

CITY OF CALEDONIA, MINNESOTA

**RESOLUTION 2021-22**

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING CAPITAL BUDGET REQUEST FOR NEW JOINT FIRE AND AMBULANCE STATION AND RECOMMENDING INCLUSION OF NEW JOINT STATION IN GOVERNOR'S CAPITAL BUDGET**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Caledonia is a political subdivision, organized and existing under the laws of the State of Minnesota; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 16A.86, subd. 3a(6), the City's governing body shall pass a resolution in support of its request for an appropriation in the 2022 Capital Budget; and

**WHEREAS**, the Caledonia City Council previously passed a resolution on June 14, 2021, supporting a Capital Budget request for a new ambulance station; and

**WHEREAS**, after reviewing ambulance station projects in other communities and evaluating the needs of the City's Fire Department and Ambulance Department, the Council believes that it is in the best interests of the Fire Department and Ambulance Department to revise that request; and

**WHEREAS**, the City's Fire Department has 30 volunteer firefighters and averages 39 calls/year and 770 call hours/year; and

**WHEREAS**, the City's Fire Department has a service area of 138 square miles with approximately 4,513 citizens in the City and portions of 9 townships; and

**WHEREAS**, the City's Fire Department also provides mutual aid to the Cities of Brownsville, Hokah, Houston, La Crescent, and Spring Grove; and

**WHEREAS**, the City needs a new fire station because the current fire station is undersized and inadequate for 21<sup>st</sup>-century fire-fighting; and

**WHEREAS**, the existing fire station is too small for the Fire Department's apparatus and equipment; and

**WHEREAS**, the existing fire station lacks safety and disaster preparedness features, such as a decontamination area, exhaust ventilation, a training room, and on-site sleeping areas; and

**WHEREAS**, the City's current ambulance station is also undersized and inadequate for a modern ambulance service; and

**WHEREAS**, the City's Ambulance Department has an active roster of 6 EMRs and 17 EMTs; and

**WHEREAS**, the City's Ambulance Department has a service area of 5,500 citizens spread across the Cities of Caledonia and Eitzen and portions of 11 townships; and

**WHEREAS**, the City's ambulance service also provides mutual aid to the Cities of Brownsville, Hokah, Houston, La Crescent, and Spring Grove; and

**WHEREAS**, the City's ambulance service was upgraded to a part-time advanced life support service on February 27, 2018; and

**WHEREAS**, the Ambulance Department's calls have increased 30% since 2012; and

**WHEREAS**, the City's ambulance service is a state-licensed EMS training program that provides training for many ambulance services in southeast Minnesota; and

**WHEREAS**, the ambulance service's current training room is undersized—having desk space for only 12 people—and is also used by the Police Department as a kitchen, break room, and hallway; and

**WHEREAS**, the ambulance service has no space for housing on-call staff; and

**WHEREAS**, the ambulance service needs space for a third garage; and

**WHEREAS**, the City's ambulance service needs a new ambulance station in order to recruit, train, and retain staff, protect confidential health information, store equipment and materials, and ensure high-quality emergency services; and

**WHEREAS**, the City would like to construct a new joint fire and ambulance station with approximately 12,594 square feet to address the needs of both the Fire Department and Ambulance Department; and

**WHEREAS**, constructing a joint facility is the most cost-efficient way to address the needs of both departments because the departments can share lounge space, training/meeting space, and bunk rooms, among other things; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has purchased a piece of property for a future joint fire and ambulance station; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has retained the services of TSP, Inc. of Rochester, Minnesota, to provide architectural design and construction observation services; and

**WHEREAS**, due to time-sensitive staffing and training needs, the City intends to start construction on the new ambulance station in 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, the estimated cost of constructing a joint facility with approximately 12,594 square feet is \$4,021,275; and

**WHEREAS**, the City does not have the funds to pay for a new joint facility without state assistance; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has raised the per capita charge for ambulance service from \$4.00 to \$16.00 since 2016, and the City has also raised the user rates, but these increases have been needed to cover basic expenses, particularly capital equipment; and

**WHEREAS**, the City is unable to pay for the proposed joint facility using tax revenues because the City's total levy and LGA for taxes payable in 2022 are estimated to be \$2,374,345, and the proposed 6.5% levy increase will generate only an additional \$64,769 to be spread among all departments, including police, public works, parks and recreation, fire, ambulance, library, and economic development; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has increased the tax levy by 8% and 7.5% the past two years, but these increases have been needed to address a backlog of street maintenance and infrastructure projects; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed joint fire and ambulance station would have a positive regional impact because the fire and ambulance services provide training, service, and support to many other cities and townships in southeast Minnesota; and

**WHEREAS**, public health and safety projects are more critical than ever due to COVID-19 and environmental concerns; and

**WHEREAS**, the new ambulance station is a critical project that will address life and safety issues, pursuant to Governor Tim Walz's priorities for allocating state resources.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of Caledonia, that the City Council supports the City's Capital Budget request of \$2,010,637.50 for a new joint fire and ambulance station and recommends to Governor Tim Walz that this request be included in his 2022 Capital Budget.

**ADOPTED** by the Caledonia City Council this 13<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2021.

  
DeWayne "Tank" Schroeder, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Adam G. Swann, Clerk/Administrator

STATE OF MINNESOTA )  
COUNTY OF HOUSTON )  
CITY OF CALEDONIA )

I, Adam Swann, city clerk and administrator of the City of Caledonia, do hereby certify that this is a true and correct transcript of the resolution that was adopted at a meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2021, the original of which is on file in this office. I further certify that 5 members voted in favor of this resolution and that 5 members were present and voting.

Signed Adam Swann

Date December 15, 2021