

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Shoreline Fire and Northshore Fire Proposed Regional Fire Authority Ballot Measure

The Shoreline Fire Department and the Northshore Fire Department Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee is seeking public input on a Regional Fire Authority measure proposed for a special election on February 11, 2025

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FAQ



What is a Regional Fire Authority?

A Regional Fire Authority is, essentially, a new fire department that is created as a special purpose district from joining two or more fire districts or fire departments. Since 2007, sixteen Regional Fire Authorities have been created in Washington State, including six in King and Snohomish Counties. The Shoreline Fire Department and Northshore Fire Department have talked about a Regional Fire Authority for decades.

Why form a Regional Fire Authority?

Regionalization is driven by the desire to improve services and achieve cost-efficiencies. A Regional Fire Authority will allow for the highest level of service and provide the best efficiency. This will ensure that the people we serve will have the best fire and emergency medical services while stretching their tax dollars as far as possible.

What is the Interlocal Agreement between the Shoreline and Northshore Fire Departments?

As a planned first step toward regionalization, the Shoreline and Northshore Fire Departments signed an inter-local agreement (ILA) in 2022. Under the ILA, Shoreline Fire provides fire and emergency medical services to the cities of Kenmore and Lake Forest Park. These services improved performance for the residents of Shoreline, Kenmore, and Lake Forest Park under the ILA while saving taxpayers about \$1.4 million dollars annually.

Will a Regional Fire Authority provide additional service improvements beyond those provided under the current ILA?

The ILA between the Shoreline Fire Department and Northshore Fire Department has led to significantly improved fire and emergency medical services in our communities. A Regional Fire Authority will build on the successes of the ILA and lead to additional service improvements.

- ✓ A Regional Fire Authority will allow Firefighters to continue working together as one unit ensuring better coordination.
- ✓ A Regional Fire Authority will enhance our overall readiness and operational capabilities by optimizing apparatus assignments, enabling us to better serve our communities.
- ✓ A Regional Fire Authority will allow us better flexibility to use personnel more effectively.
- ✓ A Regional Fire Authority allows for a better pooling of resources and strength when applying for grants to improve services.

Will a Regional Fire Authority provide additional taxpayer savings beyond those savings achieved under the current ILA?

The ILA between the Shoreline Fire Department and Northshore Fire Department has led to significant taxpayer savings. A Regional Fire Authority will build on the successes of the ILA and lead to additional taxpayer savings.

- ✓ We estimate that we will achieve an additional \$200,000 in annual savings by combining fire departments under a Regional Fire Authority.
- ✓ We estimate that the RFA will create savings for every homeowner, and 98% of all property owners in Shoreline, Kenmore, and Lake Forest Park.
- ✓ Establishing a Regional Fire Authority will potentially reduce overall liability and risk, decreasing the need for reserve funds. This reduction could enable further lowering of equivalent levy rate, reinvestment in service level improvements, or a combination of both.

Will a Regional Fire Authority provide additional efficiencies beyond those achieved under the current ILA?

Yes, especially with administrative staffing. These efficiencies will lead to improved productivity and performance, which in turn leads to additional financial savings.

- ✓ The Fire Chief and other administrative staff will no longer need to manage multiple boards, budgets, and policies.
- ✓ Our Financial staff will handle revenues and programs like BLS transports more efficiently.
- ✓ Our Administrative Director will be able to manage staff more efficiently because assignments will no longer be limited by district boundaries.
- ✓ Our Support Services Division (Fleet, Facilities, and IT) will be more efficient without managing separate budgets on different projects depending on location and scope.

How will a Regional Fire Authority ensure local control?

The Regional Fire Authority will improve citizen involvement and representation on the Regional Fire Authority Governance Board. The two existing fire districts, Shoreline and Northshore, would continue to elect Fire Commissioners to the governing board.

- ✓ A RFA would combine the Shoreline Board of Commissioners, with elected Commissioners from Lake Forest Park and Kenmore gaining direct oversight of the entire Regional Fire Authority.
- ✓ A Regional Fire Authority ensures that there would be equal representation of elected Commissioners from Northshore Fire and Shoreline Fire with five members each serving on the Board.

Who will vote in the Special Election on February 11, 2025?

Voters from both existing fire districts (Kenmore, Lake Forest Park, and Shoreline) will vote on the formation of the Regional Fire Authority and its revenue sources (property tax levy and fire benefit charge). Even though both the Northshore Fire and Shoreline Fire Departments have existing fire benefit charges, establishing a Regional Fire Authority with a fire benefit charge requires a super-majority of 60% plus one vote.

Where can I get more information?

Website: www.ShorelineFire.com/

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