

Proposition B Fiscal Impact Analysis

Fiscal Note

If this proposed amendment is approved, an overall fiscal impact analysis shows there will be immediate and continued costs to the City. Based on the City’s population density and the prevalence of large buildings classified as “high-hazard occupancies,” the minimum company staffing levels required by NFPA would be six on-duty members. To comply with the minimum staffing requirements and the response time targets set forth by the petition, the Round Rock Fire Department would need to add 207 firefighter positions over the next eight years. The total cost for complying with the petition is \$228.2 million: \$48.7 million of one-time capital costs for three additional fire stations and \$179.5 million in cumulative annual operating costs for staffing, operations, and maintenance. The estimated tax rate impact for this increase is 11.6 cents.

Minimum Staffing Requirements

The petition states that:

The Round Rock Fire Department **shall** be governed by the **minimum company staffing levels** for **engine companies, ladder/truck companies, and fire companies with quint apparatus** identified in the version of NFPA 1710, *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments*, in effect at the time.

The “shall” requires compliance with the “minimum company staffing levels” identified in the version of NFPA 1710 in effect at the time.

NFPA (the National Fire Protection Association) has consolidated their standards and NFPA 1710, *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments*, has been replaced with NFPA 1750, *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Services, Special Operations, and Fire Prevention Activities*.

Chapter 5 of NFPA 1750 provides the minimum company staffing levels which have remained unchanged from NFPA 1710. The minimum company staffing levels for engine companies (5.2.3.1), ladder companies (5.2.3.2), and quint companies (5.2.3.4) are as follows:

- 1) These companies shall be staffed with a minimum of **four on-duty members**.
- 2) In first-due response zones with a high number of incidents, geographical restrictions, geographical isolation, or **urban** areas, these companies shall be staffed with a minimum of **five on-duty members**.

- 3) In first-due response zones with tactical hazards, **high-hazard occupancies**, or **dense urban** areas, these fire companies shall be staffed with a minimum of **six on-duty members**.

The language in NFPA 1710 provided more flexibility in the urban and dense urban categorization by clarifying that these urban and dense urban densities were “as identified by the AHJ (authority having jurisdiction)” – perhaps opening the door for the City to choose to self-identify areas as being so dense as to require the additional staffing. NFPA 1750, however, removes this self-identification and lets the following definitions of urban and dense urban stand alone:

3.3.86 Urban. An incorporated or unincorporated area with a population of over 30,000 people and/or a population density over 1,000 people per square mile but less than 2,999.

3.3.23 Dense Urban. An incorporated or unincorporated area with a population of over 200,000 people and/or a population density of over 3,000 people per square mile.

The overall density of Round Rock is 3,599 persons per square mile (our most recent population estimate of 141,803 divided by current city limits which encompasses 39.404 square miles). While the population densities for certain response zones would vary, it is likely that the population densities within each zone would be greater than 3,000 people per square mile, requiring minimum company staffing levels of six on-duty members per NFPA standards.

High-Hazard Occupancies are defined in NFPA 1750 as follows:

3.3.47 High-Hazard Occupancy. An occupancy that presents a high life hazard, is **greater than 196,000 ft²**(> 18,209m²), **taller than 75 feet** (23 m) or has high fire potential due to its location; construction; configuration; the presence of specific materials, processes, contents; or as defined by a formal documented and adopted risk assessment process.

GIS data shows that there are **22** buildings greater than 196,000 square feet and 15 buildings taller than 75 feet within Round Rock city limits and ETJ. These buildings are classified as “High-Hazard Occupancies” by NFPA standards and would require minimum company staffing levels of six on-duty members. These buildings are listed in the Appendix to this writeup.

In summary, the petition states that the City **shall** be governed by the minimum company staffing levels identified in NFPA’s standards. These standards state that our companies **shall** be staffed with a minimum of six on-duty members for response zones that are dense urban or response zones that include high-hazard occupancies. The population density of Round Rock and the prevalence of these large buildings throughout the City would push the minimum staffing level to comply with NFPA standards to six on-duty members.

Fiscal Note Methodology

In addition to the minimum company staffing levels discussed above, the petition would also require that the City comply with performance objectives for alarm answering time, alarm processing time, turnout time, and travel time identified by NFPA. These objectives are

phased from 2031 to 2035. The city currently meets these performance objectives in most of the service area, but to comply with the standards set forth in the petition given future population growth and increase in population density, additional future fire stations would likely be needed to ensure that coverage is sufficient to meet the travel time objectives.

Minimum Company Staffing

The petition proposes the following phased approach to minimum company staffing:

- By **January 1, 2027**, all ladder/truck companies and all fire companies with quint apparatus.
- By **January 1, 2029**, all ladder/truck companies, all fire companies with quint apparatus, and all engine companies located at specialty stations, such as Wildland, Hazmat, and Technical Rescue.
- By **January 1, 2031**, all engine companies, all ladder/truck companies, and all fire companies with quint apparatus.

*Fiscal Year 2027 – Additional **45** firefighters.*

For FY 2027, we are already bringing Station 11 staffing forward for New Program consideration. This station will just have an engine so it will not need to be staffed with six firefighters per shift until 2031, so we can add 12 firefighters for the new station.

We have four ladders/quints (Truck 3, Truck 7, Ladder 8, Quint 9) that, by January 1, 2027, would need to be staffed with six firefighters per shift. This is an increase of 36 firefighters to meet minimum staffing, plus 9 additional fire fighter positions (three per shift) to keep the appropriate staffing factors for vacation, sick/FMLA, training, and injured on the job (IOJ).

*Fiscal Year 2029 – Additional **36** firefighters*

We have three specialty stations (Technical Rescue, Hazmat, Wildland) that, by January 1, 2029, would need to be staffed with six firefighters per shift. This is an increase of 27 firefighters to meet minimum staffing, plus 9 additional fire fighter positions (three per shift) to keep the appropriate staffing factors for vacation, sick/FMLA, training, and IOJ.

*Fiscal Year 2031 – Additional **54** firefighters*

We have five engines that are not specialty stations (Engines 3, 4, 5, 10, 11) that, by January 1, 2031, would need to be staffed with six firefighters per shift. This is an increase of 45

firefighters to meet minimum staffing, plus 9 additional firefighter positions (three per shift) to keep the appropriate staffing factors for vacation, sick/FMLA, training, and IOJ.

Performance Objectives

The petition proposes the following phased approach to performance objectives:

- By **January 1, 2031**, alarm answering time of not more than 15 seconds for at least 95 percent of the alarms received and not more than 40 seconds for at least 99 percent of the alarms received; and alarm processing time of not more than 64 seconds for at least 90 percent of the alarms received and not more than 106 seconds for at least 95 percent of the alarms.
- By **January 1, 2033**, shall meet the NFPA turnout time and travel time performance objectives for 50 percent of alarms received.
- By **January 1, 2035**, shall meet the NFPA turnout time and travel time performance objectives for 75 percent of alarms received.
- By **January 1, 2037**, shall meet the NFPA turnout time and travel time performance objectives for 90 percent of alarms received.

Finance assumes that to meet the performance objectives – particular the 240 seconds or less travel time – we will need to open the remaining three planned fire stations to ensure adequate coverage across the entire service area. That would be Stations 12, 13, and 14 in the northwest, northeast, and south-central portions of the City. Each station would require 18 firefighters to staff it at a minimum staffing of six firefighters per shift, plus six additional firefighter positions (two per shift) to keep the appropriate staffing factors for vacation, sick/FMLA, training, and injured on the job (IOJ).

Summary of New Positions

Description	Number of firefighter positions
Station 11 (previously planned)	12
FY 2027 Minimum Staffing	45
FY 2029 Minimum Staffing	36
FY 2031 Minimum Staffing	54
Station 12 – 2031	24
Station 13 – 2033	24
Station 14 – 2035	24
Total Firefighters	219
Total firefighters due to petition (<i>less Station 11 as previously planned</i>)	207

Appendix: High-Hazard Occupancies

Buildings over 196,000 square-feet in size or over 75 feet in high are classified “high-hazard occupancies” per NFPA standards and require companies that serve that area as a “first-due response zone” to be staffed with a minimum of six on-duty members.

Large Buildings (greater than 196,000 square-feet)

Rank	Business Name	Address	Area (Sq Ft)
1	Kalahari	3001 Kalahari Blvd	618,115
2	Round Rock High School	201 Deep Wood Dr	511,426
3	TECO-Westinghouse	5100 N IH 35	437,544
4	Ascension Seton Williamson Hospital	201 Seton Pkwy	370,712
5	Cedar Ridge High School	2801 Gattis School Rd	346,083
6	IKEA	1 IKEA Way	319,462
7	Stony Point High School	1801 Tiger Trl	315,356
8	Round Rock Premium Outlets (North Bldg)	4401 N IH 35 Frontage Rd	274,324
9	Round Rock Premium Outlets (South Bldg)	4401 N IH 35 Frontage Rd	261,584
10	UPS	33 Roundville Ln	253,321
11	La Frontera – Lowe’s, Boot Barn, Burlington	110 Sundance Pkwy	253,202
12	Lakeside at La Frontera	941 Hesters Crossing	246,426
13	Enclave at La Frontera	2800 La Frontera Blvd	242,033
14	Dell	503 Dell Way	233,910
15	Amazon	3150 Chisholm Trail Rd	228,828
16	Amazon	2525 CR 172	228,078
17	Walmart	4700 E Palm Valley Blvd	228,069
18	St. David’s Round Rock Medical Center	2400 Round Rock Ave	223,948
19	Sky Ridge Plaza	2000 S IH 35	223,577
20	La Frontera – Sam’s Club, Hobby Lobby	130 Sundance Pkwy	216,605
21	Walmart	2701 S IH 35	214,262
22	Baylor Scott & White Medical Center	300 University Blvd	197,203

Tall Buildings (taller than 75 feet)

Rank	Business Name	Address	Height (ft)
1	Ascension Seton Williamson Hospital	201 Seton Pkwy	199.71
2	Kalahari	3001 Kalahari Blvd	123.62
3	Palm Valley Lutheran Church	2500 E Palm Valley Blvd	102.40
4	Austin Marriott North	2600 La Frontera Blvd	101.04
5	St John Vianney Catholic Church	3201 Sunrise Rd	98.85
6	Baylor Scott & White Medical Center	300 University Blvd	97.63
7	First United Methodist Church	1004 N Mays St	94.96

8	St. David's Round Rock Medical Center	2400 Round Rock Ave	94.60
9	Emerson	1100 W Louis Henna Blvd	91.89
10	Embassy Suites by Hilton Round Rock	270 Bass Pro Dr	88.01
11	Saint William Catholic Church	620 Round Rock W Dr	86.93
12	Texas A&M Health Science Center	3950 N AW Grimes Blvd	85.34
13	Baylor Scott & White Clinic	425 University Blvd	84.69
14	Old Town Square	1 Chisholm Trail Rd	80.30
15	Hyatt Place Austin/Round Rock	420 Sundance Pkwy	78.49

Fiscal Note Cost Calculations

Description	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031	FY 2032	FY 2033	FY 2034	Total
Staffing									
Minimum Staffing	45	45	81	81	135	135	135	135	135
New Station Staffing	0	0	0	24	24	48	48	72	72
<i>Total New Staffing</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>81</i>	<i>105</i>	<i>159</i>	<i>183</i>	<i>183</i>	<i>207</i>	
<i>Salaries & Benefits</i>									
Base Salaries	3,671,101	3,928,078	7,474,641	10,417,051	16,505,244	20,302,422	21,723,592	26,129,167	
Unscheduled Overtime	57,996	62,056	118,099	164,592	260,798	320,798	343,254	412,867	
FICA	285,276	305,245	580,845	809,496	1,282,602	1,577,676	1,688,114	2,030,466	
TMRS	653,338	699,072	1,330,248	1,853,904	2,937,411	3,613,188	3,866,111	4,650,164	
Workers Compensation	48,478	51,872	98,706	137,561	217,959	268,102	286,869	345,046	
Unemployment	5,265	5,265	9,477	12,285	18,603	18,603	18,603	18,603	
Insurance	624,240	624,240	1,174,820	1,560,225	2,470,747	2,470,747	2,470,747	2,470,747	
Total Salaries & Benefits	5,345,694	5,675,828	10,786,835	14,955,115	23,693,363	28,571,536	30,397,289	36,057,059	155,482,719
Operations	1,016,226	1,016,226	1,870,364	2,454,025	3,800,093	4,413,302	4,413,302	5,057,554	24,041,091
Total Salaries & Operations	6,361,920	6,692,054	12,657,199	17,409,139	27,493,456	32,984,838	34,810,591	41,114,614	179,523,810
Capital									
New Station Construction			13,422,656		14,517,945		15,702,609		
New Engine				1,588,068		1,684,782		1,787,385	
Total Capital	-	-	13,422,656	1,588,068	14,517,945	1,684,782	15,702,609	1,787,385	48,703,444
Grand Total	6,361,920	6,692,054	26,079,855	18,997,208	42,011,401	34,669,619	50,513,200	42,901,998	228,227,254