



Newport Beach Fire Station 3 **RESPONSE CAPABILITIES ANALYSIS**

Why Newport Beach Firefighters Support Relocating to Avocado Ave

Prepared and published by the Newport Beach Firefighters Association

keepingnewportsafe.com

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This report is dedicated to the residents, workers, and visitors of Newport Beach, California, who deserve the most efficient and effective fire, rescue, and emergency medical services available.

Executive Summary

Background

The Newport Beach Firefighters Association conducted a road-network response capabilities analysis to evaluate the proposed relocation of Fire Station 3 from 868 Santa Barbara Drive to the Newport Transportation Center site at 1550 Avocado Avenue. The analysis applies the Newport Beach Fire Department's station locations, frontline unit staffing, and dispatch protocols to a calibrated street-network travel time model and measures results against NFPA 1710, the national consensus standard for career fire department deployment.^[7]

The City of Newport Beach commissioned a Standards of Coverage and Deployment Plan in 2022.^[1] That study documented travel time deficiencies in the southeastern residential areas served by Station 3 and recommended reductions in incident travel time. Its deployment models held all eight existing station locations fixed; the Avocado Avenue site move was not evaluated at the time. Since that study, Newport has invested and improved the NBFD including the recent addition of a Firefighter Paramedic assigned full-time to Truck 62 on the Balboa Peninsula. **The 2022 study is an important document showing where we were, not where we need to go to move public safety forward today.**

In June 2025, the City Council voted 6-0 to request the support of the Orange County Transportation Authority in relocating Fire Station 3 to the Avocado Avenue site.^[2] A cooperative agreement and term sheet between the City and OCTA now govern a jointly overseen relocation feasibility process for the transportation center,^[5] and on July 28, 2026, the City Council voted 7-0 to initiate a memorandum of understanding.^[6]

NBFA Key Findings

- Network response analysis revealed that relocation of Station 3 to the Avocado Avenue site would reduce first-due travel time to the Port Streets from 5:15 to 2:39, to the Harbor Hills Views and Spyglass area from 4:41 to 2:52, and to the Bonita Canyon and Ford Road corridor from 4:49 to 3:28. Three areas of the city fall outside the NFPA 1710 four-minute first-due travel objective under the current configuration. Under the proposed configuration, every area evaluated meets the objective, and **the citywide maximum first-due travel estimate falls from 5:15 to 3:46**. First-due figures throughout this report reflect the first-arriving unit from any Newport Beach fire station; driving distances for the affected corridors are measured using commercial-mapping routes.
- **Areas nearest the current station would give back time measured in seconds while the underserved corridors gain time measured in minutes.**
- For a reported structure fire or a multi-station alarm in the Eastbluff corridor, the time to assemble the full dispatched complement is effectively unchanged by the relocation. Assembly of the full complement is governed by the second and third-due engines responding from other stations, whose routes remain unaffected.
- For a structure fire in the Port Streets, **four of the five dispatched units would arrive more than two minutes sooner**, first water, first ladder, first ambulance, and command arrive at an estimated 3:59 from dispatch under the proposed configuration, compared with 6:35 under the current configuration.
- The relocation redeploys the existing Station 3 crews and requires no additional permanent staffing. The alternative concept identified in the 2022 study, construction of a ninth (and tenth) station, would require land the City does not control, a new engine company of approximately 12 to 15 personnel, and an estimated \$60 to \$100 million cost in the first ten years.

NBFA Recommendations

- The relocation of Fire Station 3 to the 1550 Avocado Avenue site should proceed through the established City and OCTA process.
- The Newport Transportation Center should be relocated to a replacement facility through the jointly governed feasibility process, preserving transit function and satisfying all Federal Transit Administration requirements.^[3]

NBFA Conclusion

Response analysis on measured driving routes revealed that **the proposed relocation would materially improve first-due coverage by minutes in the areas of the city with the greatest documented travel time deficiencies.** *While the affected neighborhoods nearest the current station give back time measured in seconds, retain full first-alarm coverage on an unchanged schedule, and overwhelmingly remain within the four-minute objective.*

The relocation achieves these improvements with existing personnel and apparatus. Any delay in the initiation of fire suppression, rescue, or emergency medical intervention translates directly into increased risk of property loss, injury, and death.

On the record and on the data, the relocation of Fire Station 3 is a public safety improvement for the City of Newport Beach.

1. Current Situation

The Newport Beach Fire Department provides fire suppression, rescue, and emergency medical services from eight fire stations. Station 3, located at 868 Santa Barbara Drive in Newport Center, houses one of the department's two truck companies and one of its four ambulances. The position of Station 3 therefore determines ladder and transport coverage for the eastern half of the city in addition to first-due engine coverage within its own district.

1.1 Station Locations and Frontline Staffing

Station	Location	Frontline staffing
1	110 E. Balboa Blvd (Balboa Peninsula)	Engine: Captain, Engineer, Firefighter Paramedic
2	2807 Newport Blvd (Lido)	Engine: Captain, Engineer, FFPM. Truck: Captain, Engineer, FF, FFPM. Ambulance: 2 FFPM
3	868 Santa Barbara Dr (Newport Center)	Engine: Captain, Engineer, FFPM. Truck: Captain, Engineer, FFPM, FF. Ambulance: 2 FFPM. Battalion Chief: BC
4	124 Marine Ave (Balboa Island)	Engine: Captain, Engineer, FFPM
5	410 Marigold Ave (Corona del Mar)	Engine: Captain, Engineer, FFPM. Ambulance: 2 FFPM
6	1348 Irvine Ave (Mariners)	Engine: Captain, Engineer, FFPM
7	20401 Acacia St (Santa Ana Heights)	Engine: Captain, Engineer, FFPM. Ambulance: 2 FFPM
8	6502 Ridge Park Rd (Newport Coast)	Engine: Captain, Engineer, FFPM

Table 1. Current fire station locations and frontline staffing.

1.2 Dispatch Protocols and Personnel

Engines are staffed with three personnel: a company officer, an engineer, and a firefighter paramedic. Trucks are staffed with four personnel: a company officer, an engineer, a tiller operator, and a firefighter paramedic. Ambulances are staffed with two firefighter paramedics. The dispatched response builds with the emergency type and call information:

- **Medical emergency:** the closest engine or truck, plus one ambulance. Five to six personnel.
- **Reported structure fire:** three engines, one truck, one ambulance, and one NBFD battalion chief. Sixteen NBFD personnel.
- **Confirmed working fire:** four total engines, two total trucks, one ambulance, and one NBFD battalion chief. Twenty-three NBFD personnel.

Fireground research by the National Institute of Standards and Technology demonstrates that the speed with which an effective complement of personnel is assembled on scene directly determines the completion time of time-critical tasks including search, rescue, and fire attack.^[8] Survival from out-of-hospital cardiac arrest declines by approximately 7 to 10 percent for each minute that passes without intervention.^[9]

This study only considers NBFD assigned personnel. Major events often utilize mutual aid and automatic aid agreements with neighboring departments, including the automatic dispatch of a second battalion chief on major events. Some calls for service in certain areas of the city may include automatic aid from neighboring departments. None of these factors are necessary to the study relating to the broad public safety benefit of relocating Fire Station 3. All data applies only to current NBFD personnel and staffing.

1.3 The 2022 Standards of Coverage Study Limitations

The 2022 study documented first-due travel performance exceeding the four-minute objective in the southeastern residential areas served by Station 3, including the Port Streets and the Bonita Canyon corridor. Its principal remedy was the addition of stations, including a new station in the vicinity of Bonita Canyon Sports Park near San Miguel Drive and Ford Road.^[1]

The study's deployment models held all existing station locations fixed. Relocation of any station, including relocation of Station 3 to the Avocado Avenue site, was outside its scope and was not evaluated. Four years after the study's publication, the recommended ninth station has not advanced: the city does not control a site, and no funding for land, construction, or a permanent additional crew has been programmed. The travel time deficiencies documented in 2022 remain in place today.

The 2022 study also did not consider potential improvements to egress, traffic optimizations, and total weighted response times in its analysis.

The NBFA supported the 2022 study as a blueprint for improving public safety in the city. However, the cost of the ninth and tenth fire stations as suggested by the 2022 study remain inefficient and incompatible with the current needs of the city. The NBFA supports the Station 3 relocation to Avocado Ave as a smart, cost-effective, and prudent investment that will provide an overwhelming boost to public safety with significant response time reductions and minimal response time increases. Trading seconds for minutes.

2. Network Response Analysis

Travel times were computed on a road-network model of the Newport Center, Eastbluff, Harbor View, and Corona del Mar street system using shortest-path routing over the arterial, collector, and residential segments used by responding apparatus. Distances to the affected areas are measured commercial-mapping driving routes and are consistent with the figures published in the June 10, 2025 City staff report.^[11] Time components follow NFPA 1710: 80 seconds turnout for fire and special operations, 60 seconds for emergency medical responses, a four-minute first-due travel objective, and an eight-minute travel objective for assembly of the initial full alarm, each at the 90th percentile.^[7] Modeling considerations and limitations are stated in Section 6.

2.1 First-Due Travel Time by Area

Estimated travel time of the first-arriving unit from any Newport Beach fire station, light traffic, shown in minutes and seconds. Most of the city is unaffected by the relocation because its first-due station does not change.

Area	Current	Standard	Proposed	Standard	Change
Harbor View / Port Streets	5:15	Does not meet	2:39	Meets	-2 min 36 sec
Harbor Hills Views / Spyglass	4:41	Does not meet	2:52	Meets	-1 min 49 sec
Bonita Canyon / Ford Road	4:49	Does not meet	3:28	Meets	-1 min 21 sec
Fashion Island	1:54	Meets	1:41	Meets	-13 sec
Westcliff / Dover Shores	2:10	Meets	2:10	Meets	No change
Newport Heights	1:44	Meets	1:44	Meets	No change
Santa Ana Heights	1:32	Meets	1:32	Meets	No change
Newport Ridge	1:32	Meets	1:32	Meets	No change

Cypress at Pacific Ridge	3:22	Meets	3:22	Meets	No change
Corona del Mar	under 1:00	Meets	under 1:00	Meets	No change
Balboa Island	1:46	Meets	1:46	Meets	No change
Lido Isle	1:51	Meets	1:51	Meets	No change
Balboa Peninsula	1:27	Meets	1:27	Meets	No change
Balboa Pier	1:29	Meets	1:29	Meets	No change
The Bluffs	3:15	Meets	3:24	Meets	+9 sec
Corona del Mar High School	2:14	Meets	3:03	Meets	+49 sec
Sea Island	1:58	Meets	3:00	Meets	+1 min 02 sec
Eastbluff	2:39	Meets	3:46	Meets	+1 min 07 sec
Park Newport	1:32	Meets	2:47	Meets	+1 min 15 sec

Table 2. Estimated first-due travel time by area, first-arriving unit from any station, current and proposed configurations. Standard refers to the NFPA 1710 four-minute first-due travel objective. Times under one minute are shown as under 1:00. Total response from dispatch adds 60 to 80 seconds of turnout.

Under the relocation, the Port Streets move from 5:15 to 2:39, the Harbor Hills Views and Spyglass area from 4:41 to 2:52, and the Bonita Canyon and Ford Road corridor from 4:49 to 3:28, all on measured driving routes. Fashion Island also improves.

Areas nearest the current station give back seconds while remaining within the four-minute objective: Eastbluff moves to 3:46, Park Newport to 2:47, Sea Island to 3:00, Corona del Mar High School to 3:03, and The Bluffs to 3:24. 10 areas are unaffected because their first-due station does not change. Section 2.2 addresses full-alarm assembly.

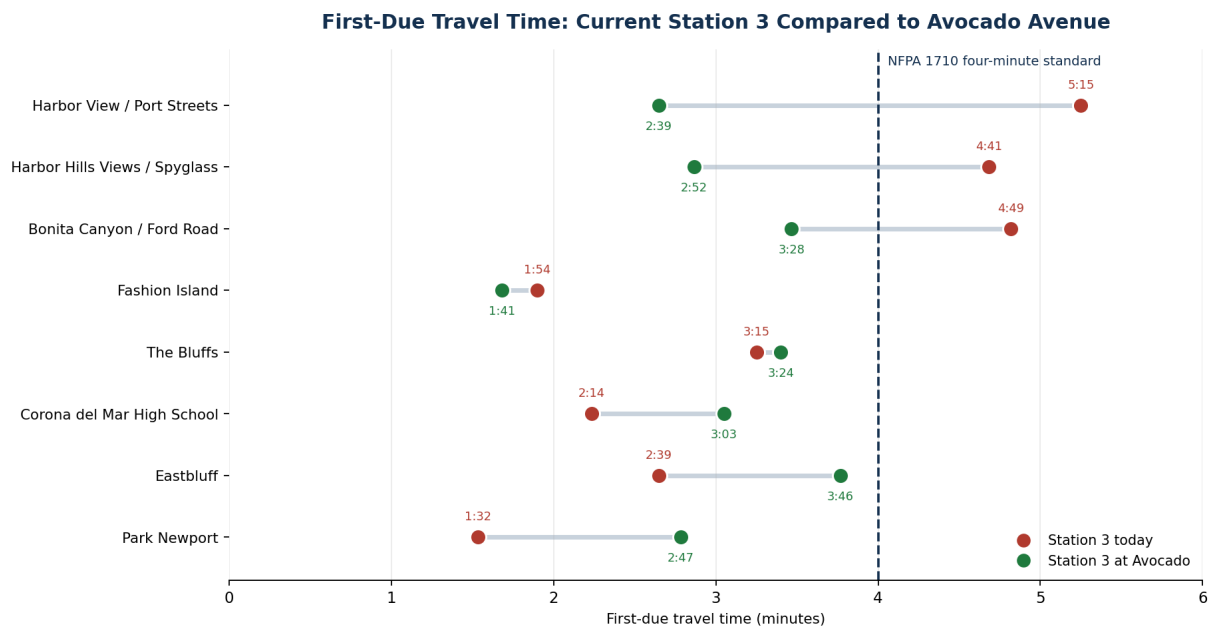
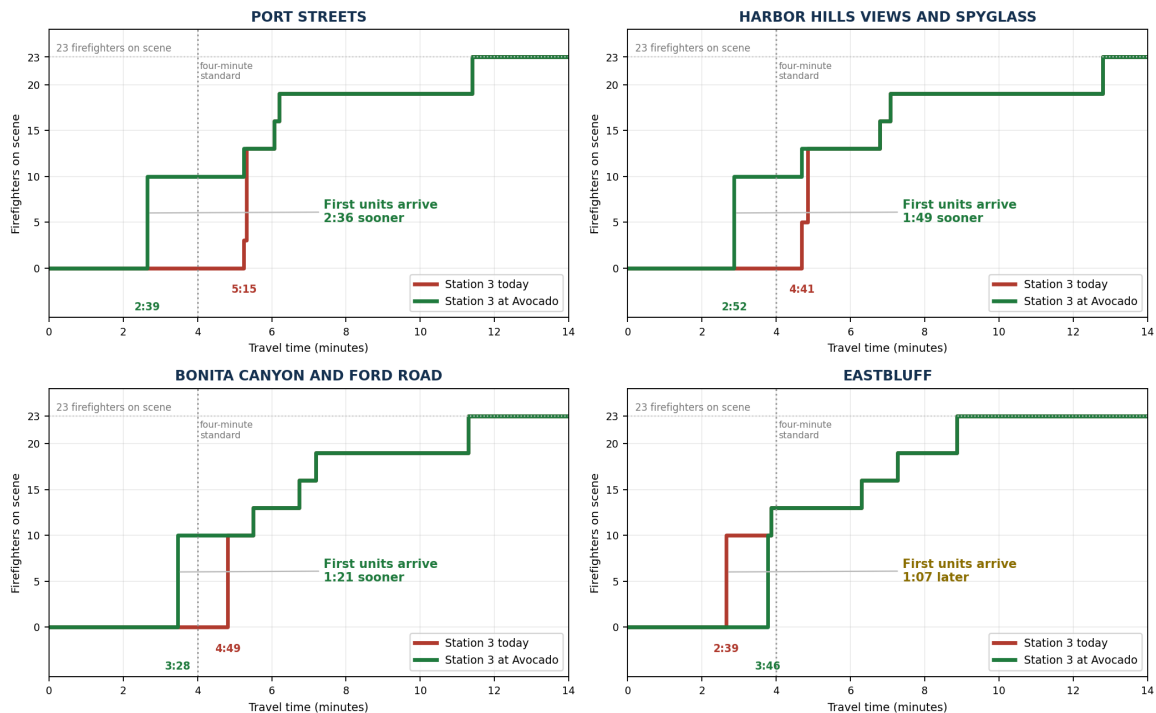


Figure 1. First-due travel time, current Station 3 compared with the Avocado Avenue site. Each pair shows one area. Areas whose first-due station does not change are not plotted. The dashed line is the NFPA 1710 four-minute first-due travel objective.

2.2 Working Fire Full Alarm Assembly

While much attention is rightly focused on the crucial four-minute first-due travel-time objective, it is equally important to note the time required to assemble a full alarm for a working fire. In the Port Streets, first water, first ladder, first ambulance, and command arrive at an estimated 3:59 from dispatch under the proposed configuration, compared with 6:35 under the current configuration, a measured-route improvement of 2:36.

Confirmed Working Fire: How Fast the Force Assembles



Travel time only, light traffic, matching the first-due figures in Table 2. Distances from Station 3 are Association-measured driving routes; travel time per the RAND fire response function with Opticom signal preemption applied on the Jamboree corridor.

Figure 2. Firefighters on scene over time, confirmed working fire (23 personnel), light traffic, travel time only. In the Port Streets, the Bonita Canyon and Ford Road corridor, and the Harbor Hills Views and Spyglass area, the first engine, truck, and ambulance arrive substantially sooner under the proposed configuration. In Eastbluff they arrive approximately one minute later, and the balance of the citywide force arrives on an unchanged schedule because no other station moves.

2.3 The Same Crews, Serving More People, Serving Families Faster

Newport Beach cannot afford to add a new fire station on every block, and the firefighters of this city are not asking it to. Together, the city can take this opportunity to place its next investment in a location that reaches the most people the fastest. That is what this relocation does, and it is why firefighters consider this a true public safety investment.

Coverage should not depend on which side of the city a household happens to be on. At present the Port Streets wait more than five minutes for a first unit while other neighborhoods see one in under two. Relocating Station 3 closes that spread without taking protection away from anyone: no neighborhood loses its first-due station, no area falls outside the four-minute objective, and the citywide worst case drops from 5:15 to 3:46. Every household in Newport Beach ends up on the right side of the four-minute line.

That is the most honest definition of good stewardship the Association knows.

3. The Newport Transportation Center

The Avocado Avenue parcel cannot serve both a fire station and a bus interchange. A fire station generates unannounced heavy apparatus egress under emergency conditions; a transit center concentrates dwelling buses and pedestrian activity at the same curb and driveway space a station apron requires. If the fire station belongs at the Avocado Avenue site for response coverage reasons, the transit function must be accommodated elsewhere, fully and properly.

The framework in place accomplishes that. The City and OCTA have executed a cooperative agreement and a term sheet governing a relocation feasibility study,^[5] with the City funding the work,^[4] and preservation of transit function, Federal Transit Administration property disposition requirements, and grantor concurrence stated as conditions.^[3] Support for examining the relocation has been publicly reported from the Teamsters union representing transit workers,^[10] and the City Council's July 28, 2026 direction to initiate a memorandum of understanding passed 7-0.^[6] No rider loses service under this framework: a replacement facility is the premise of the process, not an afterthought.

4. Fiscal Considerations

Two paths exist to address the travel time deficiencies and critical public safety concerns documented in 2022. One is a \$60 to \$100 million expense over the next decade. The other avoids the lifelong demands of new personnel on the city budget.

The relocation, never considered properly in the 2022 study, today captures the principal coverage improvement with existing crews, resolves the transportation center siting through a funded joint process, and forecloses no future option, including a northern area station should a future council fund one.

5. NBFA Facts

False claims are circulating publicly regarding the proposed relocation. The following presents the record.

Some claim the relocation is the project of a single elected official.	The record shows otherwise. The June 10, 2025 request to OCTA passed the City Council 6-0. The July 28, 2026 direction to initiate a memorandum of understanding passed 7-0. The relocation is supported by the Newport Beach Firefighters Association and by fire department and police department leadership. Recorded unanimous votes are the action of a council, not a person.
Some claim the City's 2022 fire study recommended against the relocation.	The 2022 study made no finding on the Avocado Avenue site. Its deployment models held all eight stations fixed, and relocation of any station was outside its scope. The same study documented the southeastern travel time deficiencies that the relocation addresses. The absence of a recommendation from a study that never evaluated the site is not a recommendation against it.
Some claim the relocation would dangerously degrade response to Eastbluff and nearby neighborhoods.	Every area evaluated meets the national four-minute standard under the proposed configuration, including Eastbluff. On measured driving routes with the City's existing signal preemption, Eastbluff moves from 2:39 to 3:46 and Corona del Mar High School from 2:14 to 3:03, both inside the standard. In exchange the Port Streets gain 2:36, the Harbor Hills Views and Spyglass area gains 1:49, and the Bonita Canyon and Ford Road corridor gains 1:21, all

	moving from outside the standard to inside it. Three areas fail the standard today; none does under the relocation.
Some claim the relocation exists to clear land for development.	The Newport Beach Firefighters Association supports moves that improve public safety, and this move improves public safety; that is why the Association supports it. The documented and recorded basis for the relocation is response coverage, established in unanimous public votes. Handwritten staff meeting notes recording exploratory options are not adopted policy, are not a plan, and are not a council action; no disposition of the Santa Barbara Drive property has been approved, negotiated, or brought to council, and this analysis assumes none.
Some claim OCTA opposes the relocation of the transportation center.	OCTA has executed a cooperative agreement and a term sheet governing a jointly overseen relocation feasibility study, with Federal Transit Administration requirements and grantor concurrence as express conditions and a replacement facility as the premise. The City funds the study, as the initiating party should. That is a governed process, not opposition.
Some claim transit riders would be harmed.	A replacement facility is a condition of the framework, and support for examining the relocation has been publicly reported from the union representing transit workers. The feasibility study exists to ensure riders are served as well or better, with federal requirements as a hard gate.

6. Methodology and Modeling Considerations

First-due figures reflect the first-arriving unit from any Newport Beach fire station. Driving distances from both Station 3 locations to every affected area are measured commercial-mapping routes verified by the Association. Distance converts to travel time using the RAND fire response function, travel time in minutes equal to 0.65 plus 1.7 times distance in miles, a standard planning relationship in fire deployment analysis.^[12] All figures are light-traffic estimates. The measured figures are consistent with the approximate distances published in the June 10, 2025 City staff report.^[2]

Preemption and emergency lights and sirens are modeled as a modest 20 percent travel-time reduction applied to the share of each route that runs on the Jamboree corridor.^[13]

The proposed station is sited on the Newport Transportation Center parcel at 33.61518 N, 117.86764 W. Distances to that point are the measured driving routes adjusted for its position on the parcel, an adjustment smaller than the precision of the measured routes themselves. Apparatus egress geometry, apron and driveway design, turning radius, and signal placement at the station exit are determined during station design and are assumed here to be built to current fire service standards.

Prior to drawing conclusions from this analysis, the following should be taken into consideration:

- Modeled travel speeds represent planning-level effective response speeds. Actual speeds may be slower with traffic incidents, work zones, weather, special events, signal operations, or roadway capacity constraints.

- The model does not incorporate incident-level historical dispatch data, seasonal event loads, or the timing of individual traffic signals.
- NBFA modeling considers travel time only. Turnout time is applied per NFPA 1710; alarm handling time of approximately 64 seconds precedes both and is reported separately where noted.
- Figures assume units are in quarters and available at dispatch.
- Second and third-due assignments are modeled as the next-closest stations by travel time; battalion chief quartering is at Station 3.

6.1 Educational Use and Limitations

This analysis is provided for educational and informational purposes only. It is not a guarantee of response.

The figures in this report are built from publicly available geographic information and mapping systems, including current traffic-aware routing, combined with the RAND fire response travel-time model and the turnout times published in NFPA 1710, in order to produce reasonable and defensible planning estimates of travel and response time.

Actual response times may vary. Crew status, system status, apparatus placement, concurrent incidents, traffic, weather, and other conditions outside the scope of this report all affect how quickly help arrives. Nothing in this report should be relied upon as a commitment or prediction of the response to any particular emergency.

In an emergency, dial 911.

The intent of this report is to present a clear, factual, and meaningful analysis showing that relocating Fire Station 3 from its current location to the transit center site will help Newport Beach firefighters save lives, protect property, and improve the quality of public safety across Newport Beach.

References

- [1] Emergency Services Consulting International (April 2022). City of Newport Beach Fire Department Standards of Coverage and Deployment Plan.
- [2] City of Newport Beach (June 10, 2025). City Council staff report and action: letter to the Orange County Transportation Authority requesting consideration and support for the relocation of Fire Station 3 to 1550 Avocado Avenue. Approved 6-0.
- [3] Orange County Transportation Authority (August 2025). Correspondence to the City of Newport Beach regarding the Newport Transportation Center: preservation of transit function, Federal Transit Administration property disposition requirements, and grantor concurrence.
- [4] Orange County Transportation Authority (January 2026). Agreement with HDR Engineering, Inc. for a relocation feasibility study of the Newport Transportation Center.
- [5] Orange County Transportation Authority (June 2026). Board file 26-7018: Term Sheet Agreement with the City of Newport Beach for the Potential Relocation of the Newport Transportation Center.
- [6] City of Newport Beach (July 28, 2026). City Council action directing a letter to the Orange County Transportation Authority to initiate a memorandum of understanding regarding relocation of the Newport Transportation Center. Approved 7-0. Resolution number and minutes to be appended upon posting.
- [7] National Fire Protection Association. NFPA 1710: Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments.
- [8] Averill, J.D. et al. (2010). Report on Residential Fireground Field Experiments. NIST Technical Note 1661. National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, MD.
- [9] American Heart Association. Out-of-hospital cardiac arrest survival declines by approximately 7 to 10 percent for each minute without cardiopulmonary resuscitation or defibrillation.

[10] Daily Pilot / Los Angeles Times (July 2, 2025). Coverage of the proposed Station 3 relocation and Newport Transportation Center, including reported support from the Teamsters union representing transit workers.

[11] Newport Beach Firefighters Association (August 2026). Response model documented in Section 6 of this report: measured commercial-mapping driving routes for the affected corridors, geometric estimates elsewhere, RAND fire response travel-time function.

[12] RAND Fire Project (Kolesar and Walker). Empirical fire apparatus travel-time function, $T = 0.65 + 1.7 D$, widely applied in fire station location analysis.

[13] City of Newport Beach Public Works. Traffic signal preemption (Opticom) equipment locations on the Jamboree Road corridor. Electronic Content Management System, document 3157227:

<https://ecms.newportbeachca.gov/WEB/DocView.aspx?id=3157227&dbid=0&repo=CNB>