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CITY OF DOWNEY

PRESS RELEASE



Downey, CA, December 24, 2013: On December 23, 2013, the Downey Firemen Association ("Association") filed a Government Tort Claim against the City of Downey alleging that the Association's members have been subjected to retaliation.

The allegations contained in the Government Tort Claim are identical to and the subject of internal grievances that are currently being addressed through the City's grievance procedures at the request of the Association's members. Therefore, it is premature for the City to respond to those allegations until that process has run its course. It is also the City's policy to not comment on pending personnel investigations as they are confidential.

Mayor Vasquez and members of the Council support Chief Croom's leadership of the Fire Department and his many accomplishments. "It is disappointing that the Association appears to be using the Tort Claims process to politicize its disagreement with Chief Croom's objective and candid assessment to the Council regarding the Association's proposal to contract out fire services to the County," stated Mayor Fernando Vasquez. "Rather than focus on public safety and our residents and respecting the internal process that exists to address their concerns, the tort claim will result in Downey taxpayers footing the bill for expensive and unnecessary litigation," he added. The tort claim comes on the heels of an Association proposed charter amendment which seeks to eliminate the voters' right to approve the contracting out of public safety services. Preliminary studies conducted by the Los Angeles County Fire Department revealed that contracting out fire services can cost Downey taxpayers more than 50 percent over a ten-year period with less staff to provide fire services.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE