

City of Porterville
291 N. Main Street
Porterville, CA 93257



For more information contact:
Yuriko Velarde, Administrative Analyst
(559) 306-1211
July 5, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of Porterville Receives \$10 Million for New Emergency Operations Center

The City of Porterville has been appropriated \$10 million in funding as part of California Assembly Bill 178, the Budget Act of 2022, for the development of a new Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and public safety administrative offices, to be located at the former Porterville Library site. The EOC will serve as the critical coordination hub during emergency incidents and will be the centralized location for emergency response and recovery operations in the Porterville and greater southeastern Tulare County area. With the catastrophic Library fire on February 18, 2020 that claimed the lives of Fire Captain Ramon “Ray” Figueroa and Firefighter Patrick Jones, the facility will also importantly include a memorial area in honor of the City’s fallen firefighters.

Acting Porterville Fire Chief Bryan Cogburn stated that he is “grateful that the Fire Department will be able to utilize the site of the former Library for a new EOC and public safety administrative building, given its immediate proximity to Fire Station 71 and the Porterville Police Department. The Fire Department’s objective has been to utilize this site in a way that the Fire Department can continue to honor both Ray and Patrick, and this significant State funding makes it feasible. Moving forward, we will work with both the Figueroa and Jones families to incorporate a memorial area within the facility.”

Porterville Police Chief Jake Castellow also expressed his gratitude, saying “it is tremendous news to learn funding has been allocated to the City of Porterville for a new EOC and public safety administration building. As the city continues to grow, so does the needs assessment for both Police and Fire protection, and this state-of-the-art facility will not only enhance local Police and Fire protection, but will add needed technology in a modern EOC in an effort to continue to provide the best public safety to the residents of the city of Porterville. The Police Department is also thankful to be able to use the former Library site for this new facility, and is an honorable way to memorialize Fire Captain Ray Figueroa and Firefighter Patrick Jones in the construction of a building that serves an essential public safety purpose.”

The Figueroa and Jones family have been supportive of the former library site serving a public safety purpose, which the EOC and administrative offices will provide. The Figueroa family stated that it “feels appreciative that the City of Porterville and Porterville Fire Department will be receiving funding from the State of California for an Emergency Operations Center at the site of where we lost our two heroes.” The Jones family added that “this is an opportunity for the community and the citizens of Porterville to heal as well as the Jones and the Figueroa’s and our Fire family! We look forward to seeing this project that will hopefully memorialize our fallen heroes.”

Mayor Martha Flores expressed her gratitude, "On behalf of the City of Porterville and its residents, I am thankful beyond words to State Senator Melissa Hurtado for her support in requesting and the State appropriating \$10 million for the development of a new EOC and public safety administrative offices at the former Library site. The devastating loss of Fire Captain Ramon Figueroa and Firefighter Patrick Jones in the Library fire will never be forgotten by our community, which with the support of both the Figueroa and Jones families, the former Library site will not only be developed into an essential facility to better protect and serve the emergency preparedness and public safety of the community but also importantly incorporate an appropriate memorial to Fire Captain Figueroa and Firefighter Jones. The protection and preparedness of our community's public safety and its residents is one of the City's highest priorities, which with the grateful support of the Figueroa and Jones families and Senator Hurtado, this essential facility will certainly benefit and enhance."