

Public Safety

Program Description

The City's Public Safety Program includes the Police and Fire departments. The Police Department provides services to the community which include: Patrol, Criminal Investigation, Street Crimes, Public Information, Training, School Resource Officers, Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT), Crisis Negotiations, as well as a Communications Center. The Fire Department provides: Emergency Medical Services and Transportation, Fire Suppression and Rescue Operations, Fire Cause and Origin Operations, Hazardous Material Response, Fire and Safety Public Education, and Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) services for Central Illinois Regional Airport (CIRA).

Quick Facts

- The City's FY2015 Public Safety Budget is \$40,139,300 or **43%** of the City's General Fund expenditures.
- The average cost of one sworn Police Officer is **\$135,542 annually** to the City. This figure includes salary, benefits, training, equipment, pension and overtime.
- The City of Bloomington Police Department consists of the 1 Police Chief, 3 Assistant Police Chiefs, 6 Lieutenants, 15 Sergeants, 103 Patrol Officers, 16 Professional Support Staff, 13 seasonal. The Police Department has **123 active sworn officers** and is **authorized 128 sworn officers** (the department is currently down 5 authorized sworn officers).
- The average cost of one Firefighter is **\$154,414 annually** to the City. This figure includes salary, benefits, training, equipment, pension and overtime.
- The Fire Department has **118 full time employees**. This consists of 1 Fire Chief, 2 Deputy Chiefs, 1 Training Officer, 3 Battalion Chiefs, 1 Public Education Officer, 3 Support Staff, 106 total Firefighters (19 Captains, 21 Engineers, and 66 Firefighters).
- The City owns **6 fire stations** with **5 of the stations** currently operational.

Special Considerations

- The level of pension benefits received by public safety employees is established by the State Legislature and is not controlled by local officials. However, local governments are **responsible for funding the pension benefits**.
- According to an independent professional assessment of the City's 5 active fire stations there is **\$12.4 million** in necessary repairs and building system upgrades necessary over the next six years, which is currently unfunded.
- The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends a fire suppression response time of **6 minutes** or less for **90 percent** of emergency calls. The City's response rate is **8 minutes** for **90 percent** of fire suppression calls.
- A 2012 study found Illinois to have the **4th highest workers' compensation** premium rates in the country.
- The City Council's newly established pension funding policy will require an approximate **\$1.2 million annual increase** in pension contributions for the next four years or \$4.8 million.

Group Questions

- How would you address the City's fire department building needs?
- Would you favor lowering the City's fire and emergency medical response times to the NFPA recommendations? If so, how would you propose lowering them?
- How would you address the Police and Fire pension funding needs of the City?