



Superstition Fire & Medical District Calls for November Bond Election

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GOLD CANYON - (April 17, 2025) – The Board of Directors for the Superstition Fire & Medical District voted unanimously to call for a special election to seek voter approval to issue bonds to provide funds to construct, renovate, improve, equip and furnish fire stations and other district facilities, acquire apparatus, vehicles and equipment, and other costs. The \$33.8 million proposal will now appear on a November 4, 2025, Special Election Ballot.

The decision was the culmination of several months of work by a Citizen’s Advisory Committee who conducted a public process to explore a potential General Obligation bond to address public safety needs, consider improvements, and weigh possible costs to the taxpayers. The committee focused on the history of the district, how fire districts are funded in Arizona, current and future service levels, budgeting and financial issues, capital needs, as well as toured current facilities.

Following their deliberative process, the Citizen’s Advisory Committee recommended a special election in 2025 to provide revenue for modern public safety facilities, vehicles, and equipment.

“We appreciate our local residents who dedicated their time to review the issues facing our district,” said John Whitney, Fire Chief of Superstition Fire & Medical District, “Over the past ten years, the annual call volume in the Superstition Fire & Medical District has increased by more than 60% from 8,000 calls in 2014 to nearly 13,000 calls in 2024. At the same time, we face capped tax rates and reduced valuations that make addressing this growth a challenge. We thank them for their deliberation and hard work.”

It is the opinion of the board that it will be challenging to address increases in the costs of emergency equipment and emergency response vehicles, combined with many of our current resources reaching the end of their useful life with current budget resources.

Superstition Fire & Medical District Governing Board Director, Jason Moeller explained, “The cost of personnel equipment (helmets, coats, gloves, etc.) to equip our public safety personnel has more than doubled since 2019. The cost of breathing apparatuses alone has nearly tripled in that time. Many of our vehicles are years past their service date – with rising repair costs and risks of being out of service. Several vehicles are near the end of their useful life and may take up to three years to replace. Our board of directors has determined that a bond would be an effective way to address these items.”

To meet the demands of our growing community, the bond recommendation includes funding for a new fire station (Station 266) to serve the Superstition Vistas area, which was annexed into the Superstition Fire & Medical District in 2021. Adding this station would potentially help ensure crews remain strategically located across the district — supporting faster response times for all residents. In addition to the new station, the bond also recommends funding for equipment, vehicles, and improvements to existing facilities to increase capacity and efficiency, as well as address ongoing training needs.

Superstition Fire & Medical District Governing Board Chair, Kathleen Chamberlain concluded, “Bonds are used to finance large capital items like facility improvements and new equipment that are not typically covered by the regular maintenance and operations budget. The district sells bonds to investors to generate funding for the projects and then pays the investors back with interest over a period of 20 years. It is a way to plan for capital expenses that could help to avoid costly repairs or emergency replacement. We look forward to sharing information with the voters over the next few months.”

The sale and issuance of such general obligation bonds must first be authorized by a majority of the qualified electors of the district at a special bond election called for such purposes before the district can proceed. The estimated average tax rate for the proposed bond authorization is 27 cents per \$100 of net assessed limited property value. For more information, voters can visit www.sfmd.az.gov or call (480) 982-4440.

About the Superstition Fire & Medical District

Superstition Fire & Medical District employs 104 public safety personnel, 24 ambulance personnel, and 14 support civilian staff serving the areas of Gold Canyon, Apache Junction, and Superstition Vistas. The district is an all-hazards organization responding to more than just fire. Over 76% of all requests for emergency services include rescue and emergency medical services. The district has maintained response times with an average time of 4:33 on emergent calls. The district uses fiscally responsible measures including pursuing grant opportunities, reducing pension liability, restructuring its healthcare system, and partnering with municipalities for shared services and purchasing.