



TO: VICTOR CARDENAS, CITY MANAGER
FROM: CARL JOHNSON, CFO
SUBJECT: FIRE RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING COSTS
DATE: MAY 7, 2025

MEMORANDUM

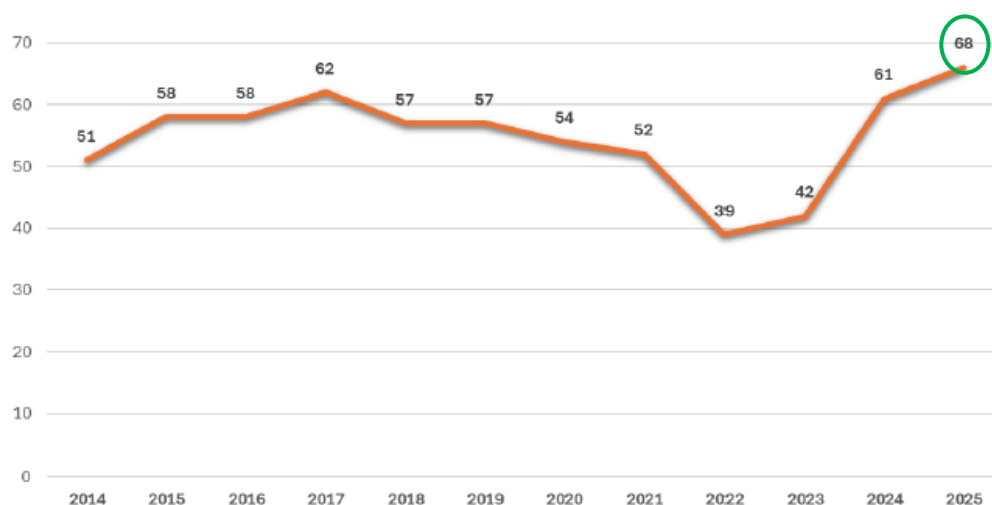
Mayor and Council –

Please see the following background regarding a forthcoming budget amendment as it pertains to Public Safety's efforts to repopulate the paid-on-call Firefighter and Auxiliary ranks.

- Victor

The Novi Fire Department uses a hybrid staffing model, with full-time firefighters covering weekdays and part-time staff covering nights and weekends. While part-time staffing peaked at 62 members in 2017, it steadily declined to 39 by 2022, which made continuous 24-hour coverage unsustainable. In response, the City initiated a major recruitment effort in 2022, resulting in the hiring of over 40 new part-time firefighters and bringing the current total to 68—surpassing the previous high.

Total Number of Part-Time Firefighters Per Year



However, beginning in FY 2024–25, the recruitment and onboarding process changed significantly, bringing with it new and unbudgeted costs. These include expenses for external background checks (to meet the demand and expedite the process), physical exams, uniforms, equipment, and formal training programs (such as Firefighter I/II and EMT-B certifications). Training new hires—many of whom have no prior experience—has proven to be especially costly, and costs for equipment and services have also risen, mainly due to other agencies now charging for these training, which were previously free/or significantly subsidized.

To support recruitment, the City began offering stipends to new hires based on their certifications, paid in two installments. As of now, 28 stipends between \$1,000 and \$5,000

have been awarded. While the Public Safety Department has covered some of these costs through internal savings, it does not have sufficient funds to address the remaining shortfall.

The City Manager's Office will propose a \$270,300 budget amendment to fund these one-time recruitment expenses. These additional efforts are expected to end by July 1, 2025, and are not part of the FY 2025–26 budget. Fortunately, the City's General Fund is currently projected to close the fiscal year stronger than anticipated, with a fund balance above 30%, due to higher-than-expected revenues.

		Original	Amended	Actual	Shortage	Additional	Total
		Budget	Budget	4/30/25	4/30/2025	Required	Required #
101-336.00-704.200	Wages - Stipend	-	112,400	183,050	70,650	9,350	80,000
101-336.00-705.310	POC firefighters-pretraining	20,000	20,000	84,919	64,919	40,081	105,000
101-336.00-741.337	Uniforms - New recruits	-	30,000	38,514	8,514	6,486	15,000
101-336.00-804.002	Medical Serv - New Recruit Candidates	30,000	30,000	43,436	13,436	864	14,300
101-336.00-882.300	Recruitment - Paid on Call	30,000	30,000	45,850	15,850	150	16,000
101-336.00-957.005	Recruitment Training	10,000	25,000	49,056	24,056	15,944	40,000
		90,000	247,400	444,825	197,425	72,875	270,300
# Includes shortages for costs to date plus estimated amounts through year-end							

New Recruit Estimated Costs			
	Qty	Unit Cost	Cost Per Recruit
Background	1	\$850.00	\$850.00
Physical	1	\$640.00	\$640.00
Psychological	1	\$500.00	\$500.00
Pre-Employment Costs			\$1,990.00
Uniform S/S Shirt	2	\$44.99	\$500.00
Uniform L/S Shirt	2	\$47.99	\$95.98
Uniform S/S Polo	2	\$53.99	\$107.98
Uniform Job Shirt	1	\$74.99	\$74.99
Uniform Pants	2	\$69.99	\$139.98
Tie	1	\$6.99	\$6.99
Tie Clip	1	\$6.00	\$6.00
Belt	1	\$32.99	\$32.99
Badge	1	\$59.99	\$59.99
Helmets	1	\$462.99	\$462.99
Fire Gloves	1	\$95.00	\$95.00
Hood	1	\$80.00	\$80.00
Fire Boots	1	\$370.00	\$370.00
SCBA Face Mask	1	\$470.00	\$470.00
Turn-Out Gear Pants - Month Rental	12	\$75.00	\$900.00
Turn-Out Gear Coat - Monthly Rental	12	\$75.00	\$900.00
Total Uniform Costs			\$4,302.89
Recruit Salary Costs During Training*	820	\$18.26	\$14,973.20
Training - FFI	1	2,500.00	\$2,500.00
Training - FF2	1	2,500.00	\$2,500.00
Training - EMT	1	2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Total Training			\$21,973.20
Total Costs**			\$28,266.09
* Assume 440 hours full-time for Firefighter 1 & 2 (Schoolcraft) and			
** Does not include cost of time involved in screening background, interviews, on-boarding, orientation, etc.			