



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Regarding the City of Oak Creek's 2024 Public Safety Staffing Plan

What is the 2024 Public Safety Staffing Plan?

In May 2023, the Oak Creek Mayor and Common Council adopted a new [five-year Strategic Action Plan \(SAP\)](#) for the community. This Plan outlines many goals and projects to keep the community moving forward and to make investments in our future. The new SAP is based on input from the public, the City workforce, and other stakeholders. The public input included the 2022 Resident Engagement and Priority Survey and public stakeholder focus groups, which supported additional funding for public safety excellence.

One immediate goal of the SAP was for the Common Council to consider a plan to provide additional resources to the City Police and Fire departments. The Common Council included extra funds in its [2024 Budget](#) to make these staff and program investments. The total amount of additional funding equals **\$1,914,920** and is broken down by Department later in this FAQ document.

Why is this important?

Oak Creek is a growing community. To handle this growth responsibly, it is important to make sure there are enough staffing resources for the services that people expect from the City. For the 2024 Operating Budget ([link](#)), the Mayor and Common Council prioritized additional funding to enhance services and programs in the City Police and Fire Departments. The City has wonderfully skilled Firefighter/Paramedics, Police Officers, and leadership teams among each of these Departments. The City made these added investments to accommodate its growth and continue to be a great community and a place that offers high quality-of-life amenities and services.

How does this affect my property taxes?

Homeowners with a median property value of \$323,700 can expect to pay an additional cost of \$9.46 per month towards the City of Oak Creek portion of their tax bill.

In Wisconsin, every city follows a law that controls how much property taxes can go up, and it's called a "[levy limit.](#)" There is a special rule, an "exception," that allows municipalities to go beyond that limit under certain circumstances. About 94% of cities in Wisconsin already use this exemption, but up to now, Oak Creek has not. The Common Council voted to use this exception when approving the 2024 Operating Budget. This decision means there's enough money to fund and carry out the 2024 Public Safety staffing plan.

What new resources are directed toward the Fire Department?

The plan adds four new Firefighter/Paramedic positions for the Fire Department, enhances the fire prevention program by adding a part-time inspector, and provides more funds to the Cadet/Intern program. New investments in the Fire Department total **\$674,920**.

What new resources are directed toward the Police Department?

The plan adds six Police Officers and one more Detective, provides extra funds to the Police Aide program, and creates a new Dispatch Supervisor position. This means the City will have one more police officer and an additional patrol car on each shift, 24/7. New investments in the Police Department total **\$1,240,000**.

What staffing, community programming, and other public services do the Police and Fire Departments provide?

The Police and Fire Departments release yearly reports packed with valuable information for the public. City staff put a lot of effort into making these documents both helpful and enjoyable to read. If you're looking for details about how the Departments are organized, call volumes, types of calls, general crime statistics, and updates on community programs they offer, start by checking out these published annual reports.

[2022 Annual Report, Oak Creek Police Department](#)

[2022 Annual Report, Oak Creek Fire Department](#)

What actions will take place in 2024?

The Police and Fire Departments will start hiring for these new positions immediately. Public safety departments across the nation are facing a challenge in finding qualified candidates for these roles and for public safety jobs in general. It will be an ongoing effort throughout 2024 to fill these positions with qualified first responders and caregivers. The City Police and Fire Departments have seen success with their next-generation staffing programs, reaching potential candidates early on in their career planning and introducing them to the public safety field. The Police Aide Program and Fire Cadet/Intern programs play a crucial role in ensuring ongoing success in staffing.

What is the Oak Creek Police Aide Program?

The Police Aide program is a part-time, limited employment, entry law enforcement position. Police Aides work both independently as well as alongside Oak Creek Police Officers on various tasks and assignments. Police Aides are 'non-sworn' positions. Candidates must be at least 18 years of age, currently pursuing a Police Science/Criminal Justice degree or have completed training in this field, and be interested in a law enforcement career. The Oak Creek Police Aide program has developed many experienced candidates who are now working as Oak Creek Police Officers, including the City's current Chief of Police.

[More information on the Police Aide Program](#)

What is the Oak Creek Fire Cadet/Intern Program?

The Fire Cadet program provides young adults with the opportunity to explore careers in the fire service, including hands-on experience in firefighting and emergency medical care. The program promotes the concepts of teamwork, responsibility, and community service and is open to anyone in high school or college who is thinking about a career in the fire service. It also welcomes older individuals thinking about switching careers to join the fire service.

The Intern program provides opportunities for select members of the Cadet group to advance towards a career in the fire service. The City supports this potential career growth by providing professional education and the possibility for future employment.

[More information on the Fire Cadet/Intern Program](#)

[More information on the entire 2024 Operating and Capital Improvement Budget](#)