

How ESD 9 Pays For Prop B

The City of Round Rock receives about \$6 million each year in Emergency Service District 9 (ESD) funding, but those dollars currently go into the General Fund instead of directly supporting the Fire Department. Redirecting those ESD funds could more than cover the cost of adding new firefighters.

Those revenues are also expected to grow, with projections moving closer to \$7.5 million next year (2027) following the sales tax allocation election approved in the district. That means there is a growing funding source available that could be used to strengthen fire protection and improve emergency response for the community.

To bring Round Rock's existing fire companies up to the minimum staffing levels outlined in NFPA 1710 by 2031, additional staffing would be added in phases. Using the City of Round Rock's own salary and benefits figures, the total cost for this responsible phased in plan is \$4,395,348.40.

This is a gradual, step-by-step approach designed to improve emergency mitigation and make sure the right number of firefighters are on the apparatus that respond to our community's calls for help.

By January 1, 2027, the Fire Department would meet NFPA 1710 minimum staffing levels for all ladder/truck companies by only hiring five(5) firefighters.

2027: 5 firefighters = cost: \$593,966

January 1, 2028: No additional firefighters would be added that year.

By January 1, 2029, the Fire Department would meet NFPA 1710 minimum staffing levels for all engine companies assigned to specialty stations, such as: Wildland, Hazmat, and Technical Rescue.
2029: 15 firefighters = cost: \$1,781,898

January 1, 2030: No additional firefighters would be added that year.

By January 1, 2031, the Fire Department would meet NFPA 1710 minimum staffing levels for all remaining engine companies.

2031: 17 firefighters = cost: \$2,019,484.40

Proposition B is about making sure Round Rock citizens and firefighters have the staffing needed to meet recognized national minimum standards to provide safer and more effective emergency response mitigation for our community.

For voters concerned about how the one time capital costs would be paid for, the City already has the financial resources to cover them.

The City's Self-Construction Fund, which is used for one-time capital projects, currently has about \$150 million available. That means there are already funds in place that could more than cover the capital costs tied to this proposition.

The City has stated those capital costs would be \$48,901,998, but based on the size of the current fund, those expenses appear to be well within reach without creating a new burden for taxpayers.

Over the life of this measured ten(10) year plan, ESD 9 is projected to contribute about \$75 million to the City of Round Rock's General Fund, yet those dollars are not dedicated to the Fire Department. On their own, those ESD 9 funds would be enough to cover Prop B and its operating costs, showing that there is already a funding source available that could support stronger fire protection and faster emergency response for our community.

Your firefighters stand with the citizens of Round Rock. For more than 20 years, the City has had opportunities to keep pace with growth and improve emergency response times. Study after study, including reports from the City's own consultants in 2005, 2010, and 2023, have pointed to the same concerns: response times are falling behind, and staffing levels are not meeting recognized national standards.

At the core, Proposition B is a practical, phased plan that puts public safety first. It uses existing funding sources, follows recognized national minimum standards, and gives Round Rock a clear path to stronger staffing, better response times, and safer service for both citizens and firefighters. This is not about asking for more than what is needed. It is about finally addressing a long documented public safety issue with a responsible plan that our community can afford and our firefighters are ready to carry out in service to the people of Round Rock.

Source: Round Rock Association of Professional Firefighters