



CITY OF DETROIT
FIRE DEPARTMENT
DETROIT PUBLIC SAFETY HEADQUARTERS

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To: Council Member Latisha Johnson
From: Charles Simms, Executive Fire Commissioner, Detroit Fire Department
Date: April 2, 2025
Re: Responses to 2025-2026 Budget Analysis

Please find below responses to your questions sent on 3/20/2025, regarding the Fiscal Year 2026 Proposed Budget for the Fire Department.

1. **What is the current condition of the department's fire trucks, ambulances, and other emergency vehicles? How much funding is allocated for repairs and new equipment?**

The Department's fleet includes 47 frontline fire companies and 25 ambulances which are all 8 years or newer. Due to accidents and repairs, the department's reserve fleet is not at an ideal level. The department will be receiving 20 new ambulances and 10 fire apparatus in 2025 and has prepared specifications for new purchases of the remaining fleet. The department has an apparatus replacement schedule that has been submitted to the Vehicle Steering Committee for review.

2. **City Council has approved multiple contracts for outside contractors to perform emergency EMT services.**

- a. **Why is there a need for these contracts?**

The size and run volume of Detroit demand 45-50 ambulances daily to maintain the quick response time to the citizens. Currently, the department has resources to staff 25-27 ambulances daily. The contract allows for an additional 16-18 ambulances daily, which brings the total to 41-45 ambulances daily. The contract costs the city approximately 20% of what it would cost if the department were to add and staff an additional 18 of its own ambulances. Many other large departments are also using this model.

- b. **How has this improved the timeliness of emergency response?**

Prior to the contract, response times were consistently over 8 minutes. Since the contract, the response times are consistently below 7:30.

- c. **Are there plans to expand the Fire Department's capabilities to eventually eliminate the need for outside assistance?**

Yes. The department is currently assessing how we can increase our resources and decrease the contractor's resources. The implementation of Nurse Navigation Program will also be a determining factor on decreasing outside contractors.



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3. Our office has engaged with the Fire Department over the past 3 years to conduct fire safety walks through residents' homes. However, we were recently informed that we will not be able to continue offering this valuable service. Will the Fire Department no longer be offering these walks? Do you require additional funding to continue this program?

The DFD will continue offering this valuable service. Currently, DFD has implemented the Detroit Smoke Alarm Program (DSAP) which aims to install 5000 smoke alarms in 1000-1600 Detroit homes. All in stock smoke alarms have been reserved for residents who have signed up for the program. Safety walks will continue once DFD receives more smoke alarms.

4. Is DFD currently experiencing a shortage of EMT's and what is the Department doing to recruit and train more EMT's?

Currently, the department does not have a current shortage of EMTs. Since 2021 the department has trained all employees to a Firefighter EMT level. Currently, over 80% of the department is trained to the level of EMT.

Approved by:

CHARLES SIMMS

Executive Fire Commissioner