

Shared Services Proposal

Garden Valley & Mosquito Fire Protection Districts

The Mosquito Fire Protection District (MFPD) must soon replace its retiring fire chief. Finding and funding a full-time chief and administrative team is costly for a small district. Garden Valley Fire Protection District (GVFPD) proposes a two-year shared services agreement that provides immediate leadership and administrative support while preserving MFPD's local identity. This opportunity builds on an existing shared services/mutual aid agreement between the two districts, formalized in 2020, which already improves coordinated emergency responses.

MFPD faces geographical isolation, limited infrastructure, and long mutual-aid response times. A recent municipal service review noted that MFPD collaborates with GVFPD through mutual aid but still operates from an outdated facility and struggles to recruit and retain volunteers. Without additional administrative capacity, the district risks disruption when its chief retires. Similar agencies have adopted shared services models to control costs and maintain consistent leadership; Garden Valley and Georgetown Fire Protection Districts entered a 12-month agreement after Georgetown's chief retired, sharing leadership and administrative costs without changing local staffing or response times. Similarly, El Dorado County Fire and Diamond Springs Fire Protection District established a multi-year shared service agreement, ultimately ending in annexation due to its success. .

Proposed Agreement

Chief Services: Garden Valley Fire Chief will serve as chief for both districts. They will oversee operations, budgeting, personnel management, strategic planning, and community engagement. GVFPD's administrative team will assist where needed with payroll, human resources, purchasing, policy development, records retention and compliance with the Brown Act and other laws.

Prevention and Code Enforcement: GVFPD will provide supervision of fire prevention services, including plan review, inspections, and public education. These functions support risk reduction and help ensure MFPD complies with state and local codes.

Training and EMS Coordination: Personnel from Garden Valley, Mosquito, and Georgetown will train under a combined training calendar/schedule. Unified training programs will ensure firefighters and emergency medical responders maintain required

certifications and use consistent incident command practices. EMS quality assurance and continuing education will also be coordinated.

Grant Writing and Funding Development: GVFPD will pursue grants on behalf of MFPD and the region, including SAFER and hazard-mitigation grants. A unified grant strategy increases competitiveness and reduces the administrative burden on MFPD volunteers.

Financial Terms

Monthly Fee: MFPD will pay \$6,500 per month (billed quarterly) for a minimum of 24 months. The fee covers leadership, administrative services, prevention programs, vehicle maintenance, fuel, legal counsel, and other shared operational costs. Fees may be adjusted by mutual agreement to account for changing costs or expanded services.

County-Funded Administrator: El Dorado County will fund a full-time administrator at \$200,000 per year, including salary and benefits. The administrator will be employed by GVFPD but will serve across Garden Valley, Mosquito, and Georgetown. Responsibilities include coordinating training, prevention, and EMS programs, writing grants, and providing administrative support. This county-funded position ensures dedicated regional management.

Budget Transparency: GVFPD will provide quarterly financial reports to MFPD detailing expenses and shared costs. MFPD retains the right to audit records and to review the fee structure annually.

Governance and Term

Independent Boards: Both districts maintain independent boards of directors, taxing authority, and control over local staffing. The shared services agreement is NOT a consolidation or annexation.

Oversight Committee: A joint committee with directors from both boards and the chief will meet quarterly to monitor performance, review financial reports, and gather community feedback. Performance metrics (response times, training hours, inspections, grant awards, and budget adherence) will be tracked and published.

Initial Term and Termination: The agreement runs for 24 months, with options to renew annually. Either party may terminate the agreement with 180 days' notice. Termination clauses ensure a smooth transition and fulfillment of obligations.

Expected Benefits

1. **Stable Leadership and Continuity:** By sharing the Garden Valley Fire Chief and administrative team, MFPD avoids the cost and uncertainty of recruiting a new chief and retains operational continuity during a leadership transition.
2. **Cost Savings:** At a monthly fee of \$6,500, MFPD will spend far less than the total compensation required for a full-time chief, administrative staff, and associated benefits. Shared purchasing and maintenance further reduce expenses.
3. **Improved Service Delivery:** Unified training and prevention programs enhance operational consistency. Regional deployment of personnel and equipment improves coverage for complex incidents without changing local response times, replicating successes from the Garden Valley/Georgetown agreement.
4. **Increased Grant Capacity:** Access to GVFPD's grant team and county-funded administrator improves the region's ability to secure federal and state funding for staffing, equipment and facilities.
5. **Enhanced Community Collaboration:** The agreement fosters cooperation among Garden Valley, Mosquito and Georgetown districts. Shared public-education campaigns, evacuation planning and community engagement strengthen preparedness and resilience. MFPD residents retain local control and benefit from broader regional expertise.

Conclusion

The Garden Valley Fire Protection District recommends that the Mosquito Fire Protection District Board of Directors approve this shared services agreement. It offers a cost-effective solution to leadership turnover, leverages proven administrative capacity and builds on an existing mutual aid relationship. By adopting this proposal, MFPD will gain stable leadership, improved operational efficiency, strengthen regional collaborations, and enhance grant opportunities while preserving its independence and community identity.