

URGENT - WEATHER MESSAGE



Budget woes force postponement of joint Valley fire station

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In an attempt to balance their budgets, the cities of Avondale and Litchfield Park will postpone plans for a joint fire station.

Postponing the plans for a year move will save approximately \$1.1 million for Avondale and \$650,000 for Litchfield Park.

Avondale, Litchfield Park and Estrella Mountain Community College are partners in the project, a \$6 million, 18,200 square-foot public safety building project on the northwest corner of Dysart Road and Sage Lane.

The project, currently in design phase and scheduled to be completed in early 2010, will house a fire station; an Avondale police substation, as well as classroom facilities for students enrolled in EMCC's new Emergency Medical

Technician (EMT) program.

"The cities of Avondale and Litchfield Park are committed to jointly operating a fire-station at the northwest public safety facility," said Avondale City Manager Charlie McClendon. "However, given our current budget constraints, it is necessary to postpone the opening of the fire station in FY 2009-2010. In the meantime, Avondale will continue to provide fire and emergency medical coverage for our residents from our existing stations."

As part of an agreement between the two cities, the new fire station would be operated by Avondale Fire/Rescue. The cities have agreed to share construction and operational costs for the northwest public safety facility.

Although the building will be completed early next year, the cities presently plan to begin operating the new fire station in early 2011.

The Avondale Police Department is moving ahead with its plans to operate a police substation at the northwest public safety facility with existing personnel.

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