

GRANT PARK FIRE DISTRICT

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Is the Grant Park Fire District part of the Village of Grant Park or the Township?

R: No, the Grant Park Fire District is an entirely separate entity from the Village of Grant Park, Yellowhead Township and Sumner Township. The Fire District has its own governing body of Trustees which oversees the Fire District.

Q: Has the Grant Park Fire District ran a tax referendum before?

R: The last tax referendum ran by the Fire District was in 2009. In 2009, the Fire District was in drastic need of replacing our fire station and the funding generated from that referendum was utilized to replace the building.

Q: What will the referendum do for the Grant Park Fire District if passed?

R: If the referendum is passed it will allow the Fire District to begin a much overdue apparatus replacement plan for fire apparatus and ambulances, increase staffing in the fire station to cover the Fire District with trained personnel 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year all while avoiding further staffing cuts and additional cuts in personnel and service when we already don't have 24 hour coverage. Lastly, equipment replacement that is required by unfunded mandates will be replaced. Without all 3 components we cannot provide an effective service when it matters most to you.

Q: How was the rate chosen and why not an increase in increments?

R: The Fire District chose the rate based on the needs as well as through a strategic plan. In order to provide the community with the service the Fire District needs to address all 3 critical areas: Apparatus replacement, staffing, and equipment replacement which the increase will address. State statute doesn't allow for the Fire District to do a gradual increase without going back for additional referendums which may not be successful and solve the problem. The total increase on the ballot question is .35 increase.

Q: How does a referendum correlate with our ISO rating?

R: ISO PPC Ratings are rated on a 1 to 10 scale. Class 1 represents exemplary fire protection. Class 10 outlines areas of the fire suppression classification that does not meet the minimum criteria. Criteria that is evaluated through this process includes review of a departments water and hydrant system, communications, training and certifications, apparatus, maintenance and staffing. Currently, the Grant Park Fire District has an ISO rating of 4 for our areas within fire hydrants and a 4b classification for the rural areas of our Fire District. With increased staffing, and replacement of our apparatus and equipment that has exceeded their life expectancy, our goal is to improve our ISO rating to a rating of 2. With this increase in our ISO rating it could mean drastic reductions in your insurance premiums based on your insurance carrier that you use. This improvement could potentially save you money long term. Without passing this referendum, the fire district risks drastic reductions in our ISO rating which will significantly increase your homeowners insurance.

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Q: What will the increase mean for me?

R: The proposed tax referendum would mean an annual increase of \$116.67 per \$100,000.00 value. This also equates out to .32 per day per \$100k home value. For a home estimated at the median for Grant Park of \$180,000 the cost would be an increase of \$207.00 per year or .56 per day.

Q: What will happen if the referendum doesn't pass?

R: If the Grant Park Fire District is unable to increase tax funding through this referendum, the service levels which we provide the Grant Park community will unfortunately decrease. The Grant Park Fire District would absolutely not be able to replace our aging fleet, one that has cost the tax payers an increase in over 270% in maintenance costs each year over the last 3 years, would need to rely more on Private Ambulance companies along with neighboring fire departments which would lead to much longer response times, and also eliminate the replacement of much needed or required equipment such as cardiac monitors, stretchers, self-contained breathing apparatus, turnout gear for our firefighters, and extrication equipment. Ultimately, with the reduction in services by the Fire District, there's the increased potential for larger fire losses and the potential of an increased loss of life. Additionally, other aspects of the fire department will greatly be diminished as well as including training hours, community outreach and events and much more. Items such as our departments current ISO rating will most likely increase which could cause home and business fire insurance premiums to increase drastically causing more of a burden to the residents both financially and with additional reductions in services. In the end, the entire Grant Park community will become drastically less safe which could lead to our community becoming a less desirable place to live.

Q: Has the Grant Park Fire District tried to obtain funding to offset these costs?

R: The Grant Park Fire District continually applies for numerous grants through private companies, the State of Illinois and FEMA. Over the past 2 years, the Fire District was successful in 2 of the over 50 grants that were written bringing funding for a direct capture vehicle exhaust system that will directly improve the health and safety of our firefighters as well as a COVID-19 supplemental grant that brought reimbursement funding back to our community for costs incurred in the pandemic. Unfortunately, grant programs are highly competitive and it becomes very challenging to secure the funding needed for the other items.