BREVARD FIRE DEPARTMENT

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Request for Updated Council Approval – Fire Engine Replacement

Current Request and Status

On June 2, 2025, Brevard City Council approved the purchase of a new fire engine to replace a 2004 American LaFrance engine currently in service. Since that approval, the manufacturer has issued a confirmed price increase of $155,901.00. Due to this increase, Brevard Fire Department is formally requesting updated approval from City Council to proceed with the purchase at the revised cost.

The apparatus scheduled for replacement is a 2004 American LaFrance engine equipped with a 2,000 GPM pump and a 1,000-gallon water tank, with approximately 40,000 miles. The engine is currently 22 years old and, based on current industry lead times, will be approximately 25–26 years old when the replacement unit is delivered.

While this engine has served the community well, it is well beyond its intended frontline service life and is no longer sustainable as a reliable frontline apparatus.

Apparatus Replacement Schedule

The Fire Department recently updated its apparatus replacement schedule following the delayed purchase of a rescue truck, which made the former plan obsolete. The new schedule establishes a 15-year ideal frontline service life, with the possibility of extending apparatus up to 10 additional years in a reserve status based on condition and reliability. Beyond 25

years, large apparatus are considered obsolete for municipal fire service operations.

This updated schedule provides:

- A normalized and predictable replacement cycle
- Improved fleet reliability and safety
- A stabilized long-term debt service strategy

All large apparatus are considered frontline units, except for one designated reserve engine. When this American LaFrance engine is replaced, the new unit will be utilized more frequently than other engines due to the age and higher mileage of several remaining fleet units.

Current Issues and Operational Risk

This American LaFrance engine is already beyond its expected frontline service life and will be obsolete in firefighter safety, functionality, and performance standards when the replacement arrives.

Current documented concerns include:

- Multiple electrical wiring issues
- Ongoing braking system problems
- Increasing difficulty sourcing manufacturer-specific parts

American LaFrance went out of business approximately 15 years ago, making replacement parts extremely difficult and sometimes impossible to obtain. These issues present significant safety concerns, increase the likelihood of apparatus failure during emergency response, and elevate maintenance costs and downtime.

Replacement Engine Overview

Brevard Fire has completed specifications for a replacement engine that meets or exceeds all applicable NFPA 1901 standards.

The proposed apparatus will include:

• Spartan fire apparatus chassis
• Advanced emergency lighting systems
• Anti-lock braking systems
• Enhanced rollover protection
• Lower-leg and head airbag protection

The body will be built by Smeal Fire Apparatus and will closely mirror the new engine scheduled to arrive in the coming weeks, providing consistency in training, maintenance, and fleet operations.

This unit will have the capacity to carry all current equipment needs while allowing for future operational expansion.

Justification to Act Now

This apparatus continues to deteriorate, and replacement must be initiated as soon as possible. Current industry build times are estimated at 2.5 to 3 years. Delaying this order increases the risk of catastrophic mechanical failure, extended apparatus downtime, and increased maintenance and parts costs.

Procuring this engine is also critical to maintaining Brevard's ISO ratings:

• Class 3 within city limits
• Class 4 in the Sylvan Valley 2 district

Manufacturers are currently projecting annual price increases of 5–7%. If ordered today, delivery is projected around Q1 2029. This timeline also allows two existing apparatus loans to roll off, helping mitigate additional budgetary impact.

Potential Cost Savings

Discussions with manufacturers indicate that, depending on production placement, there is a possibility the department could receive an engine built under prior emissions standards, which could result in a $20,000–$40,000 cost savings. While not guaranteed, this opportunity would only exist if the apparatus is ordered promptly.

Looking Ahead

Due to American LaFrance being out of business and the condition of this engine, refurbishment is not a viable option.

However, once this unit is replaced, Brevard Fire will be positioned to utilize refurbishment strategies on future apparatus were appropriate. Our frontline Seagrave engine and ladder truck are excellent candidates for refurbishment, which can extend apparatus service life 1.5 to 2 times at a fraction of the cost of full replacement. This proactive approach will result in substantial long-term savings while maintaining fleet safety and performance.