

What is a Regional Fire Authority?

A Regional Fire Authority (RFA) is a special purpose district established by voters in a service area that provides funding for fire and medical emergency services. An RFA can be made up of cities, fire districts or a combination of the two.

An RFA is created by vote of the people in the proposed service area. Together, voters in Renton and FD #25 would need to approve the creation and funding of an RFA by a 60% majority.

In Washington state, there are nine RFAs, including two in south King County.

Effect of Proposition 1 if Approved

If voters approve creation of the RFA and the funding plan, fire and emergency medical services will be provided under the direction and management of the RFA. Personnel that currently serve Renton and FD 25 will continue to serve the RFA. The proposed operating plan was developed jointly by Renton and FD 25 over the last year and a half with input from a citizens' committee and fire employees. The proposed operating plan calls for service level improvements:

- Increased number of firefighters to respond to fire and medical emergencies;
- Staffing of a new fire station in the north end of Renton to address response times across the RFA service area (the City plans to construct this fire station in 2017, if the RFA is approved by voters);
- Increased staffing for a medical aid car so the vehicle is in service more hours of the day;
- Restored fire inspector positions previously eliminated; and
- Increased staffing for public education programs.



If Proposition 1 is Not Approved

If the RFA ballot measure fails, there are no plans to proceed with construction of a new fire station in north Renton, or to fund other service level improvements for fire and emergency medical services. Funding for Renton's Fire and Emergency Services Department will continue to compete for funding with other City departments as part of the City's budget process.

How much will the RFA cost?

The RFA would be funded by a combination of:

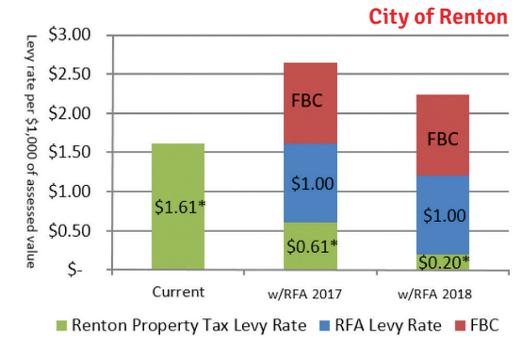
1. Property tax at \$1.00 per \$1,000 of assessed value; and a
2. New Fire Benefit Charge (FBC).

Under the proposed RFA operating plan, property owners will pay more for fire and emergency medical services than they do today. Based on 2016 fire and emergency medical service costs and property values, a homeowner with a house of median value (2,180 square foot, \$291,000 assessed value), living in either FD 25 or Renton, will pay the RFA approximately \$10 more per month than they currently pay for fire and emergency medical services.

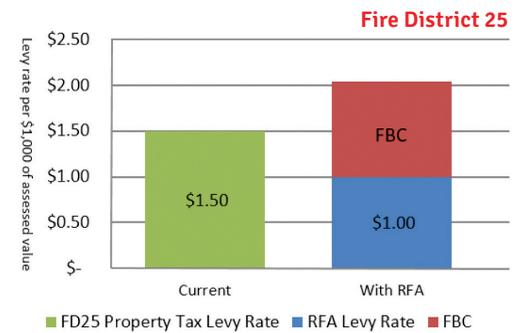
In addition, in 2017, the Renton homeowner with a house of median value would also pay the City an estimated \$12 per month for the construction of a new fire station in the north part of Renton. The City plans to further reduce its property tax in 2018 once the new fire station is funded (See bar charts).

The FBC is related to required firefighting resources, the size of the building(s) on a property, and the hazards associated with those building(s). For example, a business storing pressurized gas products would pay more than an office building of the same size. A new house and an older house of the same size would typically pay the same amount.

Commercial property owners will generally see greater cost increases than residential property owners. Some property owners who are currently exempt from paying property tax will contribute to the RFA through a new funding mechanism, a "Fire Benefit Charge." Eligible low income senior citizens and disabled persons will receive the same percentage discounts on their FBC as they currently do for property taxes.



The bar charts show the shift in property tax and funding sources if the RFA is approved. The charts are not intended to show costs payable with respect to any given property.



The FBC will be calculated separately for each property and will be based on firefighting resources, the size of the building(s) on a property, and the hazards associated with those building(s). The FBC is not a property tax levy.

*Estimates based on current City policy.

Current Renton levy rate shown is the portion of the City's property tax levy allocated to Fire and Emergency Services.

A cost calculator is available online at rentonrfa.org to provide cost estimates for any parcel of property within the proposed RFA boundaries.

The RFA addresses current challenges and plans for the future.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT RentonRFA.org OR CALL 425-271-7900

Proposition 1

On April 26, 2016, Renton and Fire District #25 voters will be asked to approve or reject the creation of a Renton Regional Fire Authority (RFA) and the associated funding for the proposed RFA.

The City of Renton and Fire District #25 have prepared this brochure in order to provide factual information about Proposition 1 and the effect it will have on the delivery of fire and emergency medical services in the area.

Current Situation

The City of Renton (Renton) currently provides fire and emergency medical services to residents and businesses in Renton and King County Fire District #25 (FD 25).

In 2015, the Renton Fire and Emergency Services Department responded to 14,945 emergency incidents, including fires and fire investigations, medical emergencies, motor vehicle accidents, hazardous materials responses, water rescues, and specialized technical rescues. Fire and emergency service personnel are certified as both firefighters and emergency medical technicians, and are posted at six fire stations strategically located in the service area.

Fire and emergency medical services are currently funded primarily by property taxes. Property tax revenues are growing at a slower rate than operating costs, calls for service and population in the service area.

Response times in areas served by four of the six

Renton fire stations have not met City adopted targets over the last four years. Population and calls for service have grown faster than firefighter staffing levels. Combined Renton tax revenues per capita, adjusted for inflation, have dropped over 30 percent since 2000. In this same time, Renton's population has nearly doubled and is projected to grow 40% over the next two decades.



Potential Creation of the Renton Regional Fire Authority

Investing in fire and medical emergency services for our community



This fact sheet was prepared by the City of Renton.

For more information, please visit

RentonRFA.org or call 425-271-7900

UPDATED: February 18, 2016



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