



Regional Fire Authority Informational Briefing

City Manager's Office & Fire Department
City Council Study Session
June 17, 2025

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Agenda

Regional Fire Authority (RFA)

- Definition
- Formation Process and Timeline
- Governance
- Funding

Feasibility Study

Next Steps



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What is an RFA?

Established for the **provision of fire and emergency services**, particularly in urban regions

Special purpose district form of governance regulated by RCW 52.26, adopted in 2004

Independent taxing authority that can include fire districts, municipalities, and/or tribes

Created by a **vote of the people residing within** the proposed fire protection boundaries



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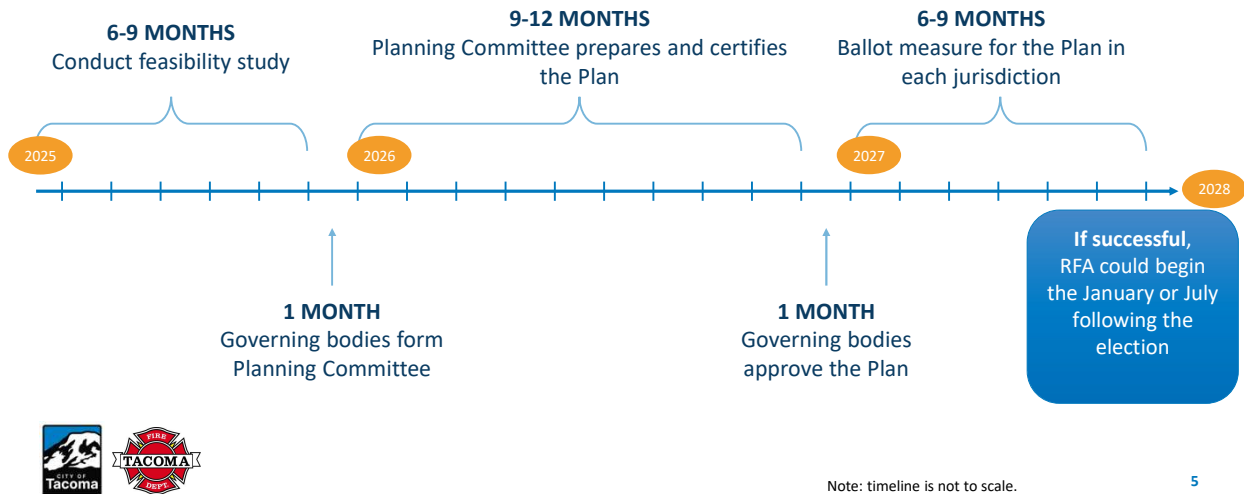
Fire Protection Jurisdiction Types

	Fire Department	Fire District	Regional Fire Authority
Composition	One entity	One entity	At least two entities
Protection Coverage	City limits	Can cover unincorporated areas	Can cover multiple cities or districts
Formation Process	City Charter	Ballot Measure	Ballot Measure
Governing Body	City Council elected from within City	Board of Commissioners elected from within District	Appointed from participating entities
Primary Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Property Taxes ▣ Service Fees ▣ Impact Fees ▣ Bonds ○ Fire Benefit Charge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Property Taxes ▣ Service Fees ▣ Impact Fees ▣ Bonds ▣ Fire Benefit Charge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Property Taxes ▣ Service Fees ▣ Impact Fees ▣ Bonds ▣ Fire Benefit Charge
Example	Tacoma Fire Department	West Pierce Fire & Rescue (PC Fire District 3)	Puget Sound RFA

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Formation Process and Timeline

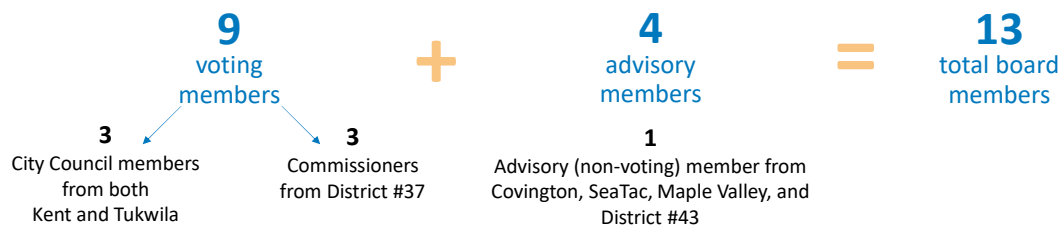


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Governance Comparison

Fire Department: City Council/Manager	Regional Fire Authority: Governing Board
ELECTED by voters/Appointed by elected Council	APPOINTED from participating jurisdictions' governing bodies
Number of members determined by CHARTER	Number of members determined by PLAN
Direct policy and approve budget for ALL DEPARTMENTS	Direct policy and approve budget for RFA ONLY

Example: Puget Sound RFA Governing Board



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RFA Funding Options

Regular Levy
Cannot exceed
\$1.50/\$1,000 of AV

Fire Benefit Charge
Collection cannot exceed 60% of operating
budget; reduces Regular Levy limit by
\$0.50/\$1,000 of AV

Bonds
Subject to voter approval;
backed by property taxes

Service Fees
For services such as event permits, fire safety
inspections, special event staffing

Service Contracts
With agencies or jurisdictions
not part of the RFA

Impact Fees
Must be authorized and
collected by City



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Fire Benefit Charge

- Voter approved fee available only to fire protection districts or regional fire authorities.
- Not a per call or assessed value charge.
- Based on formula recommended by the Planning Committee using factors like the size, type, and hazards of structures.
- Applies to all residential and commercial property.

Example Formula:

$$\begin{aligned} & \left(\sqrt{\text{Total Square Feet}} \right) \\ & \times \text{NFF Coefficient} \\ & \times \text{Category Factor} \\ & \times \text{Response Factor} \\ & \times \text{Flow Factor} \\ & \times \text{Discount} \\ & = \\ & \text{Fire Benefit Charge} \end{aligned}$$

NFF: Needed Fire Flow

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Feasibility Study Outcomes

Current Conditions

- Fiscal
- Service Level
- Personnel
- Infrastructure
- Capital

Partnering Options

- Evaluate suitable agencies for Planning Committee

Sustainability

- Recommend models for:
 - Revenue
 - Organization
 - Operations



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Next Steps

- Staff will begin contracting for a feasibility study
- Provide an update to Council in early Q4 2025



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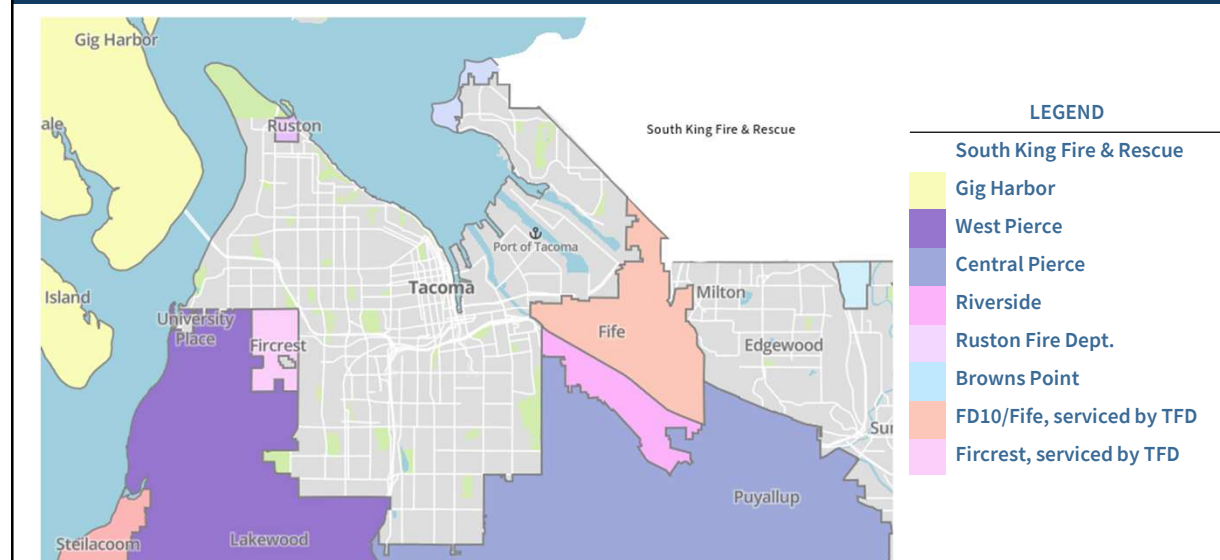


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Map of Fire Agencies



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