

# The Uncertain Future of Fire and EMS in El Dorado County

Commission of Collaborative Fire Departments

Chief Dave Roberts

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# Outline

- Overview of EDC Fire
- History of Fire District funding
- Outlook for the future
- Proposed path forward

# Overview

- 13 Fire Districts: Very rural to semi-urban
- Elected 5 member BODs
- Departments – Multiple combinations:
  - Paid, Volunteer, Apprentice, Explorer, Specialty Staff, Paid-Call, etc...
- Bulk of funding from a “small” percentage of the 1% property tax revenue
- Strong history of mutual and automatic aid

# History of Funding

- 1978 Prop 13 passed
- 1979: Assembly Bill 8 (AB-8)
- 1992: ERAF Shift (10% off the top to education)
- 1993: Prop 172 (1/2 ¢ tax for public safety)

# EDC Prop 172 Distribution

FY 2011-12

- Total: \$7,000,000
- EDSO: \$5,200,000
- Probation: \$900,000
- DA: \$700,000
- Pub Def: \$200,000

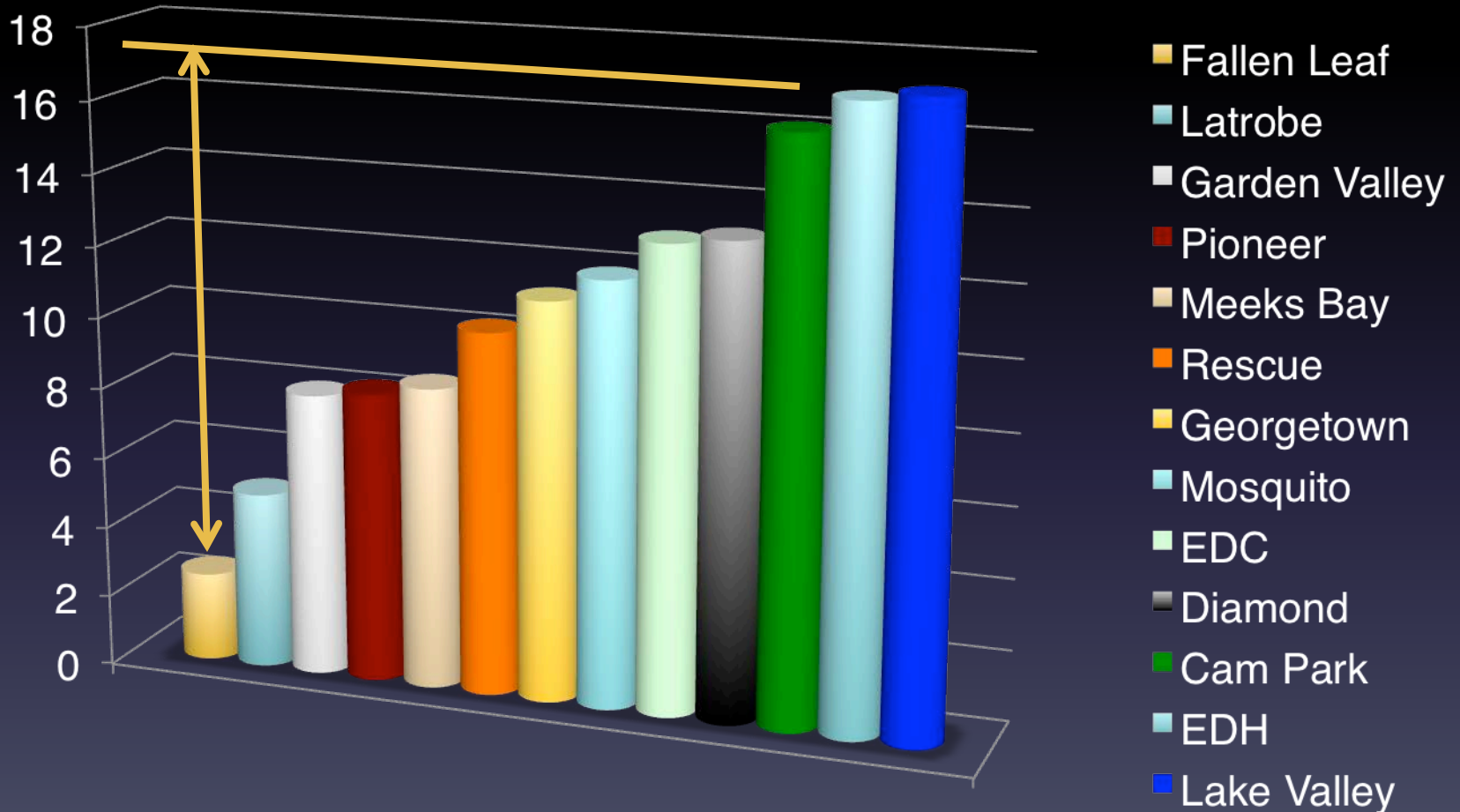
*No safety funding to EDC Fire Districts*

# Aid to Fire

## “False Sense of Security”

- Supplemental funding to districts receiving a “disproportionately small percentage of the property tax base” – Passed unanimously in 2001 by resolution
- Formula leveled Fire District funding to 13%
- About \$1.3 to \$1.6 Mil for the 8 underfunded Fire Districts
- Cancelled In 2009 - Used JPA funds to phase out over 2010/11

# Fire District Tax Rates – Highly Variable



# LFPD 2012-2013 Budget

<b>Revenues</b>		
	Current Secured Tax	105,000
	Direct Assessment	30,000
	Services	3,000
	Misc Revenue	1,000
	<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>141,000</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
	Salaries	115,000
	<b>Benefits and Fees</b>	<b>28,145</b>
	<b>Services &amp; Supplies</b>	<b>113,242</b>
	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>256,387</b>
<b><i>Difference</i></b>	<b><i>Net Loss</i></b>	<b><i>(115,387)</i></b>



# Outlook for the Future

- Increasing Call Volume & Demand
  - Up 73% Over 22,000 in 2012
- Increased Training and Cert Requirements
  - State & Federal Unfunded Mandates
- Increased Maintenance Costs
- Reduced Number of Employees
  - Difficulty Attracting Volunteers
- Aging Equipment - Unable to Replace

# Were Good At Solving Problems - But...

- Prop 13 limited our ability to adjust to economic climate
- AB-8 froze our tax rate at a "Set Point" long ago
- ERAF reduced most FD budgets by 10%
- Prop 172 passed to make Emergency Services whole from the loss of ERAF, but did not come to fire
- We got hit with the 08-11 property tax revenue decline
- "Aid to Fire" funding was discontinued

# Already Having Devastating Effects

- Staffing reduced 16% across El Dorado County Fire Districts
- 50% of Fire Districts unable to maintain safety equipment
- 70% of Fire Districts rely on fire engines older than 25 years
- 90% of Fire Districts deferred purchase of equipment

*Unsustainable for future public safety*

# Outlook for the Future

- Smaller Fire Districts will disappear
- Increased response times - Fire & EMS
- Large gaps in the automatic & mutual aid system
- Larger more devastating events inevitable
- Homeowners Insurance costs increased or revoked

*Unsustainable for future public safety*

# What have We Done?

- Formed a collaborative group (CCFD)
- Met with CAO to explore options
- Developing joint purchasing program
  - Already have joint training and dispatch
- Looking at consolidation – various types
- Reducing costs

# Proposed Path Forward

- Restart discussions with the BOS Fire Advisory Committee
- The charter of this committee would be to work with representatives from the CCFD to find a permanent solution for sustainable fire and EMS funding throughout all El Dorado County fire districts