



WHITEWATER POLICE & FIRE DEPARTMENTS

POLICE & FIRE/EMS REFERENDUM

INTRODUCTIONS



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Chief of Police



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City Manager

GROWING NEED FOR POLICE AND FIRE/EMS SERVICES



**INCREASING CALLS FOR SERVICE
FOR POLICE & FIRE/EMS**



**COMPLEX CALLS TO POLICE
DEPARTMENT REQUIRE MORE
PERSONNEL TO HANDLE**

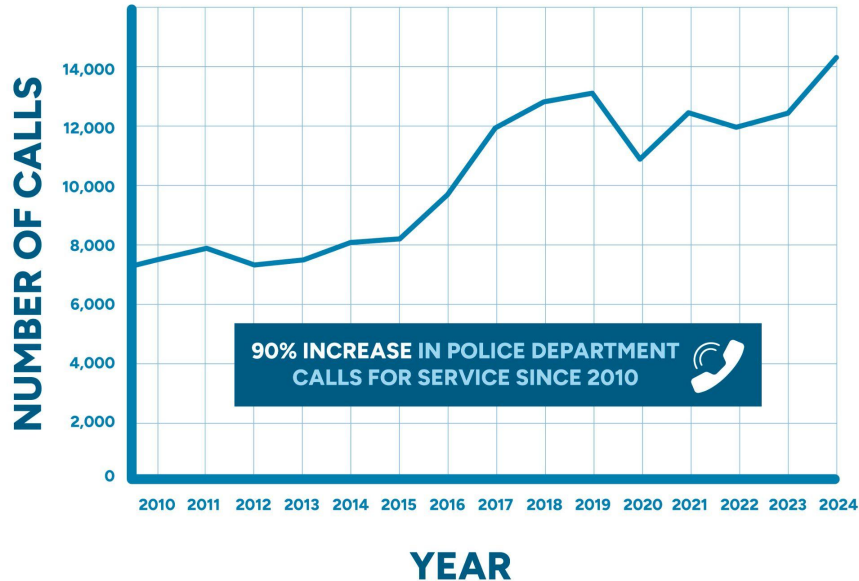


**CURRENT FULL-TIME STAFFING LEVELS,
COUPLED WITH A DECLINE IN POC
AVAILABILITY, ARE NOT MEETING
CURRENT DEMAND**

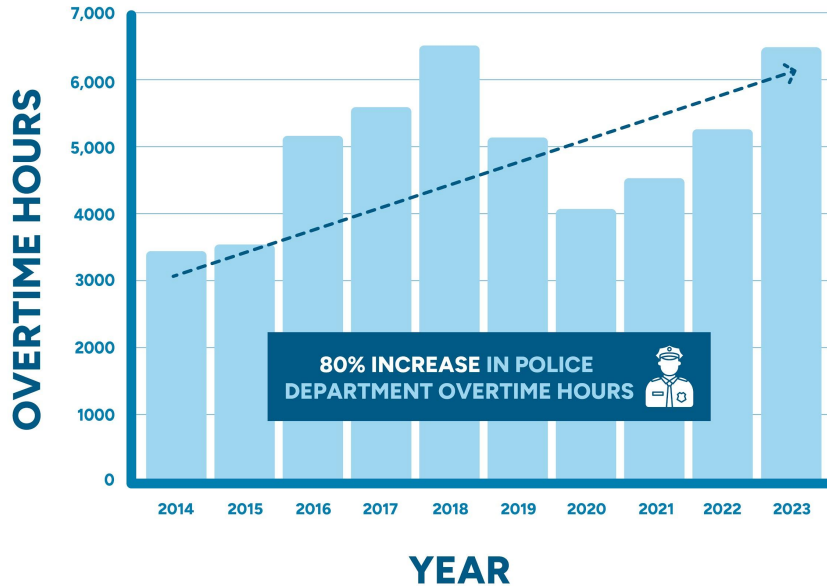
INCREASE IN CALLS FOR SERVICE

There has not been an increase in police staffing for 17 years.

Since 2010, we've seen nearly a **90% increase** in calls for police service. Our current staffing levels do not meet the needs of the community.



INCREASING OVERTIME HOURS



As a result of additional strain on police resources, the Whitewater Police Department has seen an **80 percent increase in overtime hours** worked by police officers since 2014.

This consistent increase in overtime hours is a clear indication that **demand is exceeding capacity**.

Reliance on overtime can lead to officer fatigue and burnout and is less cost-efficient than hiring additional, necessary staff.

INABILITY TO PROACTIVELY POLICE

60:40

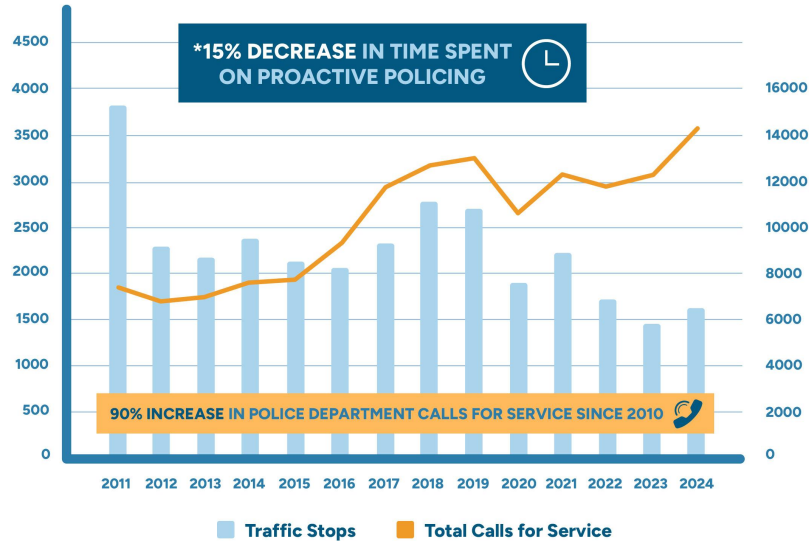


Current staffing levels are **too low to enable officers to balance their proactive and reactive duties.**

Rule of 60: A goal of policing where **60%** of officer time would be dedicated to responding to calls, while **40%** would be used to proactively address community challenges and maintain availability for serious emergencies.

REACTIVE POLICING IMPACTS

YEARLY COMPARISON BETWEEN TRAFFIC STOPS & TOTAL CALLS FOR SERVICE



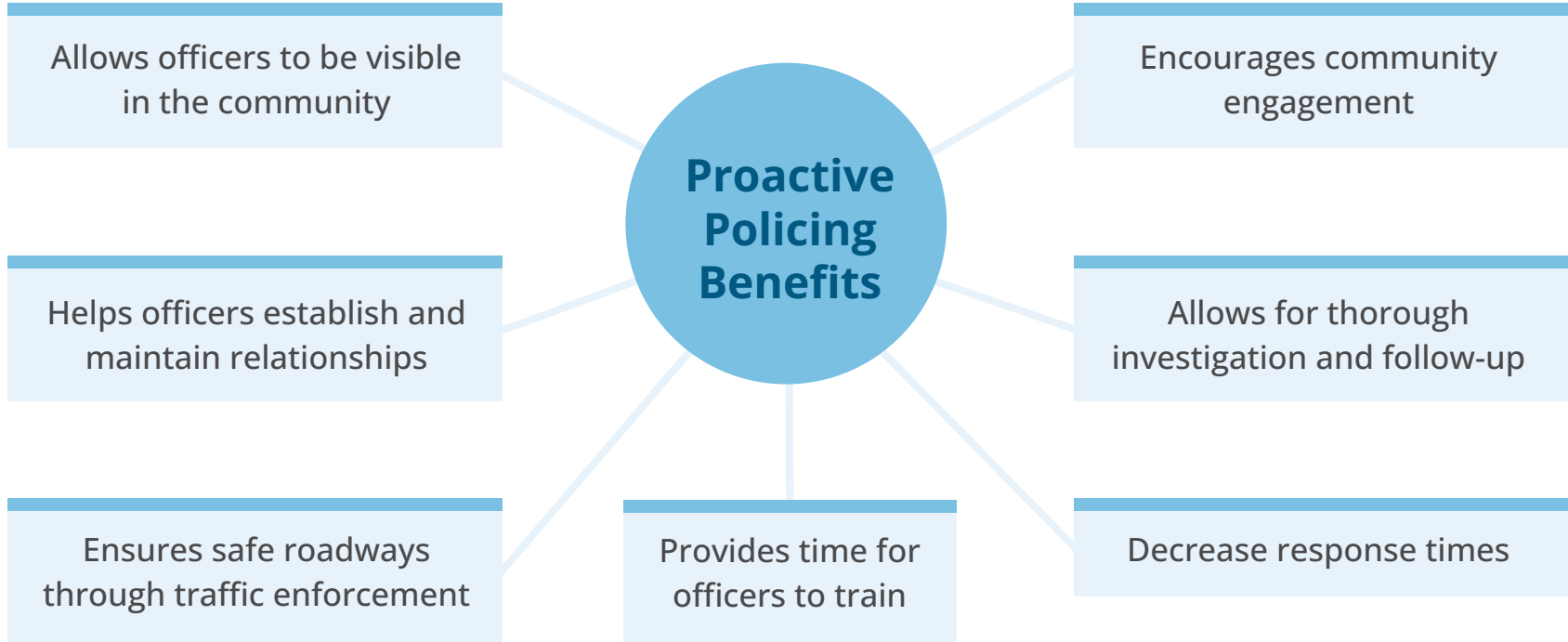
15% of patrol hours per year are diverted from proactive policing to reactive policing due to staff capacity.

This equates to **3,743 patrol hours lost/diverted** annually.

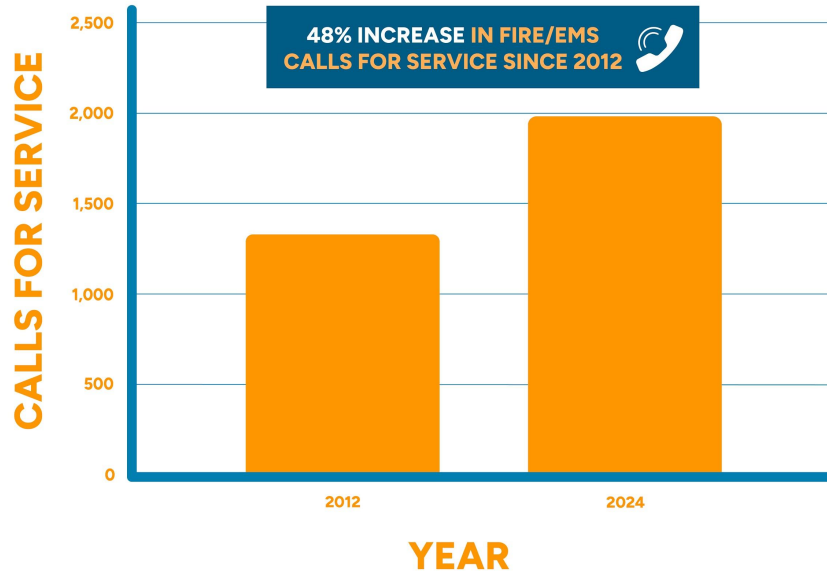
Proactive policing helps prevent crime before it happens and contributes to building trust throughout the community.

*Averages for traffic stops are calculated comparing data averages from 2011-2019 to averages from 2022-24, removing years 2021-22 due to COVID's impact on the data.

POSITIVE IMPACT OF PROACTIVE POLICING



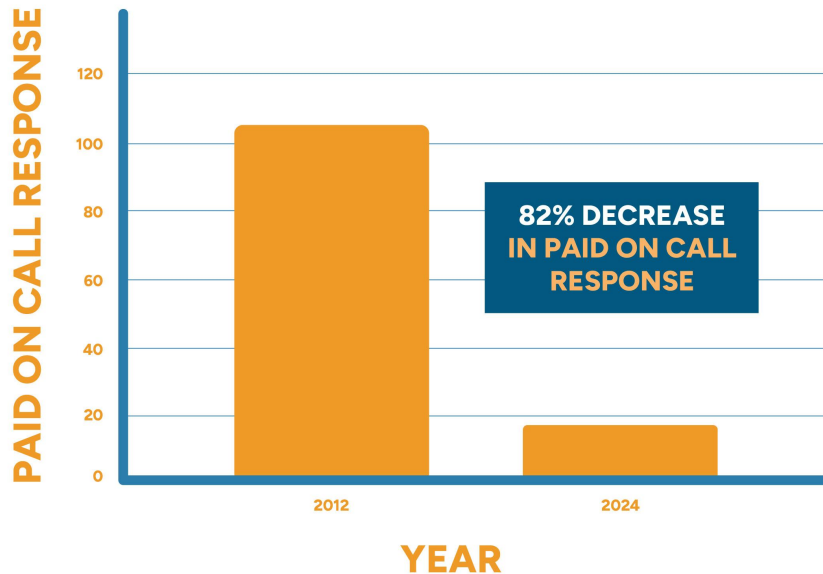
INCREASE IN CALLS FOR SERVICE



Since 2012, there has been a **48% increase in calls of service** to the Whitewater Fire Department.



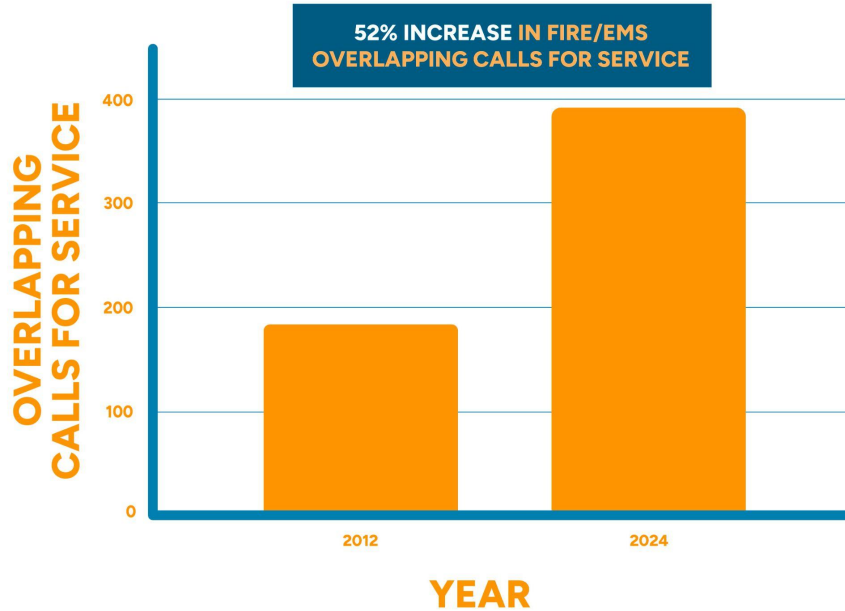
DECREASE IN PAID-ON-CALL FIRE/EMS STAFF



Since 2012, the roster of paid-on-call staff has **decreased by 82%.**

In order to adequately staff fire and EMS services and improve response times, City and Department officials need two additional cross-trained firefighters/EMTs to best serve the City of Whitewater.

INCREASING OVERLAPPING CALLS FOR SERVICE



The Whitewater Fire Department's **overlapping calls for service have increased by 52% since 2012.**

Whitewater Fire/EMS personnel are responding to simultaneous calls 20% of the time, which requires additional personnel to provide adequate services to the residents of Whitewater.

WHY REFERENDUM?



INTERNAL FUNDING SOURCES

The City needs additional funding to meet the public safety needs of the community as both the volume and complexity of calls for service continue to increase.



EXTERNAL FUNDING SOURCES

While the need for our public safety resources continues to rise, current funding sources are stagnant or decreasing, and our existing staffing levels inhibit our ability to adequately respond to calls for service.



REFERENDUM

Because of state-imposed levy limits, Whitewater must ask for approval from taxpayers through a referendum to increase the tax levy to fund these services.

WHITEWATER HAS A TRACK RECORD OF FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Whitewater has a low tax burden per resident in comparison to other Wisconsin municipalities.

Whitewater has the 58th largest population of Wisconsin municipalities, but ranks very low (409th) in per capita property tax levy.

If the referendum passes, Whitewater will still have a low tax levy per capita rating (about 294th) compared to other Wisconsin municipalities.



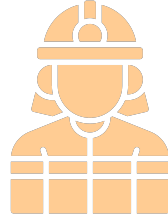
REFERENDUM WOULD ENABLE

+5



POLICE OFFICERS

+2



**CROSS TRAINED
FIREFIGHTERS/EMT
S**

+1



DISPATCHER

+NECESSARY EQUIPMENT

WHAT'S THE ASK?

THE CITY OF WHITEWATER
WILL REQUIRE

**AN ADDITIONAL
\$1,305,782**

FOR ITS ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

REFERENDUM QUESTION

The formal resolution requesting permission to exceed the state revenue limit will appear as follows on the City's April 1 ballot:

*"Under state law, the increase in the levy of the City of Whitewater for the tax to be imposed for the next fiscal year, 2026, is limited to 2.166% (based on the City's best estimate), which results in a levy of \$6,600,275. **Shall the City of Whitewater be allowed to exceed this limit and increase the levy for the next fiscal year, 2026 for the purpose of funding increased staffing, and continuing to operate police and fire/EMS services, by a total of 18.29% (based on the City's best estimate), which results in a levy of \$7,906,057, and on an ongoing basis, include the increase of \$1,305,782 for each fiscal year going forward?"***

IF A MAJORITY VOTE “YES”



If the referendum is approved by a majority of voters on April 1, the **City of Whitewater will be allowed to exceed its state-imposed levy limits** to fund necessary full-time staff additions at the Whitewater Police & Fire Departments and **ensure Whitewater PD's & FD's ability to provide high-quality, consistent emergency services to the Whitewater community.**



**Add 5 additional
full-time police
officers**



**2 cross-trained
firefighters/EMTs**



1 dispatcher



**Necessary
equipment**

PROPERTY TAX IMPACT

PROPERTY TAX IMPACT

\$1,305,782 Total Increase

	ASSESSED PROPERTY VALUE	ESTIMATED TAX INCREASE PER YEAR	WEEKLY TAX IMPACT
JEFFERSON COUNTY	\$100,000	\$92	\$1.77
WALWORTH COUNTY	\$100,000	\$118	\$2.27

IF A MAJORITY VOTE “NO”



If the referendum is rejected by a majority of voters, the City will be faced with difficult decisions about how to address the growing need for public safety services. A rejection of the referendum **would not** be the equivalent of maintaining the status quo of police and fire/EMS services.

A “no” vote means the City **will not** be able to hire additional officers or firefighters/EMTs, **impacting its ability to provide the level of service the citizens of Whitewater deserve.**

**WITHOUT ADDITIONAL FUNDING,
WHITEWATER PD & FD WILL NOT BE
ABLE TO HIRE ADDITIONAL
PERSONNEL**



VOTE TUESDAY, APRIL 1



Election Day is
**TUESDAY,
APRIL 1, 2025**

In-Person Early Voting:

- Monday-Friday, March 18-28
from 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- City Clerk's Office, 312 W. Whitewater St.

By Absentee Ballot:

- Deadline to submit application for mailed absentee ballot: March 28 by 5:00 p.m.

On Election Day:

- Polling places are open
from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

ADDITIONAL VOTING INFORMATION

whitewater-wi.gov/167/Elections-Voting or myvote.wi.gov



QUESTIONS?

Additional information is available at:

whitewater-wi.gov/615/city-of-whitewater-referendum-april-2025

Contact us via email:

WW2025Referendum@whitewater-wi.gov

