

East Metro Public Safety Training Facility

State Bonding Proposal



History:

The East Metro Public Safety Training Facility (EMPSTF) officially opened on October 9, 2016. The facility featured two training structures and a classroom and was built to primarily address firefighter training needs in the metropolitan area. The two-story house structure features an integrated fire simulation system that utilizes propane-fed fires and simulated smoke. The four-story live burn structure features a mock storefront, apartments, and four stories of live burn areas to allow for realistic firefighter training.

The EMPSTF is operated by a Joint Powers Agreement between the Cities of Maplewood, Oakdale, North Saint Paul, and Lake Elmo. Since opening in 2016, the facility has seen a steady increase in utilization. There were over 200 reservations for use in 2021, and an estimated 330 reservations will be made by the end of 2022. Century College is a significant facility partner and spends hundreds of hours each year training current and future firefighters from many communities around Minnesota. The facility has been utilized by communities as far north as Elk River, as far south as Hastings, and as far east as Baldwin, Wisconsin, and is also used by the State's two largest fire departments, Minneapolis and Saint Paul.

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Increased
usage of
65%

Challenges:

Unfortunately, the site is largely not utilized by law enforcement, emergency medical services (EMS) agencies, and embedded social workers (ESW) due to a lack of law enforcement/EMS functionality and, most recently, a lack of availability. Now, more than ever, Public Safety Professionals need to train together to meet the community's needs. Additional funding would allow police, EMS, and ESW to train side-by-side in de-escalation, incident command, operating in tactical environments, co-response to complex search and/or rescue operations, people in crisis, and training on integrating public safety technologies.

Currently, police, fire, EMS, and ESW work hand in hand to address complex issues and emergencies affecting communities. As such, there is a great need to be able to train together. Currently, each profession has a few limited locations to prepare their unique skills; however, there is no proper public training facility.

The inability to train in complex situations is a detriment to the community and limits public safety's ability to have successful outcomes on critical incidents. Unified command and interoperation ability are vital to preserving life and property. These keys are outlined in the Federal Emergency Management Administrations' training and guidance.

Additionally, there is a lack of law enforcement de-escalation, simulation, EWS, and range options for law enforcement. This lack of access hinders and complicates training, with departments traveling 20-30 miles outside their jurisdiction to access suitable training locations. Additionally, these locations are in high demand, making scheduling challenging for most agencies.



Finally, the law enforcement, fire, and EMS professions have seen a significant decrease in the number of people attending certification programs, entering the career field, and staying in the career field. This has led to significantly increased training needs. Quality training and facilities allow departments to recruit better and retain high-quality personnel.

Request:

On behalf of the East Metro Public Safety Joint Powers, the City of Maplewood is requesting funds to complete a space needs assessment to determine the feasibility and costs associated with improving the East Metro Public Safety Facility to meet the current needs of all Public Safety Professionals. These additions would add much-needed training to a facility that has already established itself as a regional asset.

Stakeholders:

The East Metro Public Safety Training Facility is a regional asset. Compared to other regions, the North East Metro lacks a public safety training facility that provides current training needs to police, fire, EMS, and ESW. There are 19 law enforcement agencies and 23 Fire Departments in Ramsey and Washington Counties. In addition, there are private EMS organizations that operate in both counties. Century College in White Bear Lake has EMS, fire, and law enforcement programs. This facility has the potential to be utilized by the broader community and by a multitude of organizations.

Agencies who utilized the site in 2022:

- Cottage Grove
- 3M
- Anoka County Fire Academy
- Brooklyn Park Fire
- Century College
- Fridley Fire
- Hugo Fire
- Inver Grove Heights Fire
- Lake Elmo Fire
- Lake Johanna Fire
- Little Canada Fire
- Maplewood Fire
- Maplewood Police
- Mendota Heights Fire
- Minneapolis Fire
- North St Paul Fire
- North St Paul Police
- Oakdale Fire
- Roseville Fire
- St Paul Fire
- Stillwater Fire
- United Fire
- Vadnais Heights Fire
- Ramsey County Chief's Fire Academy
- White Bear Lake Fire
- Woodbury Fire

