agenda. Each speaker has up to three minutes.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

3.A Consideration to Approve the April 17, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

4. REGULAR BUSINESS

- 4.A Discussion and Consideration of Public Document Regarding Weed Abatement**
- 4.B Discussion and Consideration of Fire Department Apparatus Replacement and Financing**
- 4.C Discussion and Consideration of Fire Station Condition and Possible Related Actions - Amended 5/12/2025**
- 4.D Discussion of Follow-Up Actions Related to Fire Safety Town Halls**

5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEM(S)

6. ADJOURN



CAMBRIA COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

MINUTES OF APRIL 17, 2025, REGULAR FIRE PROTECTION COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CAMBRIA COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

A regular meeting of the Fire Protection Committee of the Cambria Community Services District was held at the Cambria Veterans' Memorial Hall, located at 1000 Main Street, Cambria, CA 93428, on Thursday, April 17, 2025, at 10:30 AM

1. OPENING

1.A Call to Order

Chairperson Gray called the meeting to order at 10:30 am.

1.B Establishment of Quorum

A quorum was established.

Committee members present: Tom Gray, David Pierson, Arthur Chapman, Ronald De Luca, Tony Safford, and Gordon Heinrichs.

Staff present: General Manager Matthew McElhenie and Confidential Administrative Assistant Haley Dodson.

1.C Chair Report

Chairperson Gray drew attention to the reports submitted by the Ad Hoc committees, asked for comment from General Manager McElhenie

Committee Member Pierson reported that the Firesafe Focus Group has interacted with a Cal Poly student class who will be visiting Cambria to write community wildfire protection plans. He also reported that the County of San Luis Obispo is planning a new ordinance similar to the one recently approved by CCSD's Board of Directors for weed abatement standards for developed properties which will be applicable to unincorporated communities not including those with community services districts.

Mr. Pierson also mentioned that California Governor Newsom held a news conference announcing grants for fire risk mitigation. The County's Fire Safe Council was a consultant to the State in the granting process.

Committee Member Safford reported that the Red Cross had 70 requests for defensible space inspections and that they will need to train an additional person to assist in making home visits.

1.D Committee Member and Staff Communications

General Manager McElhenie reported that the District Board passed the weed abatement ordinance which will take effect on May 10, 2025. He also reported that the District is planning preparedness meetings with neighborhood liaisons to prepare for carrying the preparedness message to all community members.

1.E Ad Hoc Subcommittee Reports

Ad Hoc Committee members Pierson and Chapman submitted a report on possible positions and funding to aid the Fire Chief in enforcing the expanded duties for fire hazard abatement in both vacant and improved properties. Committee members and staff discussed the issues raised by the report.

Ad Hoc Committee Members Safford and Chapman submitted a report with suggestions to reach out to community members to improve compliance with the new abatement ordinance and ensure the community is well informed. With a discussion and clarification from the District Manager, Mr. Safford and Mr. Chapman agreed to draft a messaging document for committee and staff review at the next committee meeting.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairperson Gray solicited public comment from those present and those attending the meeting remotely. After hearing public comment, Chairperson Gray closed public comment.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

3.A Consideration to Approve the March 20, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

Committee Member Safford moved to accept the minutes as written.

Committee Member De Luca seconded the motion.

The motion was approved: 5-Ayes; 0-Nays; 0-Abstain; 0-Absent

4. REGULAR BUSINESS

4.A Discussion and Consideration of Task and Timetable for Evacuation Planning Ad Hoc Committee

After a discussion of evacuation issues, Chairperson Gray suggested that the ad hoc committee focus initially on working with other agencies to determine the current “best practices” in evacuation planning.

Committee Member Heinrichs reported he is planning to attend an evacuation drill to be conducted by the City of Mill Valley to understand evacuation needs and bring those findings back for their applicability to our community.

4.B Discussion of Possible Follow-Up Actions to Cambria Community Emergency Preparedness Area Meetings

The item was tabled to the next meeting.

4.C Discussion and Consideration of New June/July 2025 Committee Meeting Date

The committee discussed possible alternate meeting dates.

Committee Member Chapman moved to cancel the June 19 meeting and combine the June and July meetings into one meeting to be held on Tuesday, July 8, at 10:30 a.m.

Committee Member Safford seconded the motion.

The motion was approved: 5-Ayes; 0-Nays; 0-Abstain; 0-Absent

5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEM(S)

Chairperson Gray asked for any future agenda items and will review them for consideration in the agenda for the meeting scheduled for July 17.

6. ADJOURN

Chairperson Gray adjourned the meeting at 12:08 p.m.

DRAFT

CAMBRIA COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

TO: Fire Protection Committee

AGENDA NO. 4.A.

FROM: Michael Burkey, Fire Chief

Meeting Date: May 15, 2025

Subject: Discussion and Consideration of Public
Document Regarding Weed Abatement

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with the review of the draft Public Outreach Document. Any future costs related to printing, distribution, or implementation of outreach strategies will be considered during subsequent phases and brought to the Board for approval, as needed.

DISCUSSION:

Fire Chief Michael Burkey, in collaboration with the Public Outreach Ad Hoc Committee, has prepared a draft Public Outreach Document intended to enhance communication and engagement with the Cambria community. The document is currently in development and is being presented at this meeting for preliminary review and feedback from the Board and the public. The purpose of this document is to provide clear, accessible information regarding the District's initiatives, priorities, and ongoing efforts to ensure transparency and community involvement. Staff will incorporate any input received into the final version of the document, which will be brought back for formal adoption at a future meeting.

2025 DEFENSIBLE SPACE FACT SHEET & GUIDELINES

Background

Complementing California Fire Code Chapter 49 (Sections 4906 & 4907), Ordinance No. 01-2025 was adopted on April 10, 2025, by the Cambria Community Services District (CCSD) Board of Directors to enhance public safety and reduce fire risk through enforceable weed abatement standards.

Purpose

To ensure all property owners within the CCSD boundaries manage combustible vegetation and hazardous growth to reduce fire hazards and protect life, property, and emergency personnel.

[moved] Who Must Comply?

All property owners within the CCSD—residential, commercial, public, **including** undeveloped parcels.

Defensible space

[moved] In California, creating “defensible space” around your home **or property** is **required by law** in wildfire-prone areas. It's like building a safety buffer between your home and a potential wildfire. The idea is to **slow down the fire, reduce heat and embers, and give firefighters a better chance to protect your property and therefore the entire community.**

[move

Think of defensible space like **concentric circles** around your house:

- Zone 0: No fuel zone (0–5 ft) = super clean and ember-resistant.
- Zone 1: Light, spaced, and green (5–30 ft).
- Zone 2: Managed wildland (30–100 ft or more) = low fuel, trimmed, and thinned out.



The Three Zones of Defensible Space



Zone 0: Ember-Resistant Zone (0 to 5 feet from your house)

Goal: Keep embers from igniting your home.

This is the most important zone. A huge number of homes are lost not to flames, but to **flying embers** that land in flammable material near the house.

What to do here:

- Remove all dead plants, dry leaves, pine needles, and debris.
 - No wood mulch, firewood, or plants that burn easily near the house walls.
 - Use non-combustible materials like gravel, concrete, or stone around the foundation.
 - Clear out debris from the **roof, gutters, and decks**.
 - Keep decks and porches free of anything flammable.
-

Zone 1: Lean, Clean & Green Zone (5 to 30 feet from your house)

Goal: Reduce heat and fire movement toward your home.

What to do here:

- Keep grass mowed and green (or replace it with fire-resistant landscaping).
 - Space out trees and shrubs to **prevent fire from climbing up into the trees** (no “ladder fuels”).
 - Trim trees regularly to keep branches **at least 10 feet away from each other** and from your roof.
 - Remove flammable plants like juniper, bamboo, and certain pines.
 - Store wood piles **at least 30 feet away** from buildings.
-

Zone 2: Reduced Fuel Zone (30 to 100 feet from your house)

Goal: Slow the fire down and keep flames low if they get this far.

What to do here:

- Cut down tall grass and weeds.
 - Space trees and large shrubs apart so fire can’t easily jump between them.
 - Remove dead branches, dry vegetation, and fallen leaves regularly.
 - Prune trees up from the ground to prevent flames from reaching their tops.
 - Use fire-resistant plants and landscaping.
-

Bonus Tips

- **Access roads and driveways:** Keep them clear so fire trucks can get in.
- **Visible address:** Make sure your house number is easy to see in an emergency.
- **Fences & sheds:** If they’re close to your house, treat them like Zone 0. Don’t let flammable things pile up around them.

Key Definitions

- **Weeds:** Any combustible, hazardous, or unsightly vegetation (living or dead), excluding trees.
- **Noxious Plants:** Includes poison oak and other invasive or environmentally harmful species.
- **Hazardous Trees:** Trees with excessive deadwood, low moisture, or poor spacing that elevate fire risk.

Fire Hazard Area: Any location where vegetation may contribute to the rapid spread of fire.

Exemptions

Applies to lands managed as:

- Agricultural fields actively grazed or harvested
- Habitat for endangered/threatened species
- Natural habitat or environmentally sensitive parklands
- Scenic lands designated by the County, State, or Federal government

To Request an Exemption

- Submit written notification to the Fire Chief **30 days prior** to the weed abatement deadline. [this is the problem when we try to marry defensible space with weed abatement]
- The Fire Chief determines eligibility using appropriate authorities.

Enforcement & Penalties

- Non-compliance is declared a public nuisance.
- Violators may receive civil citations and be subject to administrative abatement.
- Abatement costs and liens may be recorded against the property.

Enforcement Authority

- CCSD Fire Chief or designee
- Routine property inspections will be conducted

Important Notes

- This ordinance supplements (does not replace) existing state and county fire codes.
- Applies to improved and unimproved parcels.
- Weed abatement is part of the District's Fire Hazard Fuel Reduction Program.

CAMBRIA COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

TO: Fire Protection Committee

AGENDA NO. **4.B.**

FROM: Michael Burkey, Fire Chief

Meeting Date: May 15, 2025

Subject: Discussion and Consideration of Fire Department Apparatus Replacement and Financing

FISCAL IMPACT:

The potential fiscal impact of purchasing a new fire apparatus is approximately 1.2-1.3 million dollars. Purchase price is determined at time of purchase. If payment is received, there is a potential for significant cost savings, in upwards of 2 hundred thousand dollars. However, payment is not required to begin until apparatus is received. Apparatus production typically takes between 3-5 years. Once purchased, price is set and does not increase from that time.

DISCUSSION:

Discussion to occur between committee members regarding potential funding sources, purchasing process, and potentially providing recommendations for the CCSD board.

ATTACHMENTS: Fire Engine Apparatus Replacement



CAMBRIA CSD FIRE DEPARTMENT

Michael Burkey, Fire Chief

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Fire Engine Apparatus Replacement

Overview

The Cambria Fire Department is requesting approval for the replacement of its current fire engine apparatus, which has been in service for over 10 years. As a key asset in our fleet, the fire engine serves as an essential resource for emergency response, fire suppression, rescue operations, and other critical services. After a thorough review of the vehicle's performance, maintenance records, and the growing demands of our department, it has become evident that replacement is necessary to ensure continued safety, reliability, and efficiency in serving our community.

Reasons for Replacement

1. Age and Wear of the Apparatus

- The current fire engine has been in service for 10 years, which is at or near the end of its effective lifespan. Fire apparatus typically have a service life of approximately 10 years, after which mechanical reliability, efficiency, and safety may begin to deteriorate.
- Components such as the engine, transmission, braking system, and other critical parts are showing signs of wear and increased frequency of breakdowns. Continued repairs become more costly and less effective as the vehicle ages.

2. Increased Maintenance Costs

- Over the last several years, maintenance costs for the fire engine have steadily increased due to the need for more frequent repairs. These ongoing maintenance expenditures are no longer cost-effective compared to the investment in a new vehicle.
- The costs of maintaining an aging apparatus, including parts that are no longer readily available, have put a strain on our department's budget, resulting in a reduced ability to allocate resources for other essential needs.

3. Reliability and Safety Concerns

- Fire engines are critical to saving lives, and reliability is paramount. The current fire engine has experienced breakdowns that have impaired its operational readiness, including in situations where immediate response is vital. For example, the vehicle has experienced engine failures and brake malfunctions, which could have compromised our ability to respond to emergencies in a timely manner.
- Additionally, aging fire apparatus may not meet modern safety standards, and continued repairs may not restore the engine's safety features to the required levels.

4. Improved Technological Advancements

- Newer fire engines come equipped with advanced technologies, including more efficient and environmentally friendly engines, better communication systems, and enhanced firefighting tools. These modern features improve response times, increase operational effectiveness, and enhance safety during emergency operations.

- A replacement apparatus would also include enhanced driver-assistance systems, improved hydraulic systems, and better overall ergonomics for crew members.

5. Changing Community Demands and Response Time

- The community's population has grown in recent years, leading to increased calls for service. The department must adapt to this growth by ensuring that it has the most reliable and efficient equipment. A newer fire engine will ensure we are equipped to handle more complex emergencies with greater speed and precision.
- A new fire engine will also help in reducing response times, which is critical in emergency situations where every second counts.

Financial Considerations

- **Cost of Replacement vs. Ongoing Maintenance**

The cost of purchasing a new fire engine is a significant investment; however, the long-term savings in maintenance, repairs, and operational inefficiencies outweigh the initial costs. By replacing the apparatus, the department will avoid the rising costs associated with maintaining an aging vehicle and the risk of costly emergency repairs that could further delay operations.

- **Budget Allocation and Funding**

The Cambria Fire Department is committed to securing the necessary funding for the replacement of the fire engine. We are exploring available grants, governmental funding, and possible partnerships to offset the costs associated with this purchase.

Conclusion

The replacement of the 10-year-old fire engine is a necessary step to ensure that the Cambria Fire Department continues to operate effectively, safely, and efficiently. As the demands on our department grow, it is essential that we maintain a fleet that is both reliable and capable of meeting the evolving needs of the community. By investing in a new fire engine, we are not only ensuring the safety of our firefighters but also enhancing our ability to protect the lives and property of those we serve.

CAMBRIA COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

TO: Fire Protection Committee

AGENDA NO. **4.C.**

FROM: Michael Burkey, Fire Chief

Meeting Date: May 15, 2025

Subject: Discussion and Consideration of Fire Station
Condition and Possible Related Actions

FISCAL IMPACT:

The potential fiscal impact of the fire station replacement or renovation is projected to fall within the range of **\$6.2 million to \$10.5 million**, depending on final design specifications, material and labor costs, and site conditions. Accurate cost estimates will require further architectural planning and feasibility studies.

DISCUSSION:

Discussion to occur between committee members regarding needs, potential funding sources, purchasing process, and potentially providing recommendations for the CCSD board. Being a 28-year-old fire station, replacement or upgrade is needed due to a combination of aging infrastructure, evolving safety standards, and increased operational demands. Over nearly three decades, building systems such as plumbing, electrical, HVAC, and roofing often deteriorate, leading to higher maintenance costs and potential safety hazards. Upgrades will also address current building codes, seismic standards, energy efficiency, and accessibility requirements. Most importantly, a modern facility can improve response times, firefighter health and wellness, and overall community safety.

ATTACHMENTS: Estimated Costs, Case Study and Renovation vs. Replacement



CAMBRIA CSD FIRE DEPARTMENT

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Estimated Costs:

- **Construction Costs:** Typically construction costs for fire stations typically range from \$400 to \$700 per square foot. For a 10,000-square-foot facility, this translates to approximately \$4 million to \$7 million.
- **Additional Expenses:** Beyond construction, other costs include site acquisition and preparation, design and engineering fees, permitting, inspections, furnishings, and contingencies. These can add 20–30% to the base construction cost, bringing the total estimated cost to between \$6.2 million and \$10.5 million.

Case Study:

Templeton Fire Station Expansion: The Templeton Community Services District has sought proposals for the expansion of its fire station. The project involves preparing preliminary drawings, cost estimates, and potential construction documents for the expansion. The goal is to accommodate current needs and future growth, ensuring compliance with NFPA, ADA, and OSHA regulations.

The Templeton Fire Station, located at 206 5th St., Templeton, CA 93465, was completed in 1996, making it approximately 29 years old as of 2025. The two-story, 4,150-square-foot facility has undergone multiple additions over the years to accommodate the growing needs of the community.

Templeton Fire Station – Most Recent Renovation Activity (as of 2024–2025)

- **Facility Age:** Built in **1996**, the station is now **29 years old**.
- **Current Size:** Approximately **4,150 square feet** over two stories.
- **Recent Action:** The **Templeton Community Services District (CSD)** issued a **Request for Proposals (RFP)** in **2023** for **architectural and engineering services** related to the **expansion and renovation** of the fire station.

Renovation vs. Replacement:

When deciding between renovation and replacement, consider the following:

- **Renovation:** Typically costs less upfront but may be constrained by the existing structure's limitations.
- **Replacement:** Higher initial investment but offers a modern facility tailored to current and future needs.

In Cambria, factors such as the current station's condition, compliance with modern safety standards, and the community's growth projections should inform the decision.

Engaging with local architects and construction firms experienced in public safety facilities is crucial to obtain accurate estimates and ensure the project meets Cambria's specific requirements.

Here's a **sample budget breakdown** for a **mid-sized fire station replacement** (around 10,000–12,000 sq ft), with an estimated total cost of **\$8 million**:

Sample Fire Station Replacement Budget

Category	Estimated Cost
Site acquisition/preparation	\$500,000 – \$1,000,000
Construction (core facility)	\$5,000,000 – \$6,000,000
Design & engineering fees	\$800,000 – \$1,000,000
Permitting & inspections	\$100,000 – \$200,000
Furniture, fixtures & equipment	\$300,000 – \$500,000
Contingency (10–15%)	\$500,000 – \$800,000
Total Estimated Cost	\$7.2M – \$9.5M

Renovation vs. Replacement

Factor	Renovation	Replacement
Cost	\$2M–\$5M (varies)	\$5M–\$20M+ depending on size/location
Disruption	Often requires working around operations	May allow continued ops at old site
Modernization	Limited by existing structure	Fully customizable, future-proof
Code Compliance	May trigger upgrades (ADA, seismic, etc.)	Built to meet all current standards
Lifespan Extended	10–20 years	40+ years

The cost to replace a fire station can vary widely based on location, size, and specific needs, but here are some typical ranges:

- **Small rural station (1–2 bays):** \$2–5 million
- **Mid-sized suburban station (2–3 bays, basic facilities):** \$5–10 million
- **Large urban station (4+ bays, specialty spaces, training areas):** \$10–20+ million

Key cost drivers include:

- **Construction costs per square foot:** Usually between **\$400–\$700+**, depending on region and materials
- **Site acquisition/preparation:** Especially costly if the land is limited or requires major work
- **Specialty features:** Decontamination zones, training rooms, living quarters, backup generators, etc.
- **Equipment and furnishings:** Beds, lockers, kitchen appliances, office equipment
- **Design and engineering fees:** Typically 10–15% of the total project cost