



A FIRE/EMS PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

By Steve Lukin, Fire Chief and Mike Mondor, Chief of EMS

Maplewood's Fire/EMS Department constantly evaluates our operations and performance to ensure maximum efficiency and service delivery. Based on these evaluations, we have made a number of improvements in the last year, including going to an all full-time department and increasing day-time staffing to better cover peak call hours. As part of this process, we are also considering realigning our fire stations.

While our South fire station is fairly new, both Central (Gladstone) and North (Hazelwood) stations need repairs and renovation. City Council will determine whether we should make the investments needed to keep operating three active fire stations, or whether we can transition to two modern fire stations and sustain our current level of service.

According to analysis by Fitch and Associates, an independent consultant to the City, a two-station system can respond to 96.4 percent of calls within eight minutes, travel time, the standard set by Maplewood for emergency responses. Continuing to operate a third station improves that performance to just 96.8 percent. With an initial cost of \$6.7 million and annual operating costs of at least \$45,000 for each fire station, that is a high price to pay for a very small performance gain.

The Maplewood Fire Department has adequate staff to respond to more than one fire at a time, and we also have mutual aid agreements with surrounding cities.

Based on the independent consultant's analysis, the plan under consideration calls for tearing down the North station and rebuilding a modern facility at the current site, while closing the Central station.

With a full-time staff already on site, the need for multiple stations has been reduced. When communities utilized volunteer (or paid-per-call) responders, stations needed to be close to where those firefighters lived and worked so they could get to stations and gear up quickly. This is no longer the case and is a model that is shifting in other communities. Most suburbs in Maplewood's peer group operate no more than two fire stations, including Roseville (1), White Bear Lake (2), Oakdale (2), North St. Paul (1).

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Attend one of our two open houses to learn more about the plan:



OPEN HOUSE

June 26

6:00 - 7:00pm

Fire Station 3 (North)

1530 County Road C East



OPEN HOUSE

July 11

6:00 - 7:00pm

Fire Station 1 (South)

600 McKnight Road N

Take a minute to fill out the station realignment survey on Polco.us/Maplewood
bit.ly/mpldfirestations

In June, the City will host two open houses so residents can learn more about the proposal and weigh in on the plan. You can also get more information by call the City of Maplewood at 651-249-2000 or going to Maplewoodmn.gov and clicking "Public Safety."

We are also running a survey for residents to provide their feedback online. Please take a few minutes to respond by going to Polco.us/Maplewood.

Maplewood Fire and EMS is committed to providing effective emergency response while maintaining fiscal responsibility which is why we have examined this issue so closely. The analysis conducted by Fitch and Associates established a road map for the future of service delivery in the City of Maplewood. By staying with three station or moving to two stations the men and women who make up the Maplewood Fire/EMS Department will continue their commitment in providing the highest level of service to those in need.

