



Thursday, March 24, 2022  
Media Release

## **Council Approves Town of LaSalle Three Fire Station Model**

At the Regular Council meeting on March 22, 2022, Council approved the Three Fire Station Operating Model and Financial Plan as presented by Ed Thiessen, Director of Fire Services/Fire Chief and Dale Langlois, Director of Finance/Treasurer. This model includes the existing headquarters station on Normandy St., a west substation at 2160 Front Road (Substation 1), and an east substation on Laurier Parkway in the area of Disputed Road (Substation 2).

“Our Town is growing, and as we continue to do so it is our duty to continue to meet standards by responding to the growing needs of our community. With this plan, Council is committed to building a safer LaSalle,” said Mayor Marc Bondy.

Since 2019, there are several factors that have occurred that have resulted in the need for a three station model. Specifically, the areas of predicted future growth within the Town in both the short to mid-term and long-term have resulted in the need for greater response capabilities. In addition, a key factor in the recommendation of additional fire stations is the National Fire Protection Association NFPA 1710 guideline which requires that fire apparatus and four firefighters arrive on-scene within four minutes. With a three station model, 87% of the Town’s urban area will be provided initial coverage within four minutes. This is well above the provincial average for municipalities which is in the range of 72% for urban geography. It is also above the 75% coverage target for municipalities.

At the same time, volunteer firefighter retention has become a challenge for most composite fire services across North America. Currently, LaSalle Fire Service is a composite fire department with 12 full-time firefighters and 32 volunteer (paid-on-call) firefighters. LaSalle Fire Service has had challenges maintaining the full complement of volunteer firefighters in recent years, which has led to challenges meeting the NFPA 1710 guideline.

“LaSalle Fire Service is dedicated to ensuring public safety. Up until now, we have maintained the appropriate level of fire service and response, but as current trends continue, we will have difficulty maintaining the NFPA guideline,” said Chief Thiessen.

The three fire station model is based on moving towards staffing each location with full-time firefighters. As new fire stations are opened, the target of four full-time firefighters at each location will be achieved over time. The financial plan transitions from two full-time firefighters to four full-time firefighters at each station location over a number of years.

“Over the next two years the focus will be on the design and construction of the first substation on Front Road at the former Centennial Arena site and securing the land for the second substation,” said Langlois. By 2026, the goal is to have the first substation constructed and operational with two full-time firefighters on-duty at all times with the appropriate capital and operational resources in place. The third station is scheduled to be built in 2031 and can be adjusted if needed based on future growth in LaSalle.

The financial plan considers both the capital and operational requirements of the fire master plan and begins with a \$200,000 increase which was approved as part of the 2022 budget followed by a \$25,000 incremental increase each year over a period of 10 years. This amounts to an annual municipal tax rate impact range of 0.52% in 2022 to 0.75% in 2031 over the 10-year period.

More information about the three fire station model can be found on our web page at [www.lasalle.ca/firestations](http://www.lasalle.ca/firestations)

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