

Olympia/Tumwater Chief's Purpose Statement:

Why Consider Creating an RFA joining the Olympia and Tumwater Fire Departments?

March 10, 2022

The Fire Departments of Olympia and Tumwater share a long, positive, and cooperative relationship. Both departments have rich traditions and strive to provide the highest level of fire and emergency services to our communities within the confines of available resources.

Current partnerships include Tumwater contractual agreements with Olympia for fleet maintenance and use of the Mark Noble Regional Training Center. Both Olympia and Tumwater are Advanced Life Support contractors for Thurston County Medic One with each staffing two paramedic units. The two agencies routinely operate jointly on emergency responses and train at all levels together.

The ability to maintain appropriate service levels and response times when responding to emergencies has been challenging as our communities have grown. As our communities continue to grow, we must continually evaluate our service delivery model and implement changes to ensure the highest level of service is delivered in the most efficient manner.

Combining the fire departments of the Cities of Olympia and Tumwater is one way to ensure continued service excellence while maximizing administrative and operational efficiency.

This joint effort is accomplished through the proposed creation of a Regional Fire Authority or "RFA". The RFA will provide for a more sustainable organization to provide all fire and emergency services for the Tumwater and Olympia communities.

Throughout the discussions of forming this new organization we will not lose sight of two primary goals:

- (1) Deliver the highest level of service in the most cost-effective manner for the public.
- (2) Create an organization where our employees can thrive and be their absolute best.

Elected officials, city officials, and fire department leadership are undertaking a planning process which will produce a comprehensive document that will be the road map for creation of the new Regional Fire Authority. In the end, both city councils will be required to approve the plan with the voters of both communities having the final say at the ballot box.

As Fire Chiefs for the Cities of Olympia and Tumwater, we fully endorse this process and support the formation of an Olympia/Tumwater Regional Fire Authority.

Mark John, Fire Chief
City of Olympia

Brian Hurley, Fire Chief
City of Tumwater