

Staffed Station Expansion Justification

As Lowndes County continues to grow, so does the need for enhanced fire protection and emergency services. The expansion of the fire department into areas currently lacking full-time staffing is a proactive measure that ensures the safety and well-being of residents while supporting the region's future development. Establishing two additional stations (Station #3 Twin Lakes area and Station #9 Westside area) will address response time concerns, improve service coverage and provide a foundation for long term community growth and resilience.

Improved Response Times and Coverage:

Currently, emergency response times in the unstaffed areas are longer due to traveled road miles or the assigned Engine Company to the unstaffed zones are attached to a Call for Service requiring the next available unit to be dispatched. By strategically placing staffed stations in these locations we will reduce response times, which is critical for both fire suppression and life-saving emergency medical interventions. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA 1710) recommends a five minute and 20 seconds response time to fire and EMS calls for service. To max out creditable points for Insurance Service Office (ISO) we are required to have an Engine on scene at a structure fire within four minutes. The addition of the proposed stations and staff will bring our department closer to meeting those standards across the entire county.

Population Growth and Increased Call Volume:

The county's ongoing residential and commercial development is increasing both population density and emergency call volume. With dedicated industrial areas in Station #3 (Twin Lakes) and Station #9 (Westside), proactively expanding fire department resources ensures that public safeties infrastructure keeps pace with this growth, rather than reacting to service gaps after they become critical. With additional population growth from the Moody AFB mission change with the arrival of the F-35s, these two new stations will provide the necessary capacity to serve future residents while maintain high standards of emergency response.

Risk Reduction and Community Safety:

Assessments of these areas has identified them to be underserved in terms of dedicated fire suppression and emergency services. Adding full time staffing to these areas will allow for continuous readiness, reducing the likelihood of property loss and improving patient outcomes in medical emergencies. Additionally, increased staffing enhances our ability to conduct fire prevention education and pre-incident planning, further strengthening overall community safety.

Economic and Insurance Benefits:

Well-staffed fire stations contribute to improved Insurance Service Office (ISO) ratings, which can lower insurance premiums for homeowners and businesses. Additionally, enhanced fire protection services make the area more attractive for commercial and industrial investments, supporting economic development. Businesses and residents alike will benefit from the increased security and financial incentives that come with improved fire protection.

Long-Term Cost Efficiency:

Investing in further expanding the fire department services with two additional stations will help prevent the possibility of costly emergency responses in the future. Establishing full time staffing at these new stations creates a sustainable model that optimizes resource allocation and reduces reliance on temporary solutions. The staffed stations will reduce response times, hiring overtime staff to man stations during high call volume events, and relying on mutual aid request to answer calls for service in these areas, all of which can be financially burdensome in the long run.