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Huntley fire protection district to build two new stations, headquarters



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Huntley Fire Protection District's Station 1 and headquarters on Coral Street in downtown Huntley will be vacated and sold once the district builds a new headquarters and station at its Main Street property. (Patrick Kunzer | Staff Photographer)



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The Huntley Fire Protection District plans to build a new headquarters and two new fire stations for \$13 million.

The Huntley village board Thursday night reviewed conceptual plans for a 10,239-square-foot station proposed for roughly two acres at the southeast corner of Jim Dhamer Drive and Hennig Road. It would be situated near the southwest corner of Sun City-Huntley senior living community.

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Currently, the district has four fire stations -- one in Algonquin and three in Huntley, including one off Regency Parkway north of Sun City.

After a survey of districtwide response times, officials determined Sun City needed better coverage due to the volume of calls generated and response times ranging from one minute to 10 minutes.

In 2018, firefighters responded to 5,300 calls of which 80 percent were for emergency medical or ambulance-based services.

"Anywhere between 35 (percent) and 40 percent of our calls are in Sun City alone," Deputy Fire Chief Al Schlick said. "It's a very large area ... there's not a lot of straight roads. We were just seeing response times we really didn't like. Anything over six minutes we didn't care for. We knew that we needed better coverage out there."

Officials estimate the new fire station, which would cost an estimated \$3 million, likely will respond to about 700 calls yearly from Sun City.

The district also is proposing a \$10 million addition and renovation to its property at 11118 Main St., which houses its administrative offices and maintenance facility.

The site plan calls for a 27,800-square-foot, two-story addition to the south end of the building, increasing its footprint by about 8,700 square feet. It will include first-floor administrative offices, firefighter living quarters on the second floor, and training facilities in the basement.

With the improvements, that building will become the district's new headquarters, and also house a fire station and maintenance facility.

The district's existing Station 1/headquarters at 11808 Coral St. in downtown -- where the fire chief, deputy chief and training officer are based -- will be vacated and sold once work is completed on the Main Street property, documents show.

"We're trying to get everybody under one roof ... trying to improve efficiencies," Schlick said.

The operation of Station 1, built in 1957 and renovated a couple of times since, has been hampered by improvements made to Huntley's Town Square that increased delivery truck and foot traffic to area businesses.

"It's very difficult for us to get out of the station and go east," Schlick said. "There are times when (fire trucks) are not able to go down Coral Street."

Fire district trustees have been saving money for years to fund these construction projects, while keeping the district debt free.

The district serves 55 square miles covering a population of 50,000 residents in Huntley, parts of Algonquin, Gilberts, Lake in the Hills and a sliver of Hampshire, and parts of unincorporated McHenry and Kane counties.

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