



What changes is the City Council considering for fire department operations?

We are very pleased with the quality of public safety services provided in Maplewood. Over the past four years, we have been looking closely at trends in fire and emergency management services, with the goals of continuing to improve services and reducing unnecessary costs. After working closely with an independent consultant and a task force of local residents, we have concluded that Maplewood needs to shift from a mix of part-time and full-time firefighters to a full-time staff.

Why do we need to change staffing now?

The services provided by the fire department continue to evolve. By 2025, the Maplewood Fire Department expects to answer 9,000 annual calls, more than double the total in 2011. Nearly 90 percent of those calls will require EMS services, rather than responding to fires or rescue situations. We have determined that both the volume and complexity of these services justifies a sustainable, full-time workforce.

Are part-time firefighters unable to do the job anymore?

We have excellent part-time firefighters. However, it is more efficient and more sustainable to train and schedule a full-time workforce than a mix of full-time and part-time firefighters.

How would this change improve operations?

In addition to providing more stability in scheduling, training costs would be reduced if we transitioned to a permanent full-time staff of firefighters. For example, it takes 21 part-time firefighters to fill the equivalent of three full-time positions in our current model. With initial training costing ranging from \$8,000 to \$15,000, and additional training offered annually, it is more responsible to focus tax dollars on a full-time stable workforce.

Will this cost more money?

In the first year, we are estimating a \$200,000 increase in the public safety budget to employ a full-time staff rather than a mix of full-time and part-time staff. This is equal to \$4 per year for the owner of a median value home. Each year, part or all of this budget increase will be offset by reductions in the following areas: overtime pay; ongoing training; new employee training and orientation; and replacement equipment.

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Will the reduction in total staff affect your ability to respond to emergencies?

The new staffing model will increase our capacity to respond in a more timely manner.

Today our minimum staffing is 6 firefighters per shift. If implemented, the addition of full-time staff will result in a minimum of 9 firefighters during our busiest time and 7 firefighters when demand lessens. It will shave travel times from 8.3 minutes to 8 minutes.

If this plan is adopted, how many full-time firefighters will the City of Maplewood employ?

Twenty-seven, which will be an increase in nine full-time firefighters.

Are other communities transitioning to full-time firefighters?

These decisions are not unique to Maplewood. Neighboring communities in the metro area are experiencing similar transitions.

Read: [Why are volunteer fire departments going up in smoke?](http://bit.ly/2nd3tOd) (http://bit.ly/2nd3tOd)

Read: [Eagan Fire Chief wants fewer volunteers and more paid firefighters](http://bit.ly/2n8rRAz) (http://bit.ly/2n8rRAz)

Recruitment and retention of part-time, paid-on-call and volunteer firefighters challenges communities across the state.

Will this result in fewer firefighters being assigned per shift?

No. In fact, our minimum staffing levels will increase while giving us greater predictability when scheduling work, and even reduce the need to use overtime.

Can part-time firefighters apply for the full-time jobs?

If they are able to commit to full-time work, we encourage them to apply for the open full-time positions.

What will happen to the current part-time firefighters?

Their jobs will be phased out over a period of time. Any firefighter that does not transition into a full-time position in Maplewood will receive a severance package and the pension benefits they have earned during their service.

What are the next steps?

The City Council heard the report from the consultant at its meeting on January 25th

