

Section 7: Governance

*Governance Sub-Approved Date: **September 4, 2024 (REWORK)***

Governance Sub-Approved Date: September 18, 2024

RFAPC-Approved Date: _____

Reference

The authority to provide governance for the Camas/Washougal Regional Fire Authority (RFA) is provided by RCW 52.26.080 and RCW 52.26.090.

Activity/Operation

As provided by RCW 52.26.080, the Camas/Washougal RFA Governing Board shall come into existence and authority on September 1, 2025, upon approval of the registered voters residing within the jurisdictional boundaries established in this RFA Plan.

As provided by RCW 52.26.080, the **initial** governing Board for this RFA shall consist of six voting members: three (3) current members of the City of Camas city council who have been appointed by the appropriate City official(s) and three (3) current members of the City of Washougal city council who have been appointed by the appropriate City official(s).

RCW 52.26.080 provides the authority for Commissioner districts:

- Subsection (4)(a) states that a regional fire protection service authority plan may create commissioner districts. If commissioner districts are created, the population of each commissioner district must be approximately equal. Commissioner districts must be redrawn as provided in chapter 29A.76 RCW.
- Subsection (3)(b) states that the terms of office for regional fire protection service authority commissioner positions may be established by the plan; however, no single term may exceed six years, and the terms of multiple positions must be staggered.
- Subsection (4)(b) states that: (1) only a registered voter who resides in a commissioner district may be a candidate for, or serve as, a commissioner of the commissioner district and (2) only voters of a commissioner district may vote at a primary to nominate candidates for a commissioner position in that commissioner district, provided, however, that all voters of the proposed regional fire authority shall be eligible to vote in the general election for each of the commissioner districts.

RCW 29A.76.010 establishes criteria for the development of RFA Commissioner Districts that will be applied in this Plan as follows:

- (4)(a) Each district shall be nearly equal in population as every other such district comprising the regional fire authority.
- (4)(b) Each district shall be as compact as possible.
- (4)(c) Each district shall consist of a geographically contiguous area.
- (4)(d) Population data may not be used for purposes of favoring or disfavoring any racial group or political party.
- (4)(e) To the extent feasible and if not inconsistent with the basic enabling legislation for the regional fire authority, the district boundaries shall coincide with existing recognized natural

boundaries and shall, to the extent possible, preserve existing communities of related and mutual interest.

On or after January 1, 2028, the Governing Board of the RFA shall be composed of the following:

Five commissioner districts of approximately equal population will be established, effective on January 1, 2028, within the RFA jurisdictional boundaries in accordance with RCW 52.26.080 and RCW 29A.76.010. Three districts will be within the City of Camas, and two districts will be within the City of Washougal. The City of Camas' districts will utilize their established ward areas as district boundaries. The City of Washougal will be divided into two districts with approximately equal population of the city. Refer to Appendix A, which is illustrative of district boundaries.

If a commissioner is appointed by a city, and while serving in the capacity of a commissioner for the regional fire authority, that commissioner shall act on behalf of the citizens of the entire RFA service boundary.

During the primary and general elections of 2027, elections will be held in each of the five districts; or each city shall retain the right to appoint members from their respective city councils to serve as commissioners.

To maintain staggered terms for the governance board, as required by RCW 52.26.080 (3)(b), one commissioner of Camas and Washougal, respectively, shall each serve a six-year term; one commissioner of Camas and Washougal, respectively, shall serve a four-year term; one commissioner of Camas shall serve a two-year term, provided that the determination of the term lengths for Camas and Washougal districts shall be done by lot.

After the expiration of the terms above, each district commissioner should serve six-year terms, except in circumstances that a City appoint their commissioners, then such appointees shall serve two-year terms. If the cities continue to appoint commissioners after the initial appointment, effective January 1, 2028, every effort shall be made to preserve staggered terms of office.

Should a City decide not to appoint one or more of their commissioners, then the City would lose its ability to appoint that position in the future.

The RFA Governance Board shall have all the power and authority granted governing boards under Washington State Law, including but not limited to all of the chapters and sections of Title 52 of the Revised Code of Washington. It shall include the power and authority to make any decisions appropriate for the RFA and issues related to RCW 52.26.

Upon ratification of the RFA Plan by the registered voters, the RFA Governance Board shall adopt governance bylaws, policies, rules, and regulations for conducting the business of the RFA upon formation after the effective date of September 1, 2025, in accordance with RCW 52.26.080.

Members of the RFA Governing Board may receive compensation in the same manner and under the same conditions as provided by law for commissioners of a fire protection district organized under Title 52 RCW, except for circumstances under RCW 52.14.010 (5).

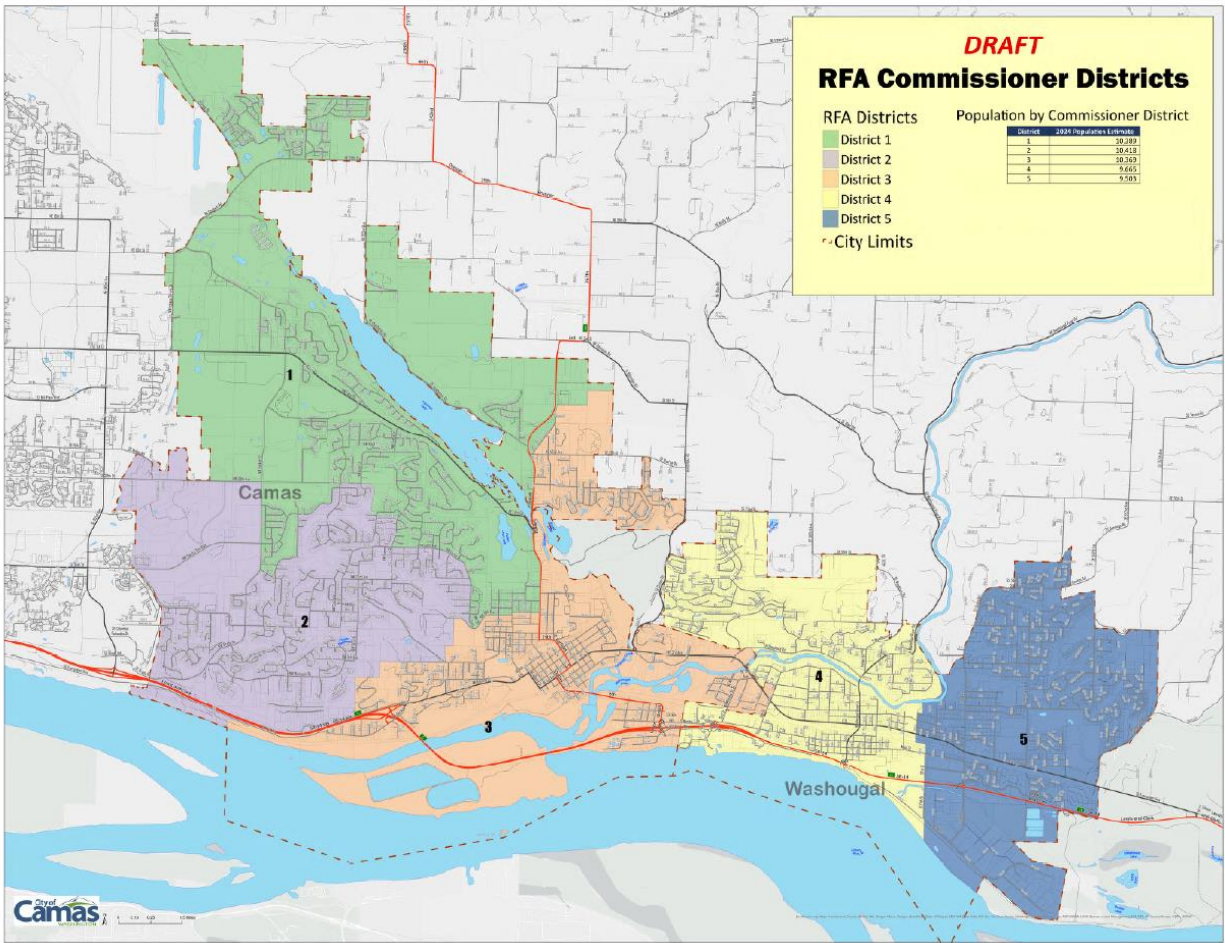
Subject to state law, after the effective date, ballot measures may be placed on the ballot by the members of the Governance Board of the RFA by a Simple majority vote of the Governance Board. The Board shall adopt a resolution requesting such an election in advance of the Clark County election filing deadlines.

RFA PLAN Revision Disposition

The **GOVERNANCE** portion of the RFA Plan may be revised by a super majority vote, defined as follows: Requires five (5) of six (6) members of a six member governing board, or requires four (4) of Five (5) members of a five member governing board.

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APPENDIX A: RFA Commissioner District Map



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