

NEWS

New Torrey Pines fire station to begin construction in the fall



A rendering depicts a new fire station planned for the corner of North Torrey Pines Road and Genesee Avenue. (Courtesy of city of San Diego)

BY ASHLEY MACKIN-SOLOMON
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Filling in a gap in coverage for the Torrey Pines and north UC San Diego areas, the city of San Diego plans to build a new fire station, with the opening expected in mid-2024.

Currently, three other fire stations that can serve the area are south and east of the proposed location near the corner of North Torrey Pines Road and Genesee Avenue.

UC San Diego is contributing \$20.5 million for the project's design and construction, according to city spokesman Tyler Becker. The city budget has allocated \$1.2 million for furniture, fixtures and equipment, he said. Construction is expected to begin in the fall.

Any unused funds from UCSD's contribution will be returned to the university, Becker said. The San Diego Fire-Rescue Department will be responsible for the cost of ongoing operations, maintenance and repairs.

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"The Torrey Pines fire station will provide a greatly improved emergency response to the surrounding community and an energy-efficient facility consistent with the city of San Diego Climate Action Plan targets," Becker said.

The two-story, 12,360-square-foot station — formerly known as the UCSD fire station — will accommodate three drive-through apparatus bays and nine staff members, including a battalion chief.

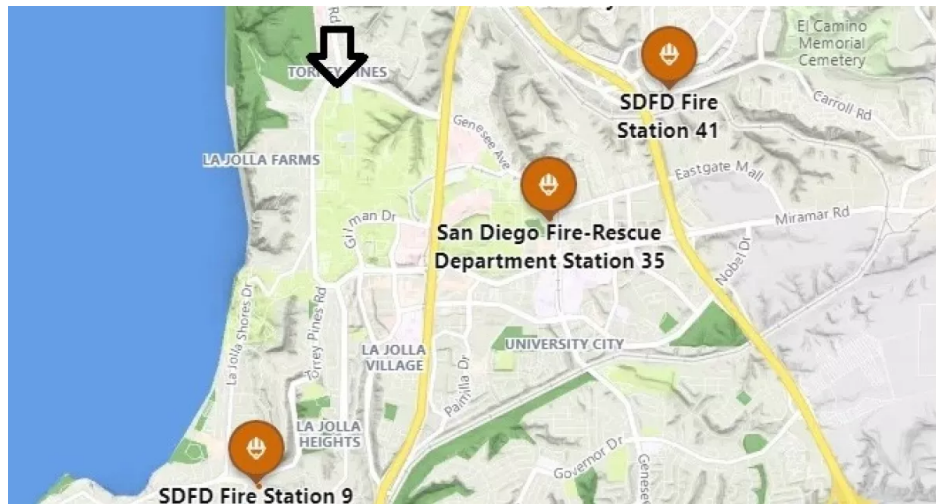
The site, accessed from North Torrey Pines Road, will include three visitor and 18 firefighter parking stalls along with required on- and off-site utility upgrades and new emergency signals midblock in the public right of way. Street and traffic improvements also are planned along Torrey Pines Road to assist emergency vehicles.

In addition, the facility will feature dorm rooms, a kitchen, watch room, ready room, station alerting system, data network, wet and dry utilities and other necessary infrastructure.

Level 10 Construction is the builder for the project, and Miller Hull is the architect.

In 2017, an analysis for the city by Citygate Associates identified gaps in service areas. Since then, UCSD announced it could add as many as 10,000 students over the next decade, pushing enrollment to 50,000 and making it among the largest schools in the western United States.

Given the area's expected population increase, "this new station will address a gap and also plans for future growth in the vicinity," said San Diego Fire-Rescue Department spokeswoman Monica Muñoz. "Our goal is for a crew to reach emergency calls for service within seven minutes and 30 seconds, and this station will help us meet that goal."



A map of current fire stations in the La Jolla area, with the arrow pointing to the approximate location of the planned Torrey Pines station. (Bing Maps and La Jolla Light)

The new station is about 60 percent of the way through the design phase.

“Given the demanding nature of a firefighter’s work and the 24/7 operation of the facility, firefighter health and well-being are at the core of the design,” Becker said. “The proposed two-story scheme provides efficient and straightforward circulation for optimal response times from the living areas to the apparatus bay. A smart, efficient envelope, minimal material use for low embodied carbon emissions and a single large roof plane for renewables emphasize the project’s focus on energy reduction.”

The city is exploring buying an electric fire engine for the station “as funding becomes available,” Becker said. ♦

Updates

5:16 p.m. Jan. 6, 2022: This article has been updated to include additional details and to clarify that UC San Diego is contributing \$20.5 million for the fire station's design and construction.
