



Central Grays Harbor Regional Fire Authority Plan

Participating Agencies:

Aberdeen Fire Department Cosmopolis Fire Department
Hoquiam Fire Department

WHAT IS A REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY

- Allows differing governments to share in administering & operating a fire department
- Provides some flexibility in funding options
- Facilitates the creation of a regional fire department based on service standards set by elected officials
- Requires a plan to be created and adopted by policy-makers, then presented to and approved by voters
- Establishes a governance board made up of elected officials. These at large positions will be elected from citizens of all three cities

WHY A REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY?

- Economies of Scale can be gained
 - Vehicle Repair & Maintenance
 - Joint Purchasing/Standardization
- Resets the tax base in the region for equity between agencies
- Services can be enhanced by design – Proactive outreach
- Resources can be shifted to reflect risk Pooled resources provide depth of response across system
- Fire Investigation Team
- Regional Logistics Division and Command Officer Response
- Leverage strength of each agency, minimize weaknesses
- Sustainability – Personnel and provision of service for future

HOW IS THIS PLAN DIFFERENT FROM THE PREVIOUS PLAN?

- COSMOPOLIS HAS BEEN ADDED TO THE PLAN - TO INCLUDE OUR VOLUNTEER BASE
- FUNDING MECHANISMS ADJUSTED
- THE GOVERNANCE HAS CHANGED – THREE (3) AT LARGE ELECTED OFFICIALS FROM WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE RFA
- TRANSFER OF ASSETS

HOW WOULD THE RFA BE FUNDED?

- **TAX LEVIES** – The RFA shall be authorized to levy and collect taxes in accordance with RCW 52.26.050 (1)(b) at the initial tax levy rate of \$1.50 per thousand of assessed valuation.
- **AMBULANCE UTILITY FEE** - Pursuant to RCW 35.21.766, the RFA may create an ambulance service to be operated as a public utility where existing ambulance service is not adequate.
- **TRANSPORT FEES** - The RFA Board will charge and collect transport fees in accordance with policies adopted by the RFA Governing Board.
- **SERVICE CONTRACTS** – To the extent permitted by law, the RFA Governance Board shall have the authority to pursue and contract with agencies and entities exempt from property taxes in accordance with RCW 52.30.020 and related statutes.

GOALS FOR AN RFA

- Maintaining quality fire and emergency medical services while improving Citizen and Firefighter Safety
- Providing stable and sustainable funding
- Improving efficiency and effectiveness of operations
 - More Firefighters on scene earlier increase Rescue and Suppression Efforts
 - Provide a more substantial staffed department capable of seamlessly handling increased call volume to fire and EMS calls
- Promoting future growth within the organization
- Providing a representative governing board. An RFA would meet increased demand and changing needs for services while creating a sustainable funding model for the future.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Once each City adopts the plan:

- Plan published on City Websites
- Educational open houses will be held in all three cities
- Informational inserts in utility bills
- Ballot measure will be in April 2023
- Commissioner positions voted in November 2023
- RFA effective start date will be January 1, 2024

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QUESTIONS?