

Evaluation Criteria for Vacant and New Positions

1. Is this position essential?

Essential positions are those that provide core public health and safety services; emergency and disaster assistance; and preservation of the essential elements of the City's financial activities.

This position is absolutely essential as it is a critical part of both establishing and maintaining and core public health and safety services. This position's primary focus is on three fronts: Code Enforcement, Public Education and Pre-planning.

Code Enforcement: position is responsible for all applicable fire code inspections, interpretations and follow-ups on new construction. Once construction is complete, Fire Code is the only presence within buildings to assure on-going compliance to codes that protect both the public and the employees of all businesses and multi-tenant living spaces. This position also assists businesses with education of their employees on safe practices both at work and home to create a safer environment.

Public Education: position is responsible for evaluating trends in fire cause and dollar loss, then putting together annual programs that focus on the two highest risk groups; the young and the elderly. A well-established public education program focusses on prevention techniques rather than emergency response. It also provides the public with the proper tools to make sound, educated decisions on fire and life safety issues.

Pre-planning: position is responsible for collecting, analyzing and presenting to fire department staff response issues unique to individual businesses. Information would include: hazards (hazardous materials, unique building features, times of operation, numbers of employees, entrance/exit locations, water supply, pumping capacities needed, Maintenance staff, etc.

Code Enforcement, Public Education and Pre-planning all fall under the recent strategic goals adopted by City Council: *Fire Departments Strategic Service Offerings of:*

Preventive Services; aggressively uphold applicable safety codes. Assist business community and the public with education focused on a safer working/living environment. Educate our young on safe behaviors.

2. Is the Position Critical?

Critical positions are positions that are, for example, one-position job classes or positions with duties that cannot be modified, reassigned or eliminated. Detailed responses to the following questions will be required in determining whether or not a position is "critical" to providing high-quality services to residents, business owners and/or employees:

- **Explain how this position is key to achieving the strategic goals identified by the City Council.**
 - As explained above, this position falls under the strategic goals accepted by the City Council. Within the Fire Department; Provides Preventative Services; aggressively uphold applicable safety codes. Assist business community and the public with education focused on a safer working/living environment. Educate our young on safe behaviors. It should be noted that this is the only position within the city staff that provides this level of expertise.
 - *Per City Code Sec. 22-1 Fire Department*
 - (a) *Creation. There is established in the city a fire department consisting of paid on-call staff and full-time staff.*
 - (b) *Purpose. The fire department shall be established for the purpose of the protection of lives and property within the city from fire and other property or life threatening emergencies. The fire department shall provide fire prevention services in accordance with those general policies established by the council*
 - It is essential that the fire safety inspection, education and pre-planning programs continue to be an integral part of the total fire services program within this community.

- **Can the duties be re-engineered or automated? Please explain.**
 - These services require excellent human communication skills for all ages. Establishing a professional presence both during code enforcement/pre-planning and public education is key to the on-going success of this position. With that said, re-engineering or automation is not an option.

- **Can the duties be reassigned temporarily or permanently? Please explain.**
 - The key to success with this position is for this person to establish themselves as a local expert for sight visits, questions on applicable codes and safety practices, a focal position within the education system to bring safety messages to our young. It is critical to have someone looking through “fire department” lenses to capture the necessary information for emergency response. In short, a familiar face with a Ramsey Fire background that has established a relationship in our community will succeed where someone in a temporary position may not be as successful due to a short-term relationship.

- **Can the position be filled internally?**

- Staff is recommending to first post this position internally. There are employees that meet minimum requirements. If internal recruitment is unsuccessful, then an outside search would be done.
- **What is the impact (i.e. to residents, business owners, employees, and/or operations) if the position is not filled?**
 - To continue to promote a safe community all disciplines of this position are essential and must be continued. We are required to complete applicable code enforcement services. Pre-planning serves a major role for our firefighters to provide emergency services to businesses in a safe manner. Without this effort, unforeseen changes to a businesses' operation may in-turn put firefighters in a position of unnecessary risk. As a city if we decide to discontinue safe practices education to our young, we may expect to witness an increase in unsafe behavior in the future. These unsafe practices may result in harm to our residents and businesses along with a decline in stability within our community.
- **Can the service provided be reduced, eliminated, or contracted out?**
 - Contracting may be an alternative for the code enforcement portion of this position. But on a temporary basis, the level of success may be substantially less than desired as compared to a person who is in the business community establishing relationships.
 - Contracting for the Pre-planning element is unacceptable. Without detailed knowledge of how fire operations work, the information returned to the fire department staff will be less than adequate to keep fire department staff educated to provide safe, effective emergency response.
 - Contracting for public education is not an acceptable alternative for public education. A local, professional expert that continues to have a presence within the community will be much more successful at establishing long-term safe behaviors than a temporary or short-term person.
- **What is the budgetary impact if the position is not filled (e.g., additional overtime/compensatory time off costs)?**
 - Staff's recommendation is that not filling the pre-planning element is not an option. This is a critical piece of emergency response within our community both today and as more and/or different businesses move into our community.
 - Staff's recommendation is that not filling the public education portion of this position is not an option. This effort plays a major part in keeping our city stable through education.

- To not fill the code enforcement portion would dictate bringing on a temporary person (contract). Estimated cost would be between \$50-\$70 per hour. Hours would depend on activity level.
- **What are the circumstances that warrant the creation of this new position?**
 - Not applicable

3. What is the total annual cost of the position (e.g., salary, taxes, benefits, equipment, etc.)?